

- CHAPTER 1 -

Observing the Armies on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra

TEXT 1

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच
धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय ॥ १ ॥

dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca
dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre
samavetā yuyutsavaḥ
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva
kim akurvata sañjaya

SYNONYMS

dhṛtarāṣṭraḥ uvāca—King Dhṛtarāṣṭra said; *dharma-kṣetre*—in the place of pilgrimage; *kuru-kṣetre*—in the place named Kurukṣetra; *samavetāḥ*—assembled; *yuyutsavaḥ*—desiring to fight; *māmakāḥ*—my party (sons); *pāṇḍavāḥ*—the sons of Pāṇḍu; *ca*—and; *eva*—certainly; *kim*—what; *akurvata*—did they do; *sañjaya*—O Sañjaya.

TRANSLATION

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said: O Sañjaya, after my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu assembled in the place of pilgrimage at Kurukṣetra, desiring to fight, what did they do?

PURPORT

Bhagavad-gītā is the widely read theistic science summarized in the *Gītā-māhātmya* (*Glorification of the Gītā*). There it says that one should read *Bhagavad-gītā* very scrutinizingly with the help of a person who is a devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and try to understand it without personally motivated interpretations. The example of clear understanding is there in the *Bhagavad-gītā* itself, in the way the teaching is understood by Arjuna, who heard the *Gītā* directly from the Lord. If someone is fortunate enough to understand *Bhagavad-gītā* in that line of disciplic succession, without motivated interpretation, then he surpasses all studies of Vedic wisdom, and all scriptures of the world. One will find in the *Bhagavad-gītā* all that is contained in other scriptures, but the reader will also find things which are not to be found elsewhere. That is the specific standard of the *Gītā*. It is the perfect theistic science because it is directly spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The topics discussed by Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Sañjaya, as described in the *Mahābhārata*, form the basic principle for this great philosophy. It is understood that this philosophy evolved on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, which is a sacred place of pilgrimage from the immemorial time of the Vedic age. It was spoken by the Lord when He was present personally on this planet for the guidance of mankind.

The word *dharma-kṣetra* (a place where religious rituals are performed) is significant because, on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead was present on the side of Arjuna. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the father of the Kurus, was highly doubtful about the possibility of his sons' ultimate victory. In his doubt, he inquired from his secretary Sañjaya, "What did they do?" He was confident that both his sons and the sons of his younger brother Pāṇḍu were assembled in that Field of Kurukṣetra for a determined engagement of the war. Still, his inquiry is significant. He did not want a compromise between the cousins and brothers, and he wanted to be sure of the fate of his sons on the battlefield. Because the battle was arranged to be fought at Kurukṣetra, which is mentioned elsewhere in the *Vedas* as a place of worship—even for the denizens of heaven—Dhṛtarāṣṭra became very fearful about the influence of the holy place on the outcome of the battle. He knew very well that this would

influence Arjuna and the sons of Pāṇḍu favorably, because by nature they were all virtuous. Sañjaya was a student of Vyāsa, and therefore, by the mercy of Vyāsa, Sañjaya was able to envision the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra even while he was in the room of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. And so, Dhṛtarāṣṭra asked him about the situation on the battlefield.

Both the Pāṇḍavas and the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra belong to the same family, but Dhṛtarāṣṭra's mind is disclosed herein. He deliberately claimed only his sons as Kurus, and he separated the sons of Pāṇḍu from the family heritage. One can thus understand the specific position of Dhṛtarāṣṭra in his relationship with his nephews, the sons of Pāṇḍu. As in the paddy field the unnecessary plants are taken out, so it is expected from the very beginning of these topics that in the religious field of Kurukṣetra, where the father of religion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was present, the unwanted plants like Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son Duryodhana and others would be wiped out and the thoroughly religious persons, headed by Yudhiṣṭhira, would be established by the Lord. This is the significance of the words *dharma-kṣetre* and *kuru-kṣetre*, apart from their historical and Vedic importance.

TEXT 2

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

sañjaya uvāca
dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkaṁ
vyūḍhaṁ duryodhanas tadā
ācāryam upasaṅgmya
rājā vacanam abravīt

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ uvāca—Sañjaya said; *dṛṣṭvā*—after seeing; *tu*—but;

pāṇḍava-anīkam—the soldiers of the Pāṇḍavas; *vyūḍham*—arranged in a military phalanx; *duryodhanaḥ*—King Duryodhana; *tadā*—at that time; *ācāryam*—the teacher; *upasaṅgamyā*—approaching; *rājā*—the king; *vacanam*—words; *abravīt*—spoke.

TRANSLATION

Saṅjaya said: O King, after looking over the army arranged in military formation by the sons of Pāṇḍu, King Duryodhana went to his teacher and spoke the following words.

PURPORT

Dhṛtarāṣṭra was blind from birth. Unfortunately, he was also bereft of spiritual vision. He knew very well that his sons were equally blind in the matter of religion, and he was sure that they could never reach an understanding with the Pāṇḍavas, who were all pious since birth. Still he was doubtful about the influence of the place of pilgrimage, and Saṅjaya could understand his motive in asking about the situation on the battlefield. Saṅjaya wanted, therefore, to encourage the despondent king and thus assured him that his sons were not going to make any sort of compromise under the influence of the holy place. Saṅjaya therefore informed the king that his son, Duryodhana, after seeing the military force of the Pāṇḍavas, at once went to the commander in chief, Droṇācārya, to inform him of the real position. Although Duryodhana is mentioned as the king, he still had to go to the commander on account of the seriousness of the situation. He was therefore quite fit to be a politician. But Duryodhana's diplomatic veneer could not disguise the fear he felt when he saw the military arrangement of the Pāṇḍavas.

TEXT 3

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।

व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

paśya—behold; *etām*—this; *pāṇḍu-putrāṇām*—of the sons of Pāṇḍu;
ācārya—O teacher; *mahatīm*—great; *camūm*—military force;
vyūḍhām—arranged; *drupada-putreṇa*—by the son of Drupada; *tava*—your;
śiṣyeṇa—disciple; *dhī-matā*—very intelligent.

TRANSLATION

O my teacher, behold the great army of the sons of Pāṇḍu, so expertly arranged by your intelligent disciple the son of Drupada.

PURPORT

Duryodhana, a great diplomat, wanted to point out the defects of Droṇācārya, the great *brāhmaṇa* commander in chief. Droṇācārya had some political quarrel with King Drupada, the father of Draupadī, who was Arjuna's wife. As a result of this quarrel, Drupada performed a great sacrifice, by which he received the benediction of having a son who would be able to kill Droṇācārya. Droṇācārya knew this perfectly well, and yet as a liberal *brāhmaṇa* he did not hesitate to impart all his military secrets when the son of Drupada, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, was entrusted to him for military education. Now, on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Dhṛṣṭadyumna took the side of the Pāṇḍavas, and it was he who arranged for their military phalanx, after having learned the art from Droṇācārya. Duryodhana pointed out this mistake of Droṇācārya's so that he might be alert and uncompromising in the fighting. By this he wanted to point out also that he should not be similarly lenient in battle against the

Pāṇḍavas, who were also Droṇācārya's affectionate students. Arjuna, especially, was his most affectionate and brilliant student. Duryodhana also warned that such leniency in the fight would lead to defeat.

TEXT 4

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।
युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥ ४ ॥

*atra śūrā maheṣv-āsā
bhīmārjuna-samā yudhi
yuyudhāno virāṭaś ca
drupadaś ca mahā-rathaḥ*

SYNONYMS

atra—here; *śūrāḥ*—heroes; *mahā-iṣu-āsāḥ*—mighty bowmen;
bhīma-arjuna—to Bhīma and Arjuna; *samāḥ*—equal; *yudhi*—in the fight;
yuyudhānaḥ—Yuyudhāna; *virāṭaḥ*—Virāṭa; *ca*—also; *drupadaḥ*—Drupada;
ca—also; *mahā-rathaḥ*—great fighter.

TRANSLATION

Here in this army are many heroic bowmen equal in fighting to Bhīma and Arjuna: great fighters like Yuyudhāna, Virāṭa and Drupada.

PURPORT

Even though Dhṛṣṭadyumna was not a very important obstacle in the face of Droṇācārya's very great power in the military art, there were many others who were causes of fear. They are mentioned by Duryodhana as great stumbling blocks on the path of victory because each and every one of them was as formidable as Bhīma and Arjuna. He knew the strength of Bhīma and Arjuna, and thus he compared the others with them.

TEXT 5

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः ॥ ५ ॥

*dhṛṣṭaketuś cekitānaḥ
kāśirājaś ca vīryavān
purujit kuntibhojaś ca
śaibyaś ca nara-puṅgavaḥ*

SYNONYMS

dhṛṣṭaketuḥ—Dhṛṣṭaketu; *cekitānaḥ*—Cekitāna; *kāśirājaḥ*—Kāśirāja; *ca*—also; *vīrya-vān*—very powerful; *purujit*—Purujit; *kuntibhojaḥ*—Kuntibhoja; *ca*—and; *śaibyaḥ*—Śaibya; *ca*—and; *nara-puṅgavaḥ*—hero in human society.

TRANSLATION

There are also great, heroic, powerful fighters like Dhṛṣṭaketu, Cekitāna, Kāśirāja, Purujit, Kuntibhoja and Śaibya.

TEXT 6

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥ ६ ॥

*yudhāmanyuś ca vikrānta
uttamaujāś ca vīryavān
saubhadro draupadeyāś ca
sarva eva mahā-rathāḥ*

SYNONYMS

yudhāmanyuḥ—Yudhāmanyu; *ca*—and; *vikrāntaḥ*—mighty;
uttamaujāḥ—Uttamaujā; *ca*—and; *vīrya-vān*—very powerful;
saubhadraḥ—the son of Subhadrā; *draupadeyāḥ*—the sons of Draupadī;
ca—and; *sarve*—all; *eva*—certainly; *mahā-rathāḥ*—great chariot fighters.

TRANSLATION

There are the mighty Yudhāmanyu, the very powerful Uttamaujā, the son of Subhadrā and the sons of Draupadī. All these warriors are great chariot fighters.

TEXT 7

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ॥ ७ ॥

asmākaṁ tu viśiṣṭā ye
tān nibodha dvijottama
nāyakā mama sainyasya
saṁjñārthaṁ tān bravāmi te

SYNONYMS

asmākaṁ—our; *tu*—but; *viśiṣṭaḥ*—especially powerful; *ye*—who; *tān*—them;
nibodha—just take note of, be informed; *dvija-uttama*—O best of the
brāhmaṇas; *nāyakāḥ*—captains; *mama*—my; *sainyasya*—of the soldiers;
saṁjñā-arthaṁ—for information; *tān*—them; *bravāmi*—I am speaking; *te*—to
you.

TRANSLATION

But for your information, O best of the brāhmaṇas, let me tell you about the captains who are especially qualified to lead my military force.

TEXT 8

भवान्भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिंजयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥ ८ ॥

*bhavān bhīṣmaś ca karṇaś ca
kṛpaś ca samitim-jayaḥ
aśvatthāmā vikarṇaś ca
saumadattis tathaiva ca*

SYNONYMS

bhavān—your good self; *bhīṣmaḥ*—Grandfather Bhīṣma; *ca*—also;
karṇaḥ—Karṇa; *ca*—and; *kṛpaḥ*—Kṛpa; *ca*—and; *samitim-jayaḥ*—always
victorious in battle; *aśvatthāmā*—Aśvatthāmā; *vikarṇaḥ*—Vikarṇa; *ca*—as well
as; *saumadattiḥ*—the son of Somadatta; *tathā*—as well as; *eva*—certainly;
ca—also.

TRANSLATION

There are personalities like you, Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Kṛpa, Aśvatthāmā, Vikarṇa
and the son of Somadatta called Bhūriśravā, who are always victorious in battle.

PURPORT

Duryodhana mentions the exceptional heroes in the battle, all of whom are
ever victorious. Vikarṇa is the brother of Duryodhana, Aśvatthāmā is the son
of Droṇācārya, and Saumadatti, or Bhūriśravā, is the son of the King of the
Bāhlikas. Karṇa is the half brother of Arjuna, as he was born of Kuntī before
her marriage with King Pāṇḍu. Kṛpācārya's twin sister married Droṇācārya.

TEXT 9

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।

नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥ ९ ॥

*anye ca bahavaḥ śūrā
mad-arthe tyakta-jīvitāḥ
nānā-śastra-praharaṇāḥ
sarve yuddha-viśārādāḥ*

SYNONYMS

anye—others; *ca*—also; *bahavaḥ*—in great numbers; *śūrāḥ*—heroes; *mat-arthe*—for my sake; *tyakta-jīvitāḥ*—prepared to risk life; *nānā*—many; *śastra*—weapons; *praharaṇāḥ*—equipped with; *sarve*—all of them; *yuddha-viśārādāḥ*—experienced in military science.

TRANSLATION

There are many other heroes who are prepared to lay down their lives for my sake. All of them are well equipped with different kinds of weapons, and all are experienced in military science.

PURPORT

As far as the others are concerned—like Jayadratha, Kṛtavarmā and Śalya—all are determined to lay down their lives for Duryodhana's sake. In other words, it is already concluded that all of them would die in the Battle of Kurukṣetra for joining the party of the sinful Duryodhana. Duryodhana was, of course, confident of his victory on account of the above-mentioned combined strength of his friends.

TEXT 10

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

*aparyāptam tad asmākaṁ
balaṁ bhīṣmābhirakṣitam
paryāptam tv idam eteṣāṁ
balaṁ bhīmābhirakṣitam*

SYNONYMS

aparyāptam—immeasurable; *tat*—that; *asmākaṁ*—of ours; *balaṁ*—strength; *bhīṣma*—by Grandfather Bhīṣma; *abhirakṣitam*—perfectly protected; *paryāptam*—limited; *tu*—but; *idam*—all this; *eteṣāṁ*—of the Pāṇḍavas; *balaṁ*—strength; *bhīma*—by Bhīma; *abhirakṣitam*—carefully protected.

TRANSLATION

Our strength is immeasurable, and we are perfectly protected by Grandfather Bhīṣma, whereas the strength of the Pāṇḍavas, carefully protected by Bhīma, is limited.

PURPORT

Herein an estimation of comparative strength is made by Duryodhana. He thinks that the strength of his armed forces is immeasurable, being specifically protected by the most experienced general, Grandfather Bhīṣma. On the other hand, the forces of the Pāṇḍavas are limited, being protected by a less experienced general, Bhīma, who is like a fig in the presence of Bhīṣma. Duryodhana was always envious of Bhīma because he knew perfectly well that if he should die at all, he would only be killed by Bhīma. But at the same time, he was confident of his victory on account of the presence of Bhīṣma, who was a far superior general. His conclusion that he would come out of the battle victorious was well ascertained.

TEXT 11

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।

भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥ ११ ॥

*ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu
yathā-bhāgam avasthitāḥ
bhīṣmam evābhirakṣantu
bhavantaḥ sarva eva hi*

SYNONYMS

ayaneṣu—in the strategic points; *ca*—also; *sarveṣu*—everywhere;
yathā-bhāgam—as differently arranged; *avasthitāḥ*—situated; *bhīṣmam*—unto
Grandfather Bhīṣma; *eva*—certainly; *abhirakṣantu*—should give support;
bhavantaḥ—you; *sarve*—all respectively; *eva hi*—certainly.

TRANSLATION

**All of you must now give full support to Grandfather Bhīṣma, as you stand
at your respective strategic points of entrance into the phalanx of the army.**

PURPORT

Duryodhana, after praising the prowess of Bhīṣma, further considered that others might think that they had been considered less important, so in his usual diplomatic way, he tried to adjust the situation in the above words. He emphasized that Bhīṣmadeva was undoubtedly the greatest hero, but he was an old man, so everyone must especially think of his protection from all sides. He might become engaged in the fight, and the enemy might take advantage of his full engagement on one side. Therefore, it was important that other heroes not leave their strategic positions and allow the enemy to break the phalanx. Duryodhana clearly felt that the victory of the Kurus depended on the presence of Bhīṣmadeva. He was confident of the full support of Bhīṣmadeva and Droṇācārya in the battle because he well knew that they did not even speak a word when Arjuna's wife Draupadī, in her helpless condition, had appealed to them for justice while she was being forced to appear naked in the

presence of all the great generals in the assembly. Although he knew that the two generals had some sort of affection for the Pāṇḍavas, he hoped that these generals would now completely give it up, as they had done during the gambling performances.

TEXT 12

तस्य सञ्जनयन्हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥ १२ ॥

*tasya sañjanayan harṣam
kuru-vṛddhaḥ pitāmahaḥ
simha-nādam vinadyoccaiḥ
śaṅkham dadhmau pratāpavān*

SYNONYMS

tasya—his; *sañjanayan*—increasing; *harṣam*—cheerfulness;
kuru-vṛddhaḥ—the grandsire of the Kuru dynasty (Bhīṣma); *pitāmahaḥ*—the grandfather; *simha-nādam*—roaring sound, like that of a lion;
vinadya—vibrating; *uccaiḥ*—very loudly; *śaṅkham*—conchshell;
dadhmau—blew; *pratāpa-vān*—the valiant.

TRANSLATION

Then Bhīṣma, the great valiant grandsire of the Kuru dynasty, the grandfather of the fighters, blew his conchshell very loudly, making a sound like the roar of a lion, giving Duryodhana joy.

PURPORT

The grandsire of the Kuru dynasty could understand the inner meaning of the heart of his grandson Duryodhana, and out of his natural compassion for him he tried to cheer him by blowing his conchshell very loudly, befitting his

position as a lion. Indirectly, by the symbolism of the conchshell, he informed his depressed grandson Duryodhana that he had no chance of victory in the battle, because the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa was on the other side. But still, it was his duty to conduct the fight, and no pains would be spared in that connection.

TEXT 13

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ १३ ॥

*tataḥ śaṅkhāś ca bheryaś ca
paṇavānaka-gomukhāḥ
sahasāivābhyahanyanta
sa śabdastumulo 'bhavat*

SYNONYMS

tataḥ—thereafter; *śaṅkhāḥ*—conchshells; *ca*—also; *bheryaḥ*—large drums; *ca*—and; *paṇava-ānaka*—small drums and kettledrums; *go-mukhāḥ*—horns; *sahasā*—all of a sudden; *eva*—certainly; *abhyahanyanta*—were simultaneously sounded; *saḥ*—that; *śabdaḥ*—combined sound; *tumulaḥ*—tumultuous; *abhavat*—became.

TRANSLATION

After that, the conchshells, drums, bugles, trumpets and horns were all suddenly sounded, and the combined sound was tumultuous.

TEXT 14

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

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

SYNONYMS

tataḥ—thereafter; *śvetaiḥ*—with white; *hayaiḥ*—horses; *yukte*—being yoked; *mahati*—in a great; *syandane*—chariot; *sthitau*—situated; *mādhavaḥ*—Kṛṣṇa (the husband of the goddess of fortune); *pāṇḍavaḥ*—Arjuna (the son of Pāṇḍu); *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *divyau*—transcendental; *śaṅkhau*—conchshells; *pradadhmatuḥ*—sounded.

TRANSLATION

On the other side, both Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, stationed on a great chariot drawn by white horses, sounded their transcendental conchshells.

PURPORT

In contrast with the conchshell blown by Bhīṣmadeva, the conchshells in the hands of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are described as transcendental. The sounding of the transcendental conchshells indicated that there was no hope of victory for the other side because Kṛṣṇa was on the side of the Pāṇḍavas. *Jayas tu pāṇḍu-putrāṇām yeṣāṁ pakṣe janārdanaḥ*. Victory is always with persons like the sons of Pāṇḍu because Lord Kṛṣṇa is associated with them. And whenever and wherever the Lord is present, the goddess of fortune is also there because the goddess of fortune never lives alone without her husband. Therefore, victory and fortune were awaiting Arjuna, as indicated by the transcendental sound produced by the conchshell of Viṣṇu, or Lord Kṛṣṇa. Besides that, the chariot on which both the friends were seated had been donated by Agni (the fire-god) to Arjuna, and this indicated that this chariot was capable of conquering all sides, wherever it was drawn over the three worlds.

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनञ्जयः ।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ १५ ॥

*pāñcajanyaṁ hṛṣīkeśo
devadattaṁ dhanañjayaḥ
pauṇḍraṁ dadhmau mahā-śaṅkhaṁ
bhīma-karmā vṛkodaraḥ*

SYNONYMS

pāñcajanya—the conchshell named Pāñcajanya; *hṛṣīka-īśaḥ*—Hṛṣīkeśa (Kṛṣṇa, the Lord who directs the senses of the devotees); *devadatta*—the conchshell named Devadatta; *ghanam-jayaḥ*—Dhanañjaya (Arjuna, the winner of wealth); *pauṇḍra*—the conch named Pauṇḍra; *dadhmau*—blew; *mahā-śaṅkha*—the terrific conchshell; *bhīma-karmā*—one who performs herculean tasks; *vṛka-udaraḥ*—the voracious eater (Bhīma).

TRANSLATION

Lord Kṛṣṇa blew His conchshell, called Pāñcajanya; Arjuna blew his, the Devadatta; and Bhīma, the voracious eater and performer of herculean tasks, blew his terrific conchshell, called Pauṇḍra.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa is referred to as Hṛṣīkeśa in this verse because He is the owner of all senses. The living entities are part and parcel of Him, and therefore the senses of the living entities are also part and parcel of His senses. The impersonalists cannot account for the senses of the living entities, and therefore they are always anxious to describe all living entities as senseless, or impersonal. The Lord, situated in the hearts of all living entities, directs their senses. But He directs in terms of the surrender of the living entity, and in the

case of a pure devotee He directly controls the senses. Here on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra the Lord directly controls the transcendental senses of Arjuna, and thus His particular name of Hṛṣīkeśa. The Lord has different names according to His different activities. For example, His name is Madhusūdana because He killed the demon of the name Madhu; His name is Govinda because He gives pleasure to the cows and to the senses; His name is Vāsudeva because He appeared as the son of Vasudeva; His name is Devakī-nandana because He accepted Devakī as His mother; His name is Yaśodā-nandana because He awarded His childhood pastimes to Yaśodā at Vṛndāvana; His name is Pārtha-sārathi because He worked as charioteer of His friend Arjuna. Similarly, His name is Hṛṣīkeśa because He gave direction to Arjuna on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

Arjuna is referred to as Dhanañjaya in this verse because he helped his elder brother in fetching wealth when it was required by the king to make expenditures for different sacrifices. Similarly, Bhīma is known as Vṛkodara because he could eat as voraciously as he could perform herculean tasks, such as killing the demon Hidimba. So the particular types of conchshell blown by the different personalities on the side of the Pāṇḍavas, beginning with the Lord's, were all very encouraging to the fighting soldiers. On the other side there were no such credits, nor the presence of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme director, nor that of the goddess of fortune. So they were predestined to lose the battle—and that was the message announced by the sounds of the conchshells.

TEXTS 16–18

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥ १६ ॥
काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥ १७ ॥
द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।

सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् ॥ १८ ॥

*anantavijayaṁ rājā
kuntī-putro yudhiṣṭhiraḥ
nakulaḥ sahadevaś ca
sughoṣa-maṇipuṣpakau

kāśyaś ca parameṣv-āsaḥ
śikhaṇḍī ca mahā-rathaḥ
dhṛṣṭadyumno virāṭaś ca
sātyakiś cāparājitaḥ

drupado draupadeyāś ca
sarvaśaḥ pṛthivī-pate
saubhadraś ca mahā-bāhuḥ
śaṅkhān dadhmuḥ pṛthak pṛthak*

SYNONYMS

ananta-vijayaṁ—the conch named Ananta-vijaya; *rājā*—the king;
kuntī-putraḥ—the son of Kuntī; *yudhiṣṭhiraḥ*—Yudhiṣṭhira; *nakulaḥ*—Nakula;
sahadevaḥ—Sahadeva; *ca*—and; *sughoṣa-maṇipuṣpakau*—the conches named
Sughoṣa and Maṇipuṣpaka; *kāśyaḥ*—the King of Kāśī (Vārāṇasī); *ca*—and;
parama-iṣu-āsaḥ—the great archer; *śikhaṇḍī*—Śikhaṇḍī; *ca*—also;
mahā-rathaḥ—one who can fight alone against thousands;
dhṛṣṭadyumnaḥ—Dhṛṣṭadyumna (the son of King Drupada); *virāṭaḥ*—Virāṭa
(the prince who gave shelter to the Pāṇḍavas while they were in disguise);
ca—also; *sātyakiḥ*—Sātyaki (the same as Yuyudhāna, the charioteer of Lord
Kṛṣṇa); *ca*—and; *aparājitaḥ*—who had never been vanquished;
drupadaḥ—Drupada, the King of Pāñcāla; *draupadeyāḥ*—the sons of Draupadī;
ca—also; *sarvaśaḥ*—all; *pṛthivī-pate*—O King; *saubhadraḥ*—Abhimanyu, the
son of Subhadra; *ca*—also; *mahā-bāhuḥ*—mighty-armed;
śaṅkhān—conchshells; *dadhmuḥ*—blew; *pṛthak pṛthak*—each separately.

TRANSLATION

King Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Kuntī, blew his conchshell, the Ananta-vijaya, and Nakula and Sahadeva blew the Sughoṣa and Maṇipuṣpaka. That great archer the King of Kāśī, the great fighter Śikhaṇḍī, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Virāṭa, the unconquerable Sātyaki, Drupada, the sons of Draupadī, and the others, O King, such as the mighty-armed son of Subhadṛā, all blew their respective conchshells.

PURPORT

Saṅjaya informed King Dhṛtarāṣṭra very tactfully that his unwise policy of deceiving the sons of Pāṇḍu and endeavoring to enthrone his own sons on the seat of the kingdom was not very laudable. The signs already clearly indicated that the whole Kuru dynasty would be killed in that great battle. Beginning with the grandsire, Bhīṣma, down to the grandsons like Abhimanyu and others—including kings from many states of the world—all were present there, and all were doomed. The whole catastrophe was due to King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, because he encouraged the policy followed by his sons.

TEXT 19

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवी चैव तुमुलोऽभ्यनुनादयन् ॥ १९ ॥

*sa ghoṣo dhārtarāṣṭrāṇām
hṛdayāni vyadārayat
nabhaś ca pṛthivīm caiva
tumulo 'bhyanunādayan*

SYNONYMS

saḥ—that; *ghoṣaḥ*—vibration; *dhārtarāṣṭrāṇām*—of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *hṛdayāni*—hearts; *vyadārayat*—shattered; *nabhaḥ*—the sky; *ca*—also;

pr̥thivīm—the surface of the earth; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly;
tumulaḥ—uproarious; *abhyānūnādayan*—resounding.

TRANSLATION

The blowing of these different conchshells became uproarious. Vibrating both in the sky and on the earth, it shattered the hearts of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

PURPORT

When Bhīṣma and the others on the side of Duryodhana blew their respective conchshells, there was no heart-breaking on the part of the Pāṇḍavas. Such occurrences are not mentioned, but in this particular verse it is mentioned that the hearts of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra were shattered by the sounds vibrated by the Pāṇḍavas' party. This is due to the Pāṇḍavas and their confidence in Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who takes shelter of the Supreme Lord has nothing to fear, even in the midst of the greatest calamity.

TEXT 20

अथ व्यवस्थितान्द्रुद्धा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिध्वजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसम्पाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ।
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ॥ २० ॥

atha vyavasthitān dṛṣṭvā
dhārtarāṣṭrān kapi-dhvajaḥ
pravṛtte śastra-sampāte
dhanur udyamya pāṇḍavaḥ
hṛṣīkeśam tadā vākyam
idam āha mahī-pate

SYNONYMS

atha—thereupon; *vyavasthitān*—situated; *dr̥ṣṭvā*—looking upon;
dhārtarāṣṭrān—the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *kapi-dhvajaḥ*—he whose flag was
marked with Hanumān; *pravṛtte*—while about to engage; *śastra-sampāte*—in
releasing his arrows; *dhanuḥ*—bow; *udyamya*—taking up; *pāṇḍavaḥ*—the son
of Pāṇḍu (Arjuna); *hṛṣīkeśam*—unto Lord Kṛṣṇa; *tadā*—at that time;
vākyaṃ—words; *idam*—these; *āha*—said; *mahī-pate*—O King.

TRANSLATION

At that time Arjuna, the son of Pāṇḍu, seated in the chariot bearing the flag marked with Hanumān, took up his bow and prepared to shoot his arrows. O King, after looking at the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra drawn in military array, Arjuna then spoke to Lord Kṛṣṇa these words.

PURPORT

The battle was just about to begin. It is understood from the above statement that the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra were more or less disheartened by the unexpected arrangement of military force by the Pāṇḍavas, who were guided by the direct instructions of Lord Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield. The emblem of Hanumān on the flag of Arjuna is another sign of victory because Hanumān cooperated with Lord Rāma in the battle between Rāma and Rāvaṇa, and Lord Rāma emerged victorious. Now both Rāma and Hanumān were present on the chariot of Arjuna to help him. Lord Kṛṣṇa is Rāma Himself, and wherever Lord Rāma is, His eternal servitor Hanumān and His eternal consort Sītā, the goddess of fortune, are present. Therefore, Arjuna had no cause to fear any enemies whatsoever. And above all, the Lord of the senses, Lord Kṛṣṇa, was personally present to give him direction. Thus, all good counsel was available to Arjuna in the matter of executing the battle. In such auspicious conditions, arranged by the Lord for His eternal devotee, lay the signs of assured victory.

TEXTS 21–22

अर्जुन उवाच

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ।
यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ॥ २१ ॥
कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन्नरासमुद्यमे ॥ २२ ॥

arjuna uvāca
senayor ubhayor madhye
ratham sthāpaya me 'cyuta
yāvad etān nirīkṣe 'ham
yoddhu-kāmān avasthitān
kair mayā saha yoddhavyam
asmin raṇa-samudyame

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *senayor*—of the armies; *ubhayor*—both; *madhye*—between; *ratham*—the chariot; *sthāpaya*—please keep; *me*—my; *acyuta*—O infallible one; *yāvat*—as long as; *etān*—all these; *nirīkṣe*—may look upon; *aham*—I; *yoddhu-kāmān*—desiring to fight; *avasthitān*—arrayed on the battlefield; *kaiḥ*—with whom; *mayā*—by me; *saha*—together; *yoddhavyam*—have to fight; *asmin*—in this; *raṇa*—strife; *samudyame*—in the attempt.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O infallible one, please draw my chariot between the two armies so that I may see those present here, who desire to fight, and with whom I must contend in this great trial of arms.

PURPORT

Although Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, out of His causeless mercy He was engaged in the service of His friend. He never fails in His affection for His devotees, and thus He is addressed herein as infallible. As charioteer, He had to carry out the orders of Arjuna, and since He did not

hesitate to do so, He is addressed as infallible. Although He had accepted the position of a charioteer for His devotee, His supreme position was not challenged. In all circumstances, He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hṛṣīkeśa, the Lord of the total senses. The relationship between the Lord and His servitor is very sweet and transcendental. The servitor is always ready to render service to the Lord, and, similarly, the Lord is always seeking an opportunity to render some service to the devotee. He takes greater pleasure in His pure devotee's assuming the advantageous position of ordering Him than He does in being the giver of orders. Since He is master, everyone is under His orders, and no one is above Him to order Him. But when He finds that a pure devotee is ordering Him, He obtains transcendental pleasure, although He is the infallible master of all circumstances.

As a pure devotee of the Lord, Arjuna had no desire to fight with his cousins and brothers, but he was forced to come onto the battlefield by the obstinacy of Duryodhana, who was never agreeable to any peaceful negotiation. Therefore, he was very anxious to see who the leading persons present on the battlefield were. Although there was no question of a peacemaking endeavor on the battlefield, he wanted to see them again, and to see how much they were bent upon demanding an unwanted war.

TEXT 23

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥ २३ ॥

yotsyamānān avekṣe 'ham
ya ete 'tra samāgatāḥ
dhārtarāṣṭrasya durbuddher
yuddhe priya-cikīrṣavaḥ

SYNONYMS

yotsyamānān—those who will be fighting; *avekṣe*—let me see; *aham*—I;

ye—who; *ete*—those; *atra*—here; *samāgatāḥ*—assembled; *dhārtarāṣṭrasya*—for the son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *durbuddheḥ*—evil-minded; *yuddhe*—in the fight; *priya*—well; *cikīrṣavaḥ*—wishing.

TRANSLATION

Let me see those who have come here to fight, wishing to please the evil-minded son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

PURPORT

It was an open secret that Duryodhana wanted to usurp the kingdom of the Pāṇḍavas by evil plans, in collaboration with his father, Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Therefore, all persons who had joined the side of Duryodhana must have been birds of the same feather. Arjuna wanted to see them on the battlefield before the fight was begun, just to learn who they were, but he had no intention of proposing peace negotiations with them. It was also a fact that he wanted to see them to make an estimate of the strength which he had to face, although he was quite confident of victory because Kṛṣṇa was sitting by his side.

TEXT 24

सञ्जय उवाच
एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥ २४ ॥

sañjaya uvāca
evam ukto hr̥ṣīkeśo
guḍākeśena bhārata
senayor ubhayor madhye
sthāpayitvā rathottamam

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ uvāca—Sañjaya said; *evam*—thus; *uktaḥ*—addressed; *hṛṣīkeśaḥ*—Lord Kṛṣṇa; *guḍākeśena*—by Arjuna; *bhārata*—O descendant of Bharata; *senayoḥ*—of the armies; *ubhayoḥ*—both; *madhye*—in the midst; *sthāpayitvā*—placing; *ratha-uttamam*—the finest chariot.

TRANSLATION

Sañjaya said: O descendant of Bharata, having thus been addressed by Arjuna, Lord Kṛṣṇa drew up the fine chariot in the midst of the armies of both parties.

PURPORT

In this verse Arjuna is referred to as Guḍākeśa. *Guḍākā* means sleep, and one who conquers sleep is called *guḍākeśa*. Sleep also means ignorance. So Arjuna conquered both sleep and ignorance because of his friendship with Kṛṣṇa. As a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa, he could not forget Kṛṣṇa even for a moment, because that is the nature of a devotee. Either in waking or in sleep, a devotee of the Lord can never be free from thinking of Kṛṣṇa's name, form, qualities and pastimes. Thus a devotee of Kṛṣṇa can conquer both sleep and ignorance simply by thinking of Kṛṣṇa constantly. This is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or *samādhi*. As Hṛṣīkeśa, or the director of the senses and mind of every living entity, Kṛṣṇa could understand Arjuna's purpose in placing the chariot in the midst of the armies. Thus He did so, and spoke as follows.

TEXT 25

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरुनिति ॥ २५ ॥

bhīṣma-droṇa-pramukhataḥ
sarveṣāṃ ca mahī-kṣitām
uvāca pārtha paśyaitān
samavetān kurūn iti

SYNONYMS

bhīṣma—Grandfather Bhīṣma; *droṇa*—the teacher Droṇa; *pramukhataḥ*—in front of; *sarveṣām*—all; *ca*—also; *mahī-kṣitām*—chiefs of the world; *uvāca*—said; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *paśya*—just behold; *etān*—all of them; *samavetān*—assembled; *kurūn*—the members of the Kuru dynasty; *iti*—thus.

TRANSLATION

In the presence of Bhīṣma, Droṇa and all the other chieftains of the world, the Lord said, Just behold, Pārtha, all the Kurus assembled here.

PURPORT

As the Supersoul of all living entities, Lord Kṛṣṇa could understand what was going on in the mind of Arjuna. The use of the word Hṛṣīkeśa in this connection indicates that He knew everything. And the word Pārtha, or the son of Kuntī, or Pṛthā, is also similarly significant in reference to Arjuna. As a friend, He wanted to inform Arjuna that because Arjuna was the son of Pṛthā, the sister of His own father Vasudeva, He had agreed to be the charioteer of Arjuna. Now what did Kṛṣṇa mean when He told Arjuna to “behold the Kurus”? Did Arjuna want to stop there and not fight? Kṛṣṇa never expected such things from the son of His aunt Pṛthā. The mind of Arjuna was thus predicted by the Lord in friendly joking.

TEXT 26

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान्पार्थः पितृनथ पितामहान् ।
आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातृन्पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ।
श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ॥ २६ ॥

tatrāpaśyat sthitān pārthaḥ
pitṛn atha pitāmahān

*ācāryān mātulān bhrātṛn
putrān pautrān sakhīms tathā
śvaśurān suhṛdaś caiva
senayor ubhayor api*

SYNONYMS

tatra—there; *apaśyat*—he could see; *sthitān*—standing; *pārthaḥ*—Arjuna; *pitṛn*—fathers; *atha*—also; *pitāmahān*—grandfathers; *ācāryān*—teachers; *mātulān*—maternal uncles; *bhrātṛn*—brothers; *putrān*—sons; *pautrān*—grandsons; *sakhīn*—friends; *tathā*—too; *śvaśurān*—fathers-in-law; *suhṛdaḥ*—well-wishers; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *senayor*—of the armies; *ubhayor*—of both parties; *api*—including.

TRANSLATION

There Arjuna could see, within the midst of the armies of both parties, his fathers, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, friends, and also his fathers-in-law and well-wishers.

PURPORT

On the battlefield Arjuna could see all kinds of relatives. He could see persons like Bhūriśravā, who were his father's contemporaries, grandfathers Bhīṣma and Somadatta, teachers like Droṇācārya and Kṛpācārya, maternal uncles like Śālyā and Śakuni, brothers like Duryodhana, sons like Lakṣmaṇa, friends like Aśvatthāmā, well-wishers like Kṛtavarmā, etc. He could see also the armies which contained many of his friends.

TEXT 27

तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्बन्धूनवस्थितान् ।
कृपया पर्याविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ॥ २७ ॥

*tān samīkṣya sa kaunteyaḥ
sarvān bandhūn avasthitān
kṛpayā parayāviṣṭo
viśīdann idam abravīt*

SYNONYMS

tān—all of them; *samīkṣya*—after seeing; *saḥ*—he; *kaunteyaḥ*—the son of Kuntī; *sarvān*—all kinds of; *bandhūn*—relatives; *avasthitān*—situated; *kṛpayā*—by compassion; *parayā*—of a high grade; *āviṣṭaḥ*—overwhelmed; *viśīdan*—while lamenting; *idam*—thus; *abravīt*—spoke.

TRANSLATION

When the son of Kuntī, Arjuna, saw all these different grades of friends and relatives, he became overwhelmed with compassion and spoke thus.

TEXT 28

अर्जुन उवाच
दृष्ट्वेमं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ।
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ॥ २८ ॥

arjuna uvāca
dr̥ṣṭvemaṁ sva-janaṁ kṛṣṇa
yuyutsum samupasthitam
sīdanti mama gātrāṇi
mukhaṁ ca pariśuṣyati

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *dr̥ṣṭvā*—after seeing; *imam*—all these; *sva-janam*—kinsmen; *kṛṣṇa*—O Kṛṣṇa; *yuyutsum*—all in a fighting spirit; *samupasthitam*—present; *sīdanti*—are quivering; *mama*—my; *gātrāṇi*—limbs

of the body; *mukham*—mouth; *ca*—also; *pariśuṣyati*—is drying up.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: My dear Kṛṣṇa, seeing my friends and relatives present before me in such a fighting spirit, I feel the limbs of my body quivering and my mouth drying up.

PURPORT

Any man who has genuine devotion to the Lord has all the good qualities which are found in godly persons or in the demigods, whereas the nondevotee, however advanced he may be in material qualifications by education and culture, lacks in godly qualities. As such, Arjuna, just after seeing his kinsmen, friends and relatives on the battlefield, was at once overwhelmed by compassion for them who had so decided to fight amongst themselves. As far as his soldiers were concerned, he was sympathetic from the beginning, but he felt compassion even for the soldiers of the opposite party, foreseeing their imminent death. And while he was so thinking, the limbs of his body began to quiver, and his mouth became dry. He was more or less astonished to see their fighting spirit. Practically the whole community, all blood relatives of Arjuna, had come to fight with him. This overwhelmed a kind devotee like Arjuna. Although it is not mentioned here, still one can easily imagine that not only were Arjuna's bodily limbs quivering and his mouth drying up, but he was also crying out of compassion. Such symptoms in Arjuna were not due to weakness but to his softheartedness, a characteristic of a pure devotee of the Lord. It is said therefore:

*yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā
mano-rathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ*

“One who has unflinching devotion for the Personality of Godhead has all the good qualities of the demigods. But one who is not a devotee of the Lord

has only material qualifications that are of little value. This is because he is hovering on the mental plane and is certain to be attracted by the glaring material energy.” (*Bhāg.* 5.18.12)

TEXT 29

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ।
गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ॥ २९ ॥

*vepathuś ca śarīre me
roma-harṣaś ca jāyate
gāṇḍīvaṁ sraṁsate hastāt
tvak caiva paridahyate*

SYNONYMS

vepathuḥ—trembling of the body; *ca*—also; *śarīre*—on the body; *me*—my; *roma-harṣaḥ*—standing of hair on end; *ca*—also; *jāyate*—is taking place; *gāṇḍīvaṁ*—the bow of Arjuna; *sraṁsate*—is slipping; *hastāt*—from the hand; *tvak*—skin; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *paridahyate*—is burning.

TRANSLATION

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

PURPORT

There are two kinds of trembling of the body, and two kinds of standings of the hair on end. Such phenomena occur either in great spiritual ecstasy or out of great fear under material conditions. There is no fear in transcendental realization. Arjuna’s symptoms in this situation are out of material fear—namely, loss of life. This is evident from other symptoms also; he became so impatient that his famous bow Gāṇḍīva was slipping from his hands, and,

because his heart was burning within him, he was feeling a burning sensation of the skin. All these are due to a material conception of life.

TEXT 30

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

*na ca śaknomy avasthātum
bhramatīva ca me manaḥ
nimittāni ca paśyāmi
viparītāni keśava*

SYNONYMS

na—nor; *ca*—also; *śaknomy*—am I able; *avasthātum*—to stay;
bhramati—forgetting; *iva*—as; *ca*—and; *me*—my; *manaḥ*—mind;
nimittāni—causes; *ca*—also; *paśyāmi*—I see; *viparītāni*—just the opposite;
keśava—O killer of the demon Keśi (Kṛṣṇa).

TRANSLATION

I am now unable to stand here any longer. I am forgetting myself, and my mind is reeling. I see only causes of misfortune, O Kṛṣṇa, killer of the Keśi demon.

PURPORT

Due to his impatience, Arjuna was unable to stay on the battlefield, and he was forgetting himself on account of this weakness of his mind. Excessive attachment for material things puts a man in such a bewildering condition of existence. *Bhayam dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syāt (Bhāg. 11.2.37)*: such fearfulness and loss of mental equilibrium take place in persons who are too affected by material conditions. Arjuna envisioned only painful reverses in the

battlefield—he would not be happy even by gaining victory over the foe. The words *nimittāni viparītāni* are significant. When a man sees only frustration in his expectations, he thinks, “Why am I here?” Everyone is interested in himself and his own welfare. No one is interested in the Supreme Self. Arjuna is showing ignorance of his real self-interest by Kṛṣṇa’s will. One’s real self-interest lies in Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa. The conditioned soul forgets this, and therefore suffers material pains. Arjuna thought that his victory in the battle would only be a cause of lamentation for him.

TEXT 31

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

*na ca śreya 'nupaśyāmi
hatvā sva-janam āhave
na kāṅkṣe vijayaṁ kṛṣṇa
na ca rājyaṁ sukhāni ca*

SYNONYMS

na—nor; *ca*—also; *śreyaḥ*—good; *anupaśyāmi*—do I foresee; *hatvā*—by killing; *sva-janam*—own kinsmen; *āhave*—in the fight; *na*—nor; *kāṅkṣe*—do I desire; *vijayaṁ*—victory; *kṛṣṇa*—O Kṛṣṇa; *na*—nor; *ca*—also; *rājyaṁ*—kingdom; *sukhāni*—happiness thereof; *ca*—also.

TRANSLATION

I do not see how any good can come from killing my own kinsmen in this battle, nor can I, my dear Kṛṣṇa, desire any subsequent victory, kingdom, or happiness.

PURPORT

Without knowing that one's self-interest is in Viṣṇu (or Kṛṣṇa), conditioned souls are attracted by bodily relationships, hoping to be happy in such situations. In such a blind conception of life, they forget even the causes of material happiness. Arjuna appears to have even forgotten the moral codes for a *kṣatriya*. It is said that two kinds of men, namely the *kṣatriya* who dies directly in front of the battlefield under Kṛṣṇa's personal orders and the person in the renounced order of life who is absolutely devoted to spiritual culture, are eligible to enter into the sun globe, which is so powerful and dazzling. Arjuna is reluctant even to kill his enemies, let alone his relatives. He thinks that by killing his kinsmen there would be no happiness in his life, and therefore he is not willing to fight, just as a person who does not feel hunger is not inclined to cook. He has now decided to go into the forest and live a secluded life in frustration. But as a *kṣatriya*, he requires a kingdom for his subsistence, because the *kṣatriyas* cannot engage themselves in any other occupation. But Arjuna has no kingdom. Arjuna's sole opportunity for gaining a kingdom lies in fighting with his cousins and brothers and reclaiming the kingdom inherited from his father, which he does not like to do. Therefore he considers himself fit to go to the forest to live a secluded life of frustration.

TEXTS 32–35

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ।
 येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ॥ ३२ ॥
 त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ।
 आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ॥ ३३ ॥
 मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः सम्बन्धिनस्तथा ।
 एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ॥ ३४ ॥
 अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ।
 निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्यान्नार्दन ॥ ३५ ॥

kim no rājyena govinda

*kiṁ bhogair jīvitena vā
yeṣāṁ arthe kāṅkṣitaṁ no
rājyaṁ bhogāḥ sukhāni ca*

*ta ime 'vasthitā yuddhe
prāṇāṁs tyaktvā dhanāni ca
ācāryāḥ pitaraḥ putrāḥ
tathaiva ca pitāmahāḥ*

*mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ pautrāḥ
śyālāḥ sambandhinas tathā
etān na hantum icchāmi
ghnato 'pi madhusūdana*

*api trailokya-rājyasya
hetoḥ kiṁ nu mahī-kṛte
nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrān naḥ
kā prītiḥ syāj janārdana*

SYNONYMS

kiṁ—what use; *naḥ*—to us; *rājyena*—is the kingdom; *govinda*—O Kṛṣṇa;
kiṁ—what; *bhogaiḥ*—enjoyment; *jīvitena*—living; *vā*—either; *yeṣāṁ*—of
whom; *arthe*—for the sake; *kāṅkṣitaṁ*—is desired; *naḥ*—by us;
rājyaṁ—kingdom; *bhogāḥ*—material enjoyment; *sukhāni*—all happiness;
ca—also; *te*—all of them; *ime*—these; *avasthitāḥ*—situated; *yuddhe*—on this
battlefield; *prāṇān*—lives; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *dhanāni*—riches; *ca*—also;
ācāryāḥ—teachers; *pitaraḥ*—fathers; *putrāḥ*—sons; *tathā*—as well as;
eva—certainly; *ca*—also; *pitāmahāḥ*—grandfathers; *mātulāḥ*—maternal
uncles; *śvaśurāḥ*—fathers-in-law; *pautrāḥ*—grandsons;
śyālāḥ—brothers-in-law; *sambandhinaḥ*—relatives; *tathā*—as well as; *etān*—all
these; *na*—never; *hantum*—to kill; *icchāmi*—do I wish; *ghnataḥ*—being killed;
api—even; *madhusūdana*—O killer of the demon Madhu (Kṛṣṇa); *api*—even
if; *trai-lokya*—of the three worlds; *rājyasya*—for the kingdom; *hetoḥ*—in
exchange; *kiṁ nu*—what to speak of; *mahī-kṛte*—for the sake of the earth;

nihatya—by killing; *dhārtarāṣṭrān*—the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *naḥ*—our; *kā*—what; *prītiḥ*—pleasure; *syāt*—will there be; *janārdana*—O maintainer of all living entities.

TRANSLATION

O Govinda, of what avail to us are a kingdom, happiness or even life itself when all those for whom we may desire them are now arrayed on this battlefield? O Madhusūdana, when teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and other relatives are ready to give up their lives and properties and are standing before me, why should I wish to kill them, even though they might otherwise kill me? O maintainer of all living entities, I am not prepared to fight with them even in exchange for the three worlds, let alone this earth. What pleasure will we derive from killing the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra?

PURPORT

Arjuna has addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa as Govinda because Kṛṣṇa is the object of all pleasures for cows and the senses. By using this significant word, Arjuna indicates that Kṛṣṇa should understand what will satisfy Arjuna's senses. But Govinda is not meant for satisfying our senses. If we try to satisfy the senses of Govinda, however, then automatically our own senses are satisfied. Materially, everyone wants to satisfy his senses, and he wants God to be the order supplier for such satisfaction. The Lord will satisfy the senses of the living entities as much as they deserve, but not to the extent that they may covet. But when one takes the opposite way—namely, when one tries to satisfy the senses of Govinda without desiring to satisfy one's own senses—then by the grace of Govinda all desires of the living entity are satisfied. Arjuna's deep affection for community and family members is exhibited here partly due to his natural compassion for them. He is therefore not prepared to fight. Everyone wants to show his opulence to friends and relatives, but Arjuna fears that all his relatives and friends will be killed on the battlefield and he will be unable to share his opulence after victory. This is a typical calculation of material life.

The transcendental life, however, is different. Since a devotee wants to satisfy the desires of the Lord, he can, Lord willing, accept all kinds of opulence for the service of the Lord, and if the Lord is not willing, he should not accept a farthing. Arjuna did not want to kill his relatives, and if there were any need to kill them, he desired that Kṛṣṇa kill them personally. At this point he did not know that Kṛṣṇa had already killed them before their coming into the battlefield and that he was only to become an instrument for Kṛṣṇa. This fact is disclosed in following chapters. As a natural devotee of the Lord, Arjuna did not like to retaliate against his miscreant cousins and brothers, but it was the Lord's plan that they should all be killed. The devotee of the Lord does not retaliate against the wrongdoer, but the Lord does not tolerate any mischief done to the devotee by the miscreants. The Lord can excuse a person on His own account, but He excuses no one who has done harm to His devotees. Therefore the Lord was determined to kill the miscreants, although Arjuna wanted to excuse them.

TEXT 36

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

*pāpam evāśrayed asmān
hatvaitān ātatāyinaḥ
tasmān nārḥā vyaṁ hantum
dhārtarāṣṭrān sa-bāndhavān
sva-janaṁ hi kathaṁ hatvā
sukhinaḥ syāma mādḥava*

SYNONYMS

pāpam—vices; *eva*—certainly; *āśrayet*—must come upon; *asmān*—us;
hatvā—by killing; *etān*—all these; *ātatāyinaḥ*—aggressors; *tasmāt*—therefore;

na—never; *arhāḥ*—deserving; *vayam*—we; *hantum*—to kill;
dhārtarāṣṭrān—the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *sa-bāndhavān*—along with friends;
sva-janam—kinsmen; *hi*—certainly; *katham*—how; *hatvā*—by killing;
sukhinaḥ—happy; *syāma*—will we become; *mādhava*—O Kṛṣṇa, husband of
the goddess of fortune.

TRANSLATION

Sin will overcome us if we slay such aggressors. Therefore it is not proper for us to kill the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and our friends. What should we gain, O Kṛṣṇa, husband of the goddess of fortune, and how could we be happy by killing our own kinsmen?

PURPORT

According to Vedic injunctions there are six kinds of aggressors: (1) a poison giver, (2) one who sets fire to the house, (3) one who attacks with deadly weapons, (4) one who plunders riches, (5) one who occupies another's land, and (6) one who kidnaps a wife. Such aggressors are at once to be killed, and no sin is incurred by killing such aggressors. Such killing of aggressors is quite befitting any ordinary man, but Arjuna was not an ordinary person. He was saintly by character, and therefore he wanted to deal with them in saintliness. This kind of saintliness, however, is not for a *kṣatriya*. Although a responsible man in the administration of a state is required to be saintly, he should not be cowardly. For example, Lord Rāma was so saintly that people even now are anxious to live in the kingdom of Lord Rāma (*rāma-rājya*), but Lord Rāma never showed any cowardice. Rāvaṇa was an aggressor against Rāma because Rāvaṇa kidnapped Rāma's wife, Sītā, but Lord Rāma gave him sufficient lessons, unparalleled in the history of the world. In Arjuna's case, however, one should consider the special type of aggressors, namely his own grandfather, own teacher, friends, sons, grandsons, etc. Because of them, Arjuna thought that he should not take the severe steps necessary against ordinary aggressors. Besides that, saintly persons are advised to forgive. Such injunctions for saintly persons are more important than any political

emergency. Arjuna considered that rather than kill his own kinsmen for political reasons, it would be better to forgive them on grounds of religion and saintly behavior. He did not, therefore, consider such killing profitable simply for the matter of temporary bodily happiness. After all, kingdoms and pleasures derived therefrom are not permanent, so why should he risk his life and eternal salvation by killing his own kinsmen? Arjuna's addressing of Kṛṣṇa as "Mādhava," or the husband of the goddess of fortune, is also significant in this connection. He wanted to point out to Kṛṣṇa that, as husband of the goddess of fortune, He should not induce Arjuna to take up a matter which would ultimately bring about misfortune. Kṛṣṇa, however, never brings misfortune to anyone, to say nothing of His devotees.

TEXTS 37-38

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।
 कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥ ३७ ॥
 कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।
 कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्विर्जनार्दन ॥ ३८ ॥

*yady apy ete na paśyanti
 lobhopahata-cetasaḥ
 kula-kṣaya-kṛtaṁ doṣaṁ
 mitra-drohe ca pātakam*

*kathaṁ na jñeyam asmābhiḥ
 pāpād asmān nivartitum
 kula-kṣaya-kṛtaṁ doṣaṁ
 prapaśyadbhir janārdana*

SYNONYMS

yadi—if; *api*—even; *ete*—they; *na*—do not; *paśyanti*—see; *lobha*—by greed; *upahata*—overpowered; *cetasaḥ*—their hearts; *kula-kṣaya*—in killing the family; *kṛtaṁ*—done; *doṣaṁ*—fault; *mitra-drohe*—in quarreling with friends;

ca—also; *pātakam*—sinful reactions; *katham*—why; *na*—should not; *jñeyam*—be known; *asmābhiḥ*—by us; *pāpāt*—from sins; *asmāt*—these; *nivartitum*—to cease; *kula-kṣaya*—in the destruction of a dynasty; *kṛtam*—done; *doṣam*—crime; *prapaśyadbhiḥ*—by those who can see; *janārdana*—O Kṛṣṇa.

TRANSLATION

O Janārdana, although these men, their hearts overtaken by greed, see no fault in killing one's family or quarreling with friends, why should we, who can see the crime in destroying a family, engage in these acts of sin?

PURPORT

A *kṣatriya* is not supposed to refuse to battle or gamble when he is so invited by some rival party. Under such an obligation, Arjuna could not refuse to fight, because he had been challenged by the party of Duryodhana. In this connection, Arjuna considered that the other party might be blind to the effects of such a challenge. Arjuna, however, could see the evil consequences and could not accept the challenge. Obligation is actually binding when the effect is good, but when the effect is otherwise, then no one can be bound. Considering all these pros and cons, Arjuna decided not to fight.

TEXT 39

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

kula-kṣaye praṇaśyanti
kula-dharmāḥ sanātanāḥ
dharme naṣṭe kulam kṛtsnam
adharmo 'bhibhavaty uta

SYNONYMS

kula-kṣaye—in destroying the family; *praṇaśyanti*—become vanquished;
kula-dharmāḥ—the family traditions; *sanātanāḥ*—eternal; *dharme*—religion;
naṣṭe—being destroyed; *kulam*—family; *kṛtsnam*—whole;
adharmāḥ—irreligion; *abhibhavati*—transforms; *uta*—it is said.

TRANSLATION

With the destruction of dynasty, the eternal family tradition is vanquished,
and thus the rest of the family becomes involved in irreligion.

PURPORT

In the system of the *varṇāśrama* institution there are many principles of religious traditions to help members of the family grow properly and attain spiritual values. The elder members are responsible for such purifying processes in the family, beginning from birth to death. But on the death of the elder members, such family traditions of purification may stop, and the remaining younger family members may develop irreligious habits and thereby lose their chance for spiritual salvation. Therefore, for no purpose should the elder members of the family be slain.

TEXT 40

अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्णसङ्करः ॥ ४० ॥

adharmābhibhavāt kṛṣṇa
praduṣyanti kula-striyaḥ
strīṣu duṣṭāsu vārṣṇeya
jāyate varṇa-saṅkaraḥ

SYNONYMS

adharma—irreligion; *abhibhavāt*—having become predominant; *kṛṣṇa*—O Kṛṣṇa; *praduṣyanti*—become polluted; *kula-striyaḥ*—family ladies; *strīṣu*—by the womanhood; *duṣṭāsu*—being so polluted; *vārṣṇeya*—O descendant of Vṛṣṇi; *jāyate*—comes into being; *varṇa-saṅkaraḥ*—unwanted progeny.

TRANSLATION

When irreligion is prominent in the family, O Kṛṣṇa, the women of the family become polluted, and from the degradation of womanhood, O descendant of Vṛṣṇi, comes unwanted progeny.

PURPORT

Good population in human society is the basic principle for peace, prosperity and spiritual progress in life. The *varṇāśrama* religion's principles were so designed that the good population would prevail in society for the general spiritual progress of state and community. Such population depends on the chastity and faithfulness of its womanhood. As children are very prone to be misled, women are similarly very prone to degradation. Therefore, both children and women require protection by the elder members of the family. By being engaged in various religious practices, women will not be misled into adultery. According to Cāṇakya Paṇḍita, women are generally not very intelligent and therefore not trustworthy. So the different family traditions of religious activities should always engage them, and thus their chastity and devotion will give birth to a good population eligible for participating in the *varṇāśrama* system. On the failure of such *varṇāśrama-dharma*, naturally the women become free to act and mix with men, and thus adultery is indulged in at the risk of unwanted population. Irresponsible men also provoke adultery in society, and thus unwanted children flood the human race at the risk of war and pestilence.

सङ्करो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।
पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥ ४१ ॥

*saṅkaro narakāyaiva
kula-ghnānām kulasya ca
patanti pitaro hy eṣām
lupta-piṇḍodaka-kriyāḥ*

SYNONYMS

saṅkaraḥ—such unwanted children; *narakāya*—make for hellish life; *eva*—certainly; *kula-ghnānām*—for those who are killers of the family; *kulasya*—for the family; *ca*—also; *patanti*—fall down; *pitaraḥ*—forefathers; *hi*—certainly; *eṣām*—of them; *lupta*—stopped; *piṇḍa*—of offerings of food; *udaka*—and water; *kriyāḥ*—performances.

TRANSLATION

An increase of unwanted population certainly causes hellish life both for the family and for those who destroy the family tradition. The ancestors of such corrupt families fall down, because the performances for offering them food and water are entirely stopped.

PURPORT

According to the rules and regulations of fruitive activities, there is a need to offer periodical food and water to the forefathers of the family. This offering is performed by worship of Viṣṇu, because eating the remnants of food offered to Viṣṇu can deliver one from all kinds of sinful actions. Sometimes the forefathers may be suffering from various types of sinful reactions, and sometimes some of them cannot even acquire a gross material body and are forced to remain in subtle bodies as ghosts. Thus, when remnants of *prasādam*

food are offered to forefathers by descendants, the forefathers are released from ghostly or other kinds of miserable life. Such help rendered to forefathers is a family tradition, and those who are not in devotional life are required to perform such rituals. One who is engaged in the devotional life is not required to perform such actions. Simply by performing devotional service, one can deliver hundreds and thousands of forefathers from all kinds of misery. It is stated in the *Bhāgavatam* (11.5.41):

*devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇi ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam*

“Anyone who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, the giver of liberation, giving up all kinds of obligation, and has taken to the path in all seriousness, owes neither duties nor obligations to the demigods, sages, general living entities, family members, humankind or forefathers.” Such obligations are automatically fulfilled by performance of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 42

दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसङ्करकारकैः ।
उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥ ४२ ॥

*doṣair etaiḥ kula-ghnānām
varṇa-saṅkara-kāraakaiḥ
utsādyante jāti-dharmāḥ
kula-dharmāś ca śāśvatāḥ*

SYNONYMS

doṣaiḥ—by such faults; *etaiḥ*—all these; *kula-ghnānām*—of the destroyers of the family; *varṇa-saṅkara*—of unwanted children; *kāraakaiḥ*—which are causes; *utsādyante*—are devastated; *jāti-dharmāḥ*—community projects;

kula-dharmāḥ—family traditions; *ca*—also; *śāśvatāḥ*—eternal.

TRANSLATION

By the evil deeds of those who destroy the family tradition and thus give rise to unwanted children, all kinds of community projects and family welfare activities are devastated.

PURPORT

Community projects for the four orders of human society, combined with family welfare activities, as they are set forth by the institution of *sanātana-dharma*, or *varṇāśrama-dharma*, are designed to enable the human being to attain his ultimate salvation. Therefore, the breaking of the *sanātana-dharma* tradition by irresponsible leaders of society brings about chaos in that society, and consequently people forget the aim of life—Viṣṇu. Such leaders are called blind, and persons who follow such leaders are sure to be led into chaos.

TEXT 43

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।
नरके नियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥ ४३ ॥

utsanna-kula-dharmāṇām
manuṣyāṇām janārdana
narake niyataṁ vāso
bhavatīty anuśuśrūma

SYNONYMS

utsanna—spoiled; *kula-dharmāṇām*—of those who have the family traditions; *manuṣyāṇām*—of such men; *janārdana*—O Kṛṣṇa; *narake*—in hell; *niyatam*—always; *vāsaḥ*—residence; *bhavati*—it so becomes; *iti*—thus;

anuśuśrūma—I have heard by disciplic succession.

TRANSLATION

O Kṛṣṇa, maintainer of the people, I have heard by disciplic succession that those who destroy family traditions dwell always in hell.

PURPORT

Arjuna bases his argument not on his own personal experience, but on what he has heard from the authorities. That is the way of receiving real knowledge. One cannot reach the real point of factual knowledge without being helped by the right person who is already established in that knowledge. There is a system in the *varṇāśrama* institution by which before death one has to undergo the process of atonement for his sinful activities. One who is always engaged in sinful activities must utilize the process of atonement called the *prāyaścitta*. Without doing so, one surely will be transferred to hellish planets to undergo miserable lives as the result of sinful activities.

TEXT 44

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

*aho bata mahat pāpam
kartum vyavasitā vayam
yad rājya-sukha-lobhena
hantum sva-janam udyatāḥ*

SYNONYMS

aho—alas; *bata*—how strange it is; *mahat*—great; *pāpam*—sins; *kartum*—to perform; *vyavasitāḥ*—have decided; *vayam*—we; *yat*—because; *rājya-sukha-lobhena*—driven by greed for royal happiness; *hantum*—to kill;

sva-janam—kinsmen; *udyatāḥ*—trying.

TRANSLATION

Alas, how strange it is that we are preparing to commit greatly sinful acts. Driven by the desire to enjoy royal happiness, we are intent on killing our own kinsmen.

PURPORT

Driven by selfish motives, one may be inclined to such sinful acts as the killing of one's own brother, father or mother. There are many such instances in the history of the world. But Arjuna, being a saintly devotee of the Lord, is always conscious of moral principles and therefore takes care to avoid such activities.

TEXT 45

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

yadi mām apratīkāram
aśastram śastra-pāṇayaḥ
dhārtarāṣṭrā raṇe hanyus
tan me kṣemataram bhavet

SYNONYMS

yadi—even if; *mām*—me; *apratīkāram*—without being resistant;
aśastram—without being fully equipped; *śastra-pāṇayaḥ*—those with weapons
in hand; *dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ*—the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *raṇe*—on the battlefield;
hanyuḥ—may kill; *tat*—that; *me*—for me; *kṣema-taram*—better;
bhavet—would be.

TRANSLATION

Better for me if the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, weapons in hand, were to kill me unarmed and unresisting on the battlefield.

PURPORT

It is the custom—according to *kṣatriya* fighting principles—that an unarmed and unwilling foe should not be attacked. Arjuna, however, decided that even if attacked by the enemy in such an awkward position, he would not fight. He did not consider how much the other party was bent upon fighting. All these symptoms are due to soft-heartedness resulting from his being a great devotee of the Lord.

TEXT 46

सञ्जय उवाच
एवमुक्त्वा र्जुनः संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्रमानसः ॥ ४६ ॥

sañjaya uvāca
evam uktvārjunaḥ saṅkhye
rathopastha upāviśat
visṛjya sa-śaram cāpaṁ
śoka-saṁvigna-mānasaḥ

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ uvāca—Sañjaya said; *evam*—thus; *uktvā*—saying; *arjunaḥ*—Arjuna; *saṅkhye*—in the battlefield; *ratha*—of the chariot; *upasthe*—on the seat; *upāviśat*—sat down again; *visṛjya*—putting aside; *sa-śaram*—along with arrows; *cāpaṁ*—the bow; *śoka*—by lamentation; *saṁvigna*—distressed; *mānasaḥ*—within the mind.

TRANSLATION

Saṅjaya said: Arjuna, having thus spoken on the battlefield, cast aside his bow and arrows and sat down on the chariot, his mind overwhelmed with grief.

PURPORT

While observing the situation of his enemy, Arjuna stood up on the chariot, but he was so afflicted with lamentation that he sat down again, setting aside his bow and arrows. Such a kind and soft-hearted person, in the devotional service of the Lord, is fit to receive self-knowledge.

Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the First Chapter of the Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of Observing the Armies on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

- CHAPTER 2 - Contents of the Gītā Summarized

TEXT 1

सञ्जय उवाच
तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ १ ॥

*saṅjaya uvāca
taṁ tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam*

aśru-pūrṇākulekṣaṇam
viṣīdantam idam vākyam
uvāca madhusūdanaḥ

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ uvāca—Sañjaya said; *tam*—unto Arjuna; *tathā*—thus; *kṛpayā*—by compassion; *āviṣṭam*—overwhelmed; *aśru-pūrṇa-ākula*—full of tears; *īkṣaṇam*—eyes; *viṣīdantam*—lamenting; *idam*—these; *vākyam*—words; *uvāca*—said; *madhu-sūdanaḥ*—the killer of Madhu.

TRANSLATION

Sañjaya said: Seeing Arjuna full of compassion, his mind depressed, his eyes full of tears, Madhusūdana, Kṛṣṇa, spoke the following words.

PURPORT

Material compassion, lamentation and tears are all signs of ignorance of the real self. Compassion for the eternal soul is self-realization. The word “Madhusūdana” is significant in this verse. Lord Kṛṣṇa killed the demon Madhu, and now Arjuna wanted Kṛṣṇa to kill the demon of misunderstanding that had overtaken him in the discharge of his duty. No one knows where compassion should be applied. Compassion for the dress of a drowning man is senseless. A man fallen in the ocean of nescience cannot be saved simply by rescuing his outward dress—the gross material body. One who does not know this and laments for the outward dress is called a *śūdra*, or one who laments unnecessarily. Arjuna was a *kṣatriya*, and this conduct was not expected from him. Lord Kṛṣṇa, however, can dissipate the lamentation of the ignorant man, and for this purpose the *Bhagavad-gītā* was sung by Him. This chapter instructs us in self-realization by an analytical study of the material body and the spirit soul, as explained by the supreme authority, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This realization is possible when one works without attachment to fruitive results and is situated in the fixed conception of the real self.

TEXT 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच
कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the Supreme Personality of Godhead said;
kutaḥ—wherefrom; *tvā*—unto you; *kaśmalam*—dirtiness; *idam*—this
lamentation; *viṣame*—in this hour of crisis; *samupasthitam*—arrived;
anārya—persons who do not know the value of life; *juṣṭam*—practiced by;
asvargyam—which does not lead to higher planets; *akīrti*—infamy;
karam—the cause of; *arjuna*—O Arjuna.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Arjuna, how have these impurities come upon you? They are not at all befitting a man who knows the value of life. They lead not to higher planets but to infamy.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa and the Supreme Personality of Godhead are identical. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is referred to as Bhagavān throughout the *Gītā*. Bhagavān is the ultimate in the Absolute Truth. Absolute Truth is realized in three phases of understanding, namely Brahman, or the impersonal all-pervasive spirit;

Paramātmā, or the localized aspect of the Supreme within the heart of all living entities; and Bhagavān, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11) this conception of the Absolute Truth is explained thus:

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmeti
bhagavān iti śabdyate*

“The Absolute Truth is realized in three phases of understanding by the knower of the Absolute Truth, and all of them are identical. Such phases of the Absolute Truth are expressed as Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān.”

These three divine aspects can be explained by the example of the sun, which also has three different aspects, namely the sunshine, the sun’s surface and the sun planet itself. One who studies the sunshine only is the preliminary student. One who understands the sun’s surface is further advanced. And one who can enter into the sun planet is the highest. Ordinary students who are satisfied by simply understanding the sunshine—its universal pervasiveness and the glaring effulgence of its impersonal nature—may be compared to those who can realize only the Brahman feature of the Absolute Truth. The student who has advanced still further can know the sun disc, which is compared to knowledge of the Paramātmā feature of the Absolute Truth. And the student who can enter into the heart of the sun planet is compared to those who realize the personal features of the Supreme Absolute Truth. Therefore, the *bhaktas*, or the transcendentalists who have realized the Bhagavān feature of the Absolute Truth, are the topmost transcendentalists, although all students who are engaged in the study of the Absolute Truth are engaged in the same subject matter. The sunshine, the sun disc and the inner affairs of the sun planet cannot be separated from one another, and yet the students of the three different phases are not in the same category.

The Sanskrit word *bhagavān* is explained by the great authority Parāśara Muni, the father of Vyāsadeva. The Supreme Personality who possesses all riches, all strength, all fame, all beauty, all knowledge and all renunciation is

called Bhagavān. There are many persons who are very rich, very powerful, very beautiful, very famous, very learned, and very much detached, but no one can claim that he possesses all riches, all strength, etc., entirely. Only Kṛṣṇa can claim this because He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. No living entity, including Brahmā, Lord Śiva, or Nārāyaṇa, can possess opulences as fully as Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it is concluded in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* by Lord Brahmā himself that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. No one is equal to or above Him. He is the primeval Lord, or Bhagavān, known as Govinda, and He is the supreme cause of all causes:

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

“There are many personalities possessing the qualities of Bhagavān, but Kṛṣṇa is the supreme because none can excel Him. He is the Supreme Person, and His body is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. He is the primeval Lord Govinda and the cause of all causes.” (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.1)

In the *Bhāgavatam* also there is a list of many incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but Kṛṣṇa is described as the original Personality of Godhead, from whom many, many incarnations and Personalities of Godhead expand:

*ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokaṁ
mṛḍayanti yuge yuge*

“All the lists of the incarnations of Godhead submitted herewith are either plenary expansions or parts of the plenary expansions of the Supreme Godhead, but Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.” (*Bhāg.* 1.3.28)

Therefore, Kṛṣṇa is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, the source of both the Supersoul and the impersonal

Brahman.

In the presence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Arjuna's lamentation for his kinsmen is certainly unbecoming, and therefore. Kṛṣṇa expressed His surprise with the word *kutaḥ*, "wherefrom." Such impurities were never expected from a person belonging to the civilized class of men known as Āryans. The word *Āryan* is applicable to persons who know the value of life and have a civilization based on spiritual realization. Persons who are led by the material conception of life do not know that the aim of life is realization of the Absolute Truth, Viṣṇu, or Bhagavān, and they are captivated by the external features of the material world, and therefore they do not know what liberation is. Persons who have no knowledge of liberation from material bondage are called non-Āryans. Although Arjuna was a *kṣatriya*, he was deviating from his prescribed duties by declining to fight. This act of cowardice is described as befitting the non-Āryans. Such deviation from duty does not help one in the progress of spiritual life, nor does it even give one the opportunity to become famous in this world. Lord Kṛṣṇa did not approve of the so-called compassion of Arjuna for his kinsmen.

TEXT 3

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्तोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ ३ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

klaibyam—impotence; *mā sma*—do not; *gamaḥ*—take to; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *na*—never; *etat*—this; *tvayi*—unto you; *upadyate*—is befitting; *kṣudram*—petty; *hṛdaya*—of the heart; *daurbalyam*—weakness;

tyaktvā—giving up; *uttiṣṭha*—get up; *param-tapa*—O chastiser of the enemies.

TRANSLATION

O son of Pṛthā, do not yield to this degrading impotence. It does not become you. Give up such petty weakness of heart and arise, O chastiser of the enemy.

PURPORT

Arjuna was addressed as the son of Pṛthā, who happened to be the sister of Kṛṣṇa's father Vasudeva. Therefore Arjuna had a blood relationship with Kṛṣṇa. If the son of a *kṣatriya* declines to fight, he is a *kṣatriya* in name only, and if the son of a *brāhmaṇa* acts impiously, he is a *brāhmaṇa* in name only. Such *kṣatriyas* and *brāhmaṇas* are unworthy sons of their fathers; therefore, Kṛṣṇa did not want Arjuna to become an unworthy son of a *kṣatriya*. Arjuna was the most intimate friend of Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa was directly guiding him on the chariot; but in spite of all these credits, if Arjuna abandoned the battle he would be committing an infamous act. Therefore Kṛṣṇa said that such an attitude in Arjuna did not fit his personality. Arjuna might argue that he would give up the battle on the grounds of his magnanimous attitude for the most respectable Bhīṣma and his relatives, but Kṛṣṇa considered that sort of magnanimity mere weakness of heart. Such false magnanimity was not approved by any authority. Therefore, such magnanimity or so-called nonviolence should be given up by persons like Arjuna under the direct guidance of Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 4

अर्जुन उवाच
कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन ।
इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥ ४ ॥

arjuna uvāca

*katham bhīṣmam aham saṅkhye
droṇam ca madhusūdana
iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi
pūjārḥāv ari-sūdana*

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *katham*—how; *bhīṣmam*—Bhīṣma; *aham*—I; *saṅkhye*—in the fight; *droṇam*—Droṇa; *ca*—also; *madhu-sūdana*—O killer of Madhu; *iṣubhiḥ*—with arrows; *pratiyotsyāmi*—shall counterattack; *pūjā-arḥau*—those who are worshipable; *ari-sūdana*—O killer of the enemies.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O killer of enemies, O killer of Madhu, how can I counterattack with arrows in battle men like Bhīṣma and Droṇa, who are worthy of my worship?

PURPORT

Respectable superiors like Bhīṣma the grandfather and Droṇācārya the teacher are always worshipable. Even if they attack, they should not be counterattacked. It is general etiquette that superiors are not to be offered even a verbal fight. Even if they are sometimes harsh in behavior, they should not be harshly treated. Then, how is it possible for Arjuna to counterattack them? Would Kṛṣṇa ever attack His own grandfather, Ugrasena, or His teacher, Sāṅdīpani Muni? These were some of the arguments offered by Arjuna to Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 5

गुरुनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्
श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरुनिहैव

भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

gurūn—the superiors; *ahatvā*—not killing; *hi*—certainly;
mahā-anubhāvān—great souls; *śreyaḥ*—it is better; *bhoktum*—to enjoy life;
bhaikṣyam—by begging; *apī*—even; *iha*—in this life; *loke*—in this world;
hatvā—killing; *artha*—gain; *kāmān*—desiring; *tu*—but; *gurūn*—superiors;
iha—in this world; *eva*—certainly; *bhuñjīya*—one has to enjoy;
bhogān—enjoyable things; *rudhira*—blood; *pradigdhān*—tainted with.

TRANSLATION

It would be better to live in this world by begging than to live at the cost of the lives of great souls who are my teachers. Even though desiring worldly gain, they are superiors. If they are killed, everything we enjoy will be tainted with blood.

PURPORT

According to scriptural codes, a teacher who engages in an abominable action and has lost his sense of discrimination is fit to be abandoned. Bhīṣma and Droṇa were obliged to take the side of Duryodhana because of his financial assistance, although they should not have accepted such a position simply on financial considerations. Under the circumstances, they have lost the respectability of teachers. But Arjuna thinks that nevertheless they remain his superiors, and therefore to enjoy material profits after killing them would mean to enjoy spoils tainted with blood.

TEXT 6

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो
यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।
यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम-
स्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥ ६ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

na—nor; *ca*—also; *etat*—this; *vidmaḥ*—do we know; *katarat*—which;
naḥ—for us; *garīyaḥ*—better; *yad vā*—whether; *jayema*—we may conquer;
yadi—if; *vā*—or; *naḥ*—us; *jayeyuḥ*—they conquer; *yān*—those who;
eva—certainly; *hatvā*—by killing; *na*—never; *jijīviṣāmaḥ*—we would want to
live; *te*—all of them; *avasthitāḥ*—are situated; *pramukhe*—in the front;
dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ—the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

TRANSLATION

Nor do we know which is better—conquering them or being conquered by them. If we killed the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, we should not care to live. Yet they are now standing before us on the battlefield.

PURPORT

Arjuna did not know whether he should fight and risk unnecessary violence, although fighting is the duty of the *kṣatriyas*, or whether he should refrain and live by begging. If he did not conquer the enemy, begging would be his only means of subsistence. Nor was there certainty of victory, because either side might emerge victorious. Even if victory awaited them (and their

cause was justified), still, if the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra died in battle, it would be very difficult to live in their absence. Under the circumstances, that would be another kind of defeat for them. All these considerations by Arjuna definitely proved that not only was he a great devotee of the Lord but he was also highly enlightened and had complete control over his mind and senses. His desire to live by begging, although he was born in the royal household, is another sign of detachment. He was truly virtuous, as these qualities, combined with his faith in the words of instruction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (his spiritual master), indicate. It is concluded that Arjuna was quite fit for liberation. Unless the senses are controlled, there is no chance of elevation to the platform of knowledge, and without knowledge and devotion there is no chance of liberation. Arjuna was competent in all these attributes, over and above his enormous attributes in his material relationships.

TEXT 7

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

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

SYNONYMS

kārpaṇya—of miserliness; *doṣa*—by the weakness; *upahata*—being afflicted; *sva-bhāvaḥ*—characteristics; *prcchāmi*—I am asking; *tvām*—unto You; *dharma*—religion; *sammūḍha*—bewildered; *cetāḥ*—in heart; *yat*—what; *śreyaḥ*—all-good; *syāt*—may be; *niścitaṁ*—confidently; *brūhi*—tell; *tat*—that; *me*—unto me; *śiṣyaḥ*—disciple; *te*—Your; *aham*—I am; *śādhi*—just instruct;

mām—me; *tvām*—unto You; *prapannam*—surrendered.

TRANSLATION

Now I am confused about my duty and have lost all composure because of miserly weakness. In this condition I am asking You to tell me for certain what is best for me. Now I am Your disciple, and a soul surrendered unto You. Please instruct me.

PURPORT

By nature's own way the complete system of material activities is a source of perplexity for everyone. In every step there is perplexity, and therefore it behooves one to approach a bona fide spiritual master who can give one proper guidance for executing the purpose of life. All Vedic literatures advise us to approach a bona fide spiritual master to get free from the perplexities of life, which happen without our desire. They are like a forest fire that somehow blazes without being set by anyone. Similarly, the world situation is such' that perplexities of life automatically appear, without our wanting such confusion. No one wants fire, and yet it takes place, and we become perplexed. The Vedic wisdom therefore advises that in order to solve the perplexities of life and to understand the science of the solution, one must approach a spiritual master who is in the disciplic succession. A person with a bona fide spiritual master is supposed to know everything. One should not, therefore, remain in material perplexities but should approach a spiritual master. This is the purport of this verse.

Who is the man in material perplexities? It is he who does not understand the problems of life. In the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (3.8.10) the perplexed man is described as follows: *yo vā etad akṣaram gārgy aviditvāsmāḥ lokāt praiti sa kṛpaṇaḥ*. "He is a miserly man who does not solve the problems of life as a human and who thus quits this world like the cats and dogs, without understanding the science of self-realization." This human form of life is a most valuable asset for the living entity who can utilize it for solving the problems of life; therefore, one who does not utilize this opportunity properly

is a miser. On the other hand, there is the *brāhmaṇa*, or he who is intelligent enough to utilize this body to solve all the problems of life. *Ya etad akṣaram gārgi viditvāsmāṁ lokāt praiti sa brāhmaṇaḥ*.

The *kṛpaṇas*, or miserly persons, waste their time in being overly affectionate for family, society, country, etc., in the material conception of life. One is often attached to family life, namely to wife, children and other members, on the basis of “skin disease.” The *kṛpaṇa* thinks that he is able to protect his family members from death; or the *kṛpaṇa* thinks that his family or society can save him from the verge of death. Such family attachment can be found even in the lower animals, who take care of children also. Being intelligent, Arjuna could understand that his affection for family members and his wish to protect them from death were the causes of his perplexities. Although he could understand that his duty to fight was awaiting him, still, on account of miserly weakness, he could not discharge the duties. He is therefore asking Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme spiritual master, to make a definite solution. He offers himself to Kṛṣṇa as a disciple. He wants to stop friendly talks. Talks between the master and the disciple are serious, and now Arjuna wants to talk very seriously before the recognized spiritual master. Kṛṣṇa is therefore the original spiritual master of the science of *Bhagavad-gītā*, and Arjuna is the first disciple for understanding the *Gītā*. How Arjuna understands the *Bhagavad-gītā* is stated in the *Gītā* itself. And yet foolish mundane scholars explain that one need not submit to Kṛṣṇa as a person, but to “the unborn within Kṛṣṇa.” There is no difference between Kṛṣṇa’s within and without. And one who has no sense of this understanding is the greatest fool in trying to understand *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 8

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्या-
द्यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।
अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं

राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥ ८ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

na—do not; *hi*—certainly; *prapaśyāmi*—I see; *mama*—my; *apanudyāt*—can drive away; *yat*—that which; *śokam*—lamentation; *ucchoṣaṇam*—drying up; *indriyāṇām*—of the senses; *avāpya*—achieving; *bhūmau*—on the earth; *asapatnam*—without rival; *ṛddham*—prosperous; *rājyaṁ*—kingdom; *surāṇām*—of the demigods; *api*—even; *ca*—also; *ādhipatyam*—supremacy.

TRANSLATION

I can find no means to drive away this grief which is drying up my senses. I will not be able to dispel it even if I win a prosperous, unrivaled kingdom on earth with sovereignty like the demigods in heaven.

PURPORT

Although Arjuna was putting forward so many arguments based on knowledge of the principles of religion and moral codes, it appears that he was unable to solve his real problem without the help of the spiritual master, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He could understand that his so-called knowledge was useless in driving away his problems, which were drying up his whole existence; and it was impossible for him to solve such perplexities without the help of a spiritual master like Lord Kṛṣṇa. Academic knowledge, scholarship, high position, etc., are all useless in solving the problems of life; help can be given only by a spiritual master like Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the conclusion is that a spiritual master who is one hundred percent Kṛṣṇa conscious is the bona fide spiritual master, for he can solve the problems of life. Lord Caitanya said that one who is master

in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, regardless of his social position, is the real spiritual master.

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei 'guru' haya*

“It does not matter whether a person is a *vipra* [learned scholar in Vedic wisdom] or is born in a lower family, or is in the renounced order of life—if he is master in the science of Kṛṣṇa, he is the perfect and bona fide spiritual master.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 8.128) So without being a master in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no one is a bona fide spiritual master. It is also said in Vedic literature:

*ṣaṭ-karma-nīpuṇo vipro
mantra-tantra-viśāradaḥ
avaiṣṇavo gurur na syād
vaiṣṇavaḥ śva-paco guruḥ*

“A scholarly *brāhmaṇa*, expert in all subjects of Vedic knowledge, is unfit to become a spiritual master without being a Vaiṣṇava, or expert in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But a person born in a family of a lower caste can become a spiritual master if he is a Vaiṣṇava, or Kṛṣṇa conscious.” (*Padma Purāṇa*)

The problems of material existence—birth, old age, disease and death—cannot be counteracted by accumulation of wealth and economic development. In many parts of the world there are states which are replete with all facilities of life, which are full of wealth and economically developed, yet the problems of material existence are still present. They are seeking peace in different ways, but they can achieve real happiness only if they consult Kṛṣṇa, or the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*—which constitute the science of Kṛṣṇa—through the bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa, the man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

If economic development and material comforts could drive away one's lamentations for family, social, national or international inebrieties, then Arjuna would not have said that even an unrivaled kingdom on earth or supremacy like that of the demigods in the heavenly planets would be unable

to drive away his lamentations. He sought, therefore, refuge in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that is the right path for peace and harmony. Economic development or supremacy over the world can be finished at any moment by the cataclysms of material nature. Even elevation into a higher planetary situation, as men are now seeking on the moon planet, can also be finished at one stroke. The *Bhagavad-gītā* confirms this: *kṣiṇe puṇye martya-lokaṁ viśanti*. “When the results of pious activities are finished, one falls down again from the peak of happiness to the lowest status of life.” Many politicians of the world have fallen down in that way. Such downfalls only constitute more causes for lamentation.

Therefore, if we want to curb lamentation for good, then we have to take shelter of Kṛṣṇa, as Arjuna is seeking to do. So Arjuna asked Kṛṣṇa to solve his problem definitely, and that is the way of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 9

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

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

SYNONYMS

sañjayaḥ uvāca—Sañjaya said; *evam*—thus; *uktvā*—speaking; *hṛṣīkeśam*—unto Kṛṣṇa, the master of the senses; *guḍākeśaḥ*—Arjuna, the master of curbing ignorance; *parantapaḥ*—the chastiser of the enemies; *na yotsya*—I shall not fight; *iti*—thus; *govindam*—unto Kṛṣṇa, the giver of pleasure to the senses; *uktvā*—saying; *tūṣṇīm*—silent; *babhūva*—became; *ha*—certainly.

TRANSLATION

Saṅjaya said: Having spoken thus, Arjuna, chastiser of enemies, told Kṛṣṇa, “Govinda, I shall not fight,” and fell silent.

PURPORT

Dhṛtarāṣṭra must have been very glad to understand that Arjuna was not going to fight and was instead leaving the battlefield for the begging profession. But Saṅjaya disappointed him again in relating that Arjuna was competent to kill his enemies (*parantapaḥ*). Although Arjuna was, for the time being, overwhelmed with false grief due to family affection, he surrendered unto Kṛṣṇa, the supreme spiritual master, as a disciple. This indicated that he would soon be free from the false lamentation resulting from family affection and would be enlightened with perfect knowledge of self-realization, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and would then surely fight. Thus Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s joy would be frustrated, since Arjuna would be enlightened by Kṛṣṇa and would fight to the end.

TEXT 10

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥ १० ॥

*tam uvāca hṛṣīkeśaḥ
prahasann iva bhārata
senayor ubhayor madhye
viśīdantam idaṁ vacaḥ*

SYNONYMS

tam—unto him; *uvāca*—said; *hṛṣīkeśaḥ*—the master of the senses, Kṛṣṇa; *prahasan*—smiling; *iva*—like that; *bhārata*—O Dhṛtarāṣṭra, descendant of

Bharata; *senayoḥ*—of the armies; *ubhayoḥ*—of both parties; *madhye*—between; *viśīdantam*—unto the lamenting one; *idam*—the following; *vacāḥ*—words.

TRANSLATION

O descendant of Bharata, at that time Kṛṣṇa, smiling, in the midst of both the armies, spoke the following words to the grief-stricken Arjuna.

PURPORT

The talk was going on between intimate friends, namely the Hṛṣīkeśa and the Guḍākeśa. As friends, both of them were on the same level, but one of them voluntarily became a student of the other. Kṛṣṇa was smiling because a friend had chosen to become a disciple. As Lord of all, He is always in the superior position as the master of everyone, and yet the Lord agrees to be a friend, a son, or a lover for a devotee who wants Him in such a role. But when He was accepted as the master, He at once assumed the role and talked with the disciple like the master—with gravity, as it is required. It appears that the talk between the master and the disciple was openly exchanged in the presence of both armies so that all were benefitted. So the talks of *Bhagavad-gītā* are not for any particular person, society, or community, but they are for all, and friends or enemies are equally entitled to hear them.

TEXT 11

श्रीभगवानुवाच
अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ ११ ॥

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

nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ

SYNONYMS

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *aśocyān*—not worthy of lamentation; *anvaśocaḥ*—you are lamenting; *tvam*—you; *prajñā-vādān*—learned talks; *ca*—also; *bhāṣase*—speaking; *gata*—lost; *asūn*—life; *agata*—not past; *asūn*—life; *ca*—also; *na*—never; *anuśocanti*—lament; *paṇḍitāḥ*—the learned.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: While speaking learned words, you are mourning for what is not worthy of grief. Those who are wise lament neither for the living nor for the dead.

PURPORT

The Lord at once took the position of the teacher and chastised the student, calling him, indirectly, a fool. The Lord said, “You are talking like a learned man, but you do not know that one who is learned—one who knows what is body and what is soul—does not lament for any stage of the body, neither in the living nor in the dead condition.” As explained in later chapters, it will be clear that knowledge means to know matter and spirit and the controller of both. Arjuna argued that religious principles should be given more importance than politics or sociology, but he did not know that knowledge of matter, soul and the Supreme is even more important than religious formularies. And because he was lacking in that knowledge, he should not have posed himself as a very learned man. As he did not happen to be a very learned man, he was consequently lamenting for something which was unworthy of lamentation. The body is born and is destined to be vanquished today or tomorrow; therefore the body is not as important as the soul. One who knows this is actually learned, and for him there is no cause for lamentation, regardless of the condition of the material body.

TEXT 12

नत्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव नभविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥ १२ ॥

*na tv evāham jātu nāsam
na tvam neme janādhīpāḥ
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ
sarve vayam ataḥ param*

SYNONYMS

na—never; *tu*—but; *eva*—certainly; *aham*—I; *jātu*—at any time; *na*—did not; *āsam*—exist; *na*—not; *tvam*—you; *na*—not; *ime*—all these; *jana-adhīpāḥ*—kings; *na*—never; *ca*—also; *eva*—certainly; *na*—not; *bhaviṣyāmaḥ*—shall exist; *sarve vayam*—all of us; *ataḥ param*—hereafter.

TRANSLATION

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

PURPORT

In the *Vedas*, in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* as well as in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, it is said that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the maintainer of innumerable living entities, in terms of their different situations according to individual work and reaction of work. That Supreme Personality of Godhead is also, by His plenary portions, alive in the heart of every living entity. Only saintly persons who can see, within and without, the same Supreme Lord can actually attain to perfect and eternal peace.

*nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām
eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*

*tam ātma-stham ye 'nupaśyanti dhīrās
teṣāṁ śāntiḥ śāśvatī netareṣāṁ*

The same Vedic truth given to Arjuna is given to all persons in the world who pose themselves as very learned but factually have but a poor fund of knowledge. The Lord says clearly that He Himself, Arjuna and all the kings who are assembled on the battlefield are eternally individual beings and that the Lord is eternally the maintainer of the individual living entities both in their conditioned and in their liberated situations. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the supreme individual person, and Arjuna, the Lord's eternal associate, and all the kings assembled there are individual eternal persons. It is not that they did not exist as individuals in the past, and it is not that they will not remain eternal persons. Their individuality existed in the past, and their individuality will continue in the future without interruption. Therefore, there is no cause for lamentation for anyone.

The Māyāvādī theory that after liberation the individual soul, separated by the covering of *māyā*, or illusion, will merge into the impersonal Brahman and lose its individual existence is not supported herein by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme authority. Nor is the theory that we only think of individuality in the conditioned state supported herein. Kṛṣṇa clearly says herein that in the future also the individuality of the Lord and others, as it is confirmed in the *Upaniṣads*, will continue eternally. This statement of Kṛṣṇa's is authoritative because Kṛṣṇa cannot be subject to illusion. If individuality were not a fact, then Kṛṣṇa would not have stressed it so much—even for the future. The Māyāvādī may argue that the individuality spoken of by Kṛṣṇa is not spiritual, but material. Even accepting the argument that the individuality is material, then how can one distinguish Kṛṣṇa's individuality? Kṛṣṇa affirms His individuality in the past and confirms His individuality in the future also. He has confirmed His individuality in many ways, and impersonal Brahman has been declared to be subordinate to Him. Kṛṣṇa has maintained spiritual individuality all along; if He is accepted as an ordinary conditioned soul in individual consciousness, then His *Bhagavad-gītā* has no value as authoritative scripture. A common man with all the four defects of human frailty is unable to teach that which is worth hearing. The *Gītā* is above such literature. No

mundane book compares with the *Bhagavad-gītā*. When one accepts Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary man, the *Gītā* loses all importance. The Māyāvādī argues that the plurality mentioned in this verse is conventional and that it refers to the body. But previous to this verse such a bodily conception is already condemned. After condemning the bodily conception of the living entities, how was it possible for Kṛṣṇa to place a conventional proposition on the body again? Therefore, individuality is maintained on spiritual grounds and is thus confirmed by great *ācāryas* like Śrī Rāmānuja and others. It is clearly mentioned in many places in the *Gītā* that this spiritual individuality is understood by those who are devotees of the Lord. Those who are envious of Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead have no bona fide access to the great literature. The nondevotee's approach to the teachings of the *Gītā* is something like that of a bee licking on a bottle of honey. One cannot have a taste of honey unless one opens the bottle. Similarly, the mysticism of the *Bhagavad-gītā* can be understood only by devotees, and no one else can taste it, as it is stated in the Fourth Chapter of the book. Nor can the *Gītā* be touched by persons who envy the very existence of the Lord. Therefore, the Māyāvādī explanation of the *Gītā* is a most misleading presentation of the whole truth. Lord Caitanya has forbidden us to read commentations made by the Māyāvādīs and warns that one who takes to such an understanding of the Māyāvādī philosophy loses all power to understand the real mystery of the *Gītā*. If individuality refers to the empirical universe, then there is no need of teaching by the Lord. The plurality of the individual soul and of the Lord is an eternal fact, and it is confirmed by the *Vedas* as above mentioned.

TEXT 13

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥ १३ ॥

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe
kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir*

dhīras tatra na muhyati

SYNONYMS

dehinaḥ—of the embodied; *asmin*—in this; *yathā*—as; *dehe*—in the body; *kaumāram*—boyhood; *yauvanam*—youth; *jarā*—old age; *tathā*—similarly; *deha-antara*—of transference of the body; *prāptiḥ*—achievement; *dhīraḥ*—the sober; *tatra*—thereupon; *na*—never; *muhyati*—is deluded.

TRANSLATION

As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change.

PURPORT

Since every living entity is an individual soul, each is changing his body every moment, manifesting sometimes as a child, sometimes as a youth, and sometimes as an old man. Yet the same spirit soul is there and does not undergo any change. This individual soul finally changes the body at death and transmigrates to another body; and since it is sure to have another body in the next birth—either material or spiritual—there was no cause for lamentation by Arjuna on account of death, neither for Bhīṣma nor for Droṇa, for whom he was so much concerned. Rather, he should rejoice for their changing bodies from old to new ones, thereby rejuvenating their energy. Such changes of body account for varieties of enjoyment or suffering, according to one's work in life. So Bhīṣma and Droṇa, being noble souls, were surely going to have spiritual bodies in the next life, or at least life in heavenly bodies for superior enjoyment of material existence. So, in either case, there was no cause of lamentation.

Any man who has perfect knowledge of the constitution of the individual soul, the Supersoul, and nature—both material and spiritual—is called a *dhīra*, or a most sober man. Such a man is never deluded by the change of bodies.

The Māyāvādī theory of oneness of the spirit soul cannot be entertained, on the ground that the spirit soul cannot be cut into pieces as a fragmental portion. Such cutting into different individual souls would make the Supreme cleavable or changeable, against the principle of the Supreme Soul's being unchangeable. As confirmed in the *Gītā*, the fragmental portions of the Supreme exist eternally (*sanātana*) and are called *kṣara*; that is, they have a tendency to fall down into material nature. These fragmental portions are eternally so, and even after liberation the individual soul remains the same—fragmental. But once liberated, he lives an eternal life in bliss and knowledge with the Personality of Godhead. The theory of reflection can be applied to the Supersoul, who is present in each and every individual body and is known as the *Paramātmā*. He is different from the individual living entity. When the sky is reflected in water, the reflections represent both the sun and the moon and the stars also. The stars can be compared to the living entities and the sun or the moon to the Supreme Lord. The individual fragmental spirit soul is represented by Arjuna, and the Supreme Soul is the Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They are not on the same level, as it will be apparent in the beginning of the Fourth Chapter. If Arjuna is on the same level with Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is not superior to Arjuna, then their relationship of instructor and instructed becomes meaningless. If both of them are deluded by the illusory energy (*māyā*), then there is no need of one being the instructor and the other the instructed. Such instruction would be useless because, in the clutches of *māyā*, no one can be an authoritative instructor. Under the circumstances, it is admitted that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, superior in position to the living entity, Arjuna, who is a forgetful soul deluded by *māyā*.

TEXT 14

मात्रास्पर्शस्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ १४ ॥

mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ

*āgamāpāyino 'nityās
tāms titikṣasva bhārata*

SYNONYMS

mātrā-sparsāḥ—sensory perception; *tu*—only; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *śīta*—winter; *uṣṇa*—summer; *sukha*—happiness; *duḥkha*—and pain; *dāḥ*—giving; *āgama*—appearing; *apāyinaḥ*—disappearing; *anityāḥ*—nonpermanent; *tān*—all of them; *titikṣasva*—just try to tolerate; *bhārata*—O descendant of the Bharata dynasty.

TRANSLATION

O son of Kuntī, the nonpermanent appearance of happiness and distress, and their disappearance in due course, are like the appearance and disappearance of winter and summer seasons. They arise from sense perception, O scion of Bharata, and one must learn to tolerate them without being disturbed.

PURPORT

In the proper discharge of duty, one has to learn to tolerate nonpermanent appearances and disappearances of happiness and distress. According to Vedic injunction, one has to take his bath early in the morning even during the month of Māgha (January-February). It is very cold at that time, but in spite of that a man who abides by the religious principles does not hesitate to take his bath. Similarly, a woman does not hesitate to cook in the kitchen in the months of May and June, the hottest part of the summer season. One has to execute his duty in spite of climatic inconveniences. Similarly, to fight is the religious principle of the *kṣatriyas*, and although one has to fight with some friend or relative, one should not deviate from his prescribed duty. One has to follow the prescribed rules and regulations of religious principles in order to rise up to the platform of knowledge, because by knowledge and devotion only can one liberate himself from the clutches of *māyā* (illusion).

The two different names of address given to Arjuna are also significant. To

address him as Kaunteya signifies his great blood relations from his mother's side; and to address him as Bhārata signifies his greatness from his father's side. From both sides he is supposed to have a great heritage. A great heritage brings responsibility in the matter of proper discharge of duties; therefore, he cannot avoid fighting.

TEXT 15

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

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

SYNONYMS

yam—one to whom; *hi*—certainly; *na*—never; *vyathayanti*—are distressing; *ete*—all these; *puruṣam*—to a person; *puruṣa-rṣabha*—O best among men; *sama*—unaltered; *duḥkha*—in distress; *sukham*—and happiness; *dhīram*—patient; *saḥ*—he; *amṛtatvāya*—for liberation; *kalpate*—is considered eligible.

TRANSLATION

O best among men [Arjuna], the person who is not disturbed by happiness and distress and is steady in both is certainly eligible for liberation.

PURPORT

Anyone who is steady in his determination for the advanced stage of spiritual realization and can equally tolerate the onslaughts of distress and happiness is certainly a person eligible for liberation. In the *varṇāśrama*

institution, the fourth stage of life, namely the renounced order (*sannyāsa*), is a painstaking situation. But one who is serious about making his life perfect surely adopts the *sannyāsa* order of life in spite of all difficulties. The difficulties usually arise from having to sever family relationships, to give up the connection of wife and children. But if anyone is able to tolerate such difficulties, surely his path to spiritual realization is complete. Similarly, in Arjuna's discharge of duties as a *kṣatriya*, he is advised to persevere, even if it is difficult to fight with his family members or similarly beloved persons. Lord Caitanya took *sannyāsa* at the age of twenty-four, and His dependents, young wife as well as old mother, had no one else to look after them. Yet for a higher cause He took *sannyāsa* and was steady in the discharge of higher duties. That is the way of achieving liberation from material bondage.

TEXT 16

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ १६ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

na—never; *asataḥ*—of the nonexistent; *vidyate*—there is;
bhāvaḥ—endurance; *na*—never; *abhāvaḥ*—changing quality; *vidyate*—there is;
sataḥ—of the eternal; *ubhayor*—of the two; *api*—verily; *dṛṣṭaḥ*—observed;
antaḥ—conclusion; *tu*—indeed; *anayor*—of them; *tattva*—of the truth;
darśibhiḥ—by the seers.

TRANSLATION

Those who are seers of the truth have concluded that of the nonexistent [the

material body] there is no endurance and of the eternal [the soul] there is no change. This they have concluded by studying the nature of both.

PURPORT

There is no endurance of the changing body. That the body is changing every moment by the actions and reactions of the different cells is admitted by modern medical science; and thus growth and old age are taking place in the body. But the spirit soul exists permanently, remaining the same despite all changes of the body and the mind. That is the difference between matter and spirit. By nature, the body is ever changing, and the soul is eternal. This conclusion is established by all classes of seers of the truth, both impersonalist and personalist. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (2.12.38) it is stated that Viṣṇu and His abodes all have self-illuminated spiritual existence (*jyotīṁṣi viṣṇur bhuvanāni viṣṇuḥ*). The words *existent* and *nonexistent* refer only to spirit and matter. That is the version of all seers of truth.

This is the beginning of the instruction by the Lord to the living entities who are bewildered by the influence of ignorance. Removal of ignorance involves the reestablishment of the eternal relationship between the worshiper and the worshipable and the consequent understanding of the difference between the part-and-parcel living entities and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One can understand the nature of the Supreme by thorough study of oneself, the difference between oneself and the Supreme being understood as the relationship between the part and the whole. In the *Vedānta-sūtras*, as well as in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Supreme has been accepted as the origin of all emanations. Such emanations are experienced by superior and inferior natural sequences. The living entities belong to the superior nature, as it will be revealed in the Seventh Chapter. Although there is no difference between the energy and the energetic, the energetic is accepted as the Supreme, and energy or nature is accepted as the subordinate. The living entities, therefore, are always subordinate to the Supreme Lord, as in the case of the master and the servant, or the teacher and the taught. Such clear knowledge is impossible to understand under the spell of ignorance, and to

drive away such ignorance the Lord teaches the *Bhagavad-gītā* for the enlightenment of all living entities for all time.

TEXT 17

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

*avināśi tu tad viddhi
yena sarvam idam tatam
vināśam avyayasyāśya
na kaścit kartum arhati*

SYNONYMS

avināśi—imperishable; *tu*—but; *tat*—that; *viddhi*—know it; *yena*—by whom; *sarvam*—all of the body; *idam*—this; *tatam*—pervaded; *vināśam*—destruction; *avyayasya*—of the imperishable; *asya*—of it; *na kaścit*—no one; *kartum*—to do; *arhati*—is able.

TRANSLATION

That which pervades the entire body you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul.

PURPORT

This verse more clearly explains the real nature of the soul, which is spread all over the body. Anyone can understand what is spread all over the body: it is consciousness. Everyone is conscious of the pains and pleasures of the body in part or as a whole. This spreading of consciousness is limited within one's own body. The pains and pleasures of one body are unknown to another. Therefore, each and every body is the embodiment of an individual soul, and the symptom of the soul's presence is perceived as individual consciousness. This soul is

described as one ten-thousandth part of the upper portion of the hair point in size. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (5.9) confirms this:

*bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya
śatadhā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvaḥ vijñeyaḥ
sa cānantyāya kalpate*

“When the upper point of a hair is divided into one hundred parts and again each of such parts is further divided into one hundred parts, each such part is the measurement of the dimension of the spirit soul.” Similarly the same version is stated:

*keśāgra-śata-bhāgasya
śatāmśaḥ sādṛśātmakaḥ
jīvaḥ sūkṣma-svarūpo 'yaṁ
saṅkhyātīto hi cit-kaṇaḥ
[Cc. Madya 19.140]*

“There are innumerable particles of spiritual atoms, which are measured as one ten-thousandth of the upper portion of the hair.”

Therefore, the individual particle of spirit soul is a spiritual atom smaller than the material atoms, and such atoms are innumerable. This very small spiritual spark is the basic principle of the material body, and the influence of such a spiritual spark is spread all over the body as the influence of the active principle of some medicine spreads throughout the body. This current of the spirit soul is felt all over the body as consciousness, and that is the proof of the presence of the soul. Any layman can understand that the material body minus consciousness is a dead body, and this consciousness cannot be revived in the body by any means of material administration. Therefore, consciousness is not due to any amount of material combination, but to the spirit soul. In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.9) the measurement of the atomic spirit soul is further explained:

*eṣo 'nur ātmā cetasā veditavyo
yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa*

*prāṇaiś cittam sarvam otaṁ prajānām
yasmin viśuddhe vibhavaty eṣa ātmā*

“The soul is atomic in size and can be perceived by perfect intelligence. This atomic soul is floating in the five kinds of air (*prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *samāna* and *udāna*), is situated within the heart, and spreads its influence all over the body of the embodied living entities. When the soul is purified from the contamination of the five kinds of material air, its spiritual influence is exhibited.”

The *haṭha-yoga* system is meant for controlling the five kinds of air encircling the pure soul by different kinds of sitting postures—not for any material profit, but for liberation of the minute soul from the entanglement of the material atmosphere.

So the constitution of the atomic soul is admitted in all Vedic literatures, and it is also actually felt in the practical experience of any sane man. Only the insane man can think of this atomic soul as all-pervading *viṣṇu-tattva*.

The influence of the atomic soul can be spread all over a particular body. According to the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, this atomic soul is situated in the heart of every living entity, and because the measurement of the atomic soul is beyond the power of appreciation of the material scientists, some of them assert foolishly that there is no soul. The individual atomic soul is definitely there in the heart along with the Supersoul, and thus all the energies of bodily movement are emanating from this part of the body. The corpuscles which carry the oxygen from the lungs gather energy from the soul. When the soul passes away from this position, the activity of the blood, generating fusion, ceases. Medical science accepts the importance of the red corpuscles, but it cannot ascertain that the source of the energy is the soul. Medical science, however, does admit that the heart is the seat of all energies of the body.

Such atomic particles of the spirit whole are compared to the sunshine molecules. In the sunshine there are innumerable radiant molecules. Similarly, the fragmental parts of the Supreme Lord are atomic sparks of the rays of the Supreme Lord, called by the name *prabhā*, or superior energy. So whether one follows Vedic knowledge or modern science, one cannot deny the existence of the spirit soul in the body, and the science of the soul is explicitly described in

the *Bhagavad-gītā* by the Personality of Godhead Himself.

TEXT 18

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

antavanta ime dehā
nityasyuktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ
anāśīno 'prameyasya
tasmād yudhyasva bhārata

SYNONYMS

anta-vantaḥ—perishable; *ime*—all these; *dehāḥ*—material bodies;
nityasya—eternal in existence; *uktāḥ*—are said; *śarīriṇaḥ*—of the embodied
soul; *anāśīnaḥ*—never to be destroyed; *aprameyasya*—immeasurable;
tasmāt—therefore; *yudhyasva*—fight; *bhārata*—O descendant of Bharata.

TRANSLATION

The material body of the indestructible, immeasurable and eternal living
entity is sure to come to an end; therefore, fight, O descendant of Bharata.

PURPORT

The material body is perishable by nature. It may perish immediately, or it
may do so after a hundred years. It is a question of time only. There is no
chance of maintaining it indefinitely. But the spirit soul is so minute that it
cannot even be seen by an enemy, to say nothing of being killed. As
mentioned in the previous verse, it is so small that no one can have any idea
how to measure its dimension. So from both viewpoints there is no cause of
lamentation, because the living entity as he is cannot be killed nor can the
material body be saved for any length of time or permanently protected. The

minute particle of the whole spirit acquires this material body according to his work, and therefore observance of religious principles should be utilized. In the *Vedānta-sūtras* the living entity is qualified as light because he is part and parcel of the supreme light. As sunlight maintains the entire universe, so the light of the soul maintains this material body. As soon as the spirit soul is out of this material body, the body begins to decompose; therefore it is the spirit soul which maintains this body. The body itself is unimportant. Arjuna was advised to fight and not sacrifice the cause of religion for material, bodily considerations.

TEXT 19

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

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

SYNONYMS

yaḥ—anyone who; *enam*—this; *vetti*—knows; *hantāram*—the killer;
yaḥ—anyone who; *ca*—also; *enam*—this; *manyate*—thinks; *hatam*—killed;
ubhau—both; *tau*—they; *na*—never; *vijānītaḥ*—are in knowledge; *na*—never;
ayam—this; *hanti*—kills; *na*—nor; *hanyate*—is killed.

TRANSLATION

Neither he who thinks the living entity the slayer nor he who thinks it slain is in knowledge, for the self slays not nor is slain.

PURPORT

When an embodied living entity is hurt by fatal weapons, it is to be known that the living entity within the body is not killed. The spirit soul is so small that it is impossible to kill him by any material weapon, as will be evident from subsequent verses. Nor is the living entity killable, because of his spiritual constitution. What is killed, or is supposed to be killed, is the body only. This, however, does not at all encourage killing of the body. The Vedic injunction is *mā himsyāt sarvā bhūtāni*: never commit violence to anyone. Nor does understanding that the living entity is not killed encourage animal slaughter. Killing the body of anyone without authority is abominable and is punishable by the law of the state as well as by the law of the Lord. Arjuna, however, is being engaged in killing for the principle of religion, and not whimsically.

TEXT 20

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि-
न्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥ २० ॥

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

SYNONYMS

na—never; *jāyate*—takes birth; *mriyate*—dies; *vā*—either; *kadācit*—at any time (past, present or future); *na*—never; *ayam*—this; *bhūtvā*—having come into being; *bhavitā*—will come to be; *vā*—or; *na*—not; *bhūyaḥ*—or is again coming to be; *ajaḥ*—unborn; *nityaḥ*—eternal; *śāśvataḥ*—permanent; *ayam*—this; *purāṇaḥ*—the oldest; *na*—never; *hanyate*—is killed; *hanyamāne*—being killed; *śarīre*—the body.

TRANSLATION

For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.

PURPORT

Qualitatively, the small atomic fragmental part of the Supreme Spirit is one with the Supreme. He undergoes no changes like the body. Sometimes the soul is called the steady, or *kūṭa-stha*. The body is subject to six kinds of transformations. It takes its birth from the womb of the mother's body, remains for some time, grows, produces some effects, gradually dwindles, and at last vanishes into oblivion. The soul, however, does not go through such changes. The soul is not born, but, because he takes on a material body, the body takes its birth. The soul does not take birth there, and the soul does not die. Anything which has birth also has death. And because the soul has no birth, he therefore has no past, present or future. He is eternal, ever-existing, and primeval—that is, there is no trace in history of his coming into being. Under the impression of the body, we seek the history of birth, etc., of the soul. The soul does not at any time become old, as the body does. The so-called old man, therefore, feels himself to be in the same spirit as in his childhood or youth. The changes of the body do not affect the soul. The soul does not deteriorate like a tree, nor anything material. The soul has no by-product either. The by-products of the body, namely children, are also different individual souls; and, owing to the body, they appear as children of a particular man. The body develops because of the soul's presence, but the soul has neither offshoots nor change. Therefore, the soul is free from the six changes of the body.

In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.18) we also find a similar passage, which reads:

*na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścin
nāyaṁ kutaścin na babhūva kaścit*

*ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*
[Bg. 2.20]

The meaning and purport of this verse is the same as in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, but here in this verse there is one special word, *vipaścit*, which means learned or with knowledge.

The soul is full of knowledge, or full always with consciousness. Therefore, consciousness is the symptom of the soul. Even if one does not find the soul within the heart, where he is situated, one can still understand the presence of the soul simply by the presence of consciousness. Sometimes we do not find the sun in the sky owing to clouds, or for some other reason, but the light of the sun is always there, and we are convinced that it is therefore daytime. As soon as there is a little light in the sky early in the morning, we can understand that the sun is in the sky. Similarly, since there is some consciousness in all bodies—whether man or animal—we can understand the presence of the soul. This consciousness of the soul is, however, different from the consciousness of the Supreme because the supreme consciousness is all-knowledge—past, present and future. The consciousness of the individual soul is prone to be forgetful. When he is forgetful of his real nature, he obtains education and enlightenment from the superior lessons of Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa is not like the forgetful soul. If so, Kṛṣṇa's teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* would be useless.

There are two kinds of souls—namely the minute particle soul (*aṇu-ātmā*) and the Supersoul (*vibhu-ātmā*). This is also confirmed in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.20) in this way:

*aṇor aṇīyān mahato mahīyān
ātmāsya jantor nihito guhāyām
tam akraतुḥ paśyati vīta-śoko
dhātuḥ prasādān mahimānam ātmanaḥ*

“Both the Supersoul [Paramātmā] and the atomic soul [jīvātmā] are situated on the same tree of the body within the same heart of the living being, and only one who has become free from all material desires as well as lamentations can, by the grace of the Supreme, understand the glories of the soul.” Kṛṣṇa is

the fountainhead of the Supersoul also, as it will be disclosed in the following chapters, and Arjuna is the atomic soul, forgetful of his real nature; therefore he requires to be enlightened by Kṛṣṇa, or by His bona fide representative (the spiritual master).

TEXT 21

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

*vedāvināśinam nityam
ya enam ajam avyayam
katham sa puruṣaḥ pārtha
kaṁ ghātayati hanti kaṁ*

SYNONYMS

veda—knows; *avināśinam*—indestructible; *nityam*—always existing; *yaḥ*—one who; *enam*—this (soul); *ajam*—unborn; *avyayam*—immutable; *katham*—how; *saḥ*—that; *puruṣaḥ*—person; *pārtha*—O Pārtha (Arjuna); *kaṁ*—whom; *ghātayati*—causes to hurt; *hanti*—kills; *kaṁ*—whom.

TRANSLATION

O Pārtha, how can a person who knows that the soul is indestructible, eternal, unborn and immutable kill anyone or cause anyone to kill?

PURPORT

Everything has its proper utility, and a man who is situated in complete knowledge knows how and where to apply a thing for its proper utility. Similarly, violence also has its utility, and how to apply violence rests with the person in knowledge. Although the justice of the peace awards capital punishment to a person condemned for murder, the justice of the peace

cannot be blamed, because he orders violence to another person according to the codes of justice. In *Manu-saṁhitā*, the lawbook for mankind, it is supported that a murderer should be condemned to death so that in his next life he will not have to suffer for the great sin he has committed. Therefore, the king's punishment of hanging a murderer is actually beneficial. Similarly, when Kṛṣṇa orders fighting, it must be concluded that violence is for supreme justice, and thus Arjuna should follow the instruction, knowing well that such violence, committed in the act of fighting for Kṛṣṇa, is not violence at all because, at any rate, the man, or rather the soul, cannot be killed; so for the administration of justice, so-called violence is permitted. A surgical operation is not meant to kill the patient, but to cure him. Therefore the fighting to be executed by Arjuna at the instruction of Kṛṣṇa is with full knowledge, so there is no possibility of sinful reaction.

TEXT 22

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय
नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-
न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥ २२ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

vāsāṁsi—garments; *jīrṇāni*—old and worn out; *yathā*—just as; *vihāya*—giving up; *navāni*—new garments; *gṛhṇāti*—does accept; *naraḥ*—a man; *aparāṇi*—others; *tathā*—in the same way; *śarīrāṇi*—bodies; *vihāya*—giving up; *jīrṇāni*—old and useless; *anyāni*—different; *saṁyāti*—verily accepts; *navāni*—new sets; *dehī*—the embodied.

TRANSLATION

As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones.

PURPORT

Change of body by the atomic individual soul is an accepted fact. Even the modern scientists who do not believe in the existence of the soul, but at the same time cannot explain the source of energy from the heart, have to accept continuous changes of body which appear from childhood to boyhood and from boyhood to youth and again from youth to old age. From old age, the change is transferred to another body. This has already been explained in a previous verse (2.13).

Transference of the atomic individual soul to another body is made possible by the grace of the Supersoul. The Supersoul fulfills the desire of the atomic soul as one friend fulfills the desire of another. The *Vedas*, like the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, as well as the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, compare the soul and the Supersoul to two friendly birds sitting on the same tree. One of the birds (the individual atomic soul) is eating the fruit of the tree, and the other bird (Kṛṣṇa) is simply watching His friend. Of these two birds—although they are the same in quality—one is captivated by the fruits of the material tree, while the other is simply witnessing the activities of His friend. Kṛṣṇa is the witnessing bird, and Arjuna is the eating bird. Although they are friends, one is still the master and the other is the servant. Forgetfulness of this relationship by the atomic soul is the cause of one's changing his position from one tree to another, or from one body to another. The *jīva* soul is struggling very hard on the tree of the material body, but as soon as he agrees to accept the other bird as the supreme spiritual master—as Arjuna agreed to do by voluntary surrender unto Kṛṣṇa for instruction—the subordinate bird immediately becomes free from all lamentations. Both the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.2) and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (4.7) confirm this:

*samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno
'nīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ
juṣṭam yadā paśyaty anyam īśam
asya mahimānam iti vīta-śokaḥ*

“Although the two birds are in the same tree, the eating bird is fully engrossed with anxiety and moroseness as the enjoyer of the fruits of the tree. But if in some way or other he turns his face to his friend who is the Lord and knows His glories—at once the suffering bird becomes free from all anxieties.” Arjuna has now turned his face towards his eternal friend, Kṛṣṇa, and is understanding the *Bhagavad-gītā* from Him. And thus, hearing from Kṛṣṇa, he can understand the supreme glories of the Lord and be free from lamentation.

Arjuna is advised herewith by the Lord not to lament for the bodily change of his old grandfather and his teacher. He should rather be happy to kill their bodies in the righteous fight so that they may be cleansed at once of all reactions from various bodily activities. One who lays down his life on the sacrificial altar, or in the proper battlefield, is at once cleansed of bodily reactions and promoted to a higher status of life. So there was no cause for Arjuna’s lamentation.

TEXT 23

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

*nainam chindanti śastrāṇi
nainam dahati pāvakaḥ
na cainam kledayanty āpo
na śoṣayati mārutaḥ*

SYNONYMS

na—never; *enam*—this soul; *chindanti*—can cut to pieces; *śastrāṇi*—weapons;
na—never; *enam*—this soul; *dahati*—burns; *pāvakaḥ*—fire; *na*—never;

ca—also; *enam*—this soul; *kledayanti*—moistens; *āpaḥ*—water; *na*—never; *śoṣayati*—dries; *mārutaḥ*—wind.

TRANSLATION

The soul can never be cut to pieces by any weapon, nor burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind.

PURPORT

All kinds of weapons—swords, flame weapons, rain weapons, tornado weapons, etc.—are unable to kill the spirit soul. It appears that there were many kinds of weapons made of earth, water, air, ether, etc., in addition to the modern weapons of fire. Even the nuclear weapons of the modern age are classified as fire weapons, but formerly there were other weapons made of all different types of material elements. Firearms were counteracted by water weapons, which are now unknown to modern science. Nor do modern scientists have knowledge of tornado weapons. Nonetheless, the soul can never be cut into pieces, nor annihilated by any number of weapons, regardless of scientific devices.

The Māyāvādī cannot explain how the individual soul came into existence simply by ignorance and consequently became covered by illusory energy. Nor was it ever possible to cut the individual souls from the original Supreme Soul; rather, the individual souls are eternally separated parts of the Supreme Soul. Because they are atomic individual souls eternally (*sanātana*), they are prone to be covered by the illusory energy, and thus they become separated from the association of the Supreme Lord, just as the sparks of a fire, although one in quality with the fire, are prone to be extinguished when out of the fire. In the *Varāha Purāṇa*, the living entities are described as separated parts and parcels of the Supreme. They are eternally so, according to the *Bhagavad-gītā* also. So, even after being liberated from illusion, the living entity remains a separate identity, as is evident from the teachings of the Lord to Arjuna. Arjuna became liberated by the knowledge received from Kṛṣṇa, but he never became one with Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 24

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥ २४ ॥

*acchedyo 'yam adāhyo 'yam
akledyo 'śoṣya eva ca
nityaḥ sarva-gataḥ sthāṇur
acalo 'yaṁ sanātanaḥ*

SYNONYMS

acchedyaḥ—unbreakable; *ayam*—this soul; *adāhyaḥ*—unable to be burned; *ayam*—this soul; *akledyaḥ*—insoluble; *aśoṣyaḥ*—not able to be dried; *eva*—certainly; *ca*—and; *nityaḥ*—everlasting; *sarva-gataḥ*—all-pervading; *sthāṇuḥ*—unchangeable; *acalaḥ*—immovable; *ayam*—this soul; *sanātanaḥ*—eternally the same.

TRANSLATION

This individual soul is unbreakable and insoluble, and can be neither burned nor dried. He is everlasting, present everywhere, unchangeable, immovable and eternally the same.

PURPORT

All these qualifications of the atomic soul definitely prove that the individual soul is eternally the atomic particle of the spirit whole, and he remains the same atom eternally, without change. The theory of monism is very difficult to apply in this case, because the individual soul is never expected to become one homogeneously. After liberation from material contamination, the atomic soul may prefer to remain as a spiritual spark in the effulgent rays of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the intelligent souls

enter into the spiritual planets to associate with the Personality of Godhead.

The word *sarva-gata* (“all-pervading”) is significant because there is no doubt that living entities are all over God’s creation. They live on the land, in the water, in the air, within the earth and even within fire. The belief that they are sterilized in fire is not acceptable, because it is clearly stated here that the soul cannot be burned by fire. Therefore, there is no doubt that there are living entities also in the sun planet with suitable bodies to live there. If the sun globe is uninhabited, then the word *sarva-gata*—“living everywhere”—becomes meaningless.

TEXT 25

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २५ ॥

*avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam
avikāryo 'yam ucyate
tasmād evaṁ viditvainaṁ
nānuśocitum arhasi*

SYNONYMS

avyaktaḥ—invisible; *ayam*—this soul; *acintyaḥ*—inconceivable; *ayam*—this soul; *avikāryaḥ*—unchangeable; *ayam*—this soul; *ucyate*—is said; *tasmāt*—therefore; *evam*—like this; *viditvā*—knowing it well; *enam*—this soul; *na*—do not; *anuśocitum*—to lament; *arhasi*—you deserve.

TRANSLATION

It is said that the soul is invisible, inconceivable and immutable. Knowing this, you should not grieve for the body.

PURPORT

As described previously, the magnitude of the soul is so small for our material calculation that he cannot be seen even by the most powerful microscope; therefore, he is invisible. As far as the soul's existence is concerned, no one can establish his existence experimentally beyond the proof of *śruti*, or Vedic wisdom. We have to accept this truth, because there is no other source of understanding the existence of the soul, although it is a fact by perception. There are many things we have to accept solely on grounds of superior authority. No one can deny the existence of his father, based upon the authority of his mother. There is no source of understanding the identity of the father except by the authority of the mother. Similarly, there is no source of understanding the soul except by studying the *Vedas*. In other words, the soul is inconceivable by human experimental knowledge. The soul is consciousness and conscious—that also is the statement of the *Vedas*, and we have to accept that. Unlike the bodily changes, there is no change in the soul. As eternally unchangeable, the soul remains atomic in comparison to the infinite Supreme Soul. The Supreme Soul is infinite, and the atomic soul is infinitesimal. Therefore, the infinitesimal soul, being unchangeable, can never become equal to the infinite soul, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This concept is repeated in the *Vedas* in different ways just to confirm the stability of the conception of the soul. Repetition of something is necessary in order that we understand the matter thoroughly, without error.

TEXT 26

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

*atha cainam nitya-jātaṁ
nityaṁ vā manyase mṛtaṁ
tathāpi tvaṁ mahā-bāho
nainam śocitum arhasi*

SYNONYMS

atha—if, however; *ca*—also; *enam*—this soul; *nitya-jātam*—always born; *nityam*—forever; *vā*—either; *manyase*—you so think; *mṛtam*—dead; *tathā* *api*—still; *tvam*—you; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed one; *na*—never; *enam*—about the soul; *śocitum*—to lament; *arhasi*—deserve.

TRANSLATION

If, however, you think that the soul [or the symptoms of life] is always born and dies forever, you still have no reason to lament, O mighty-armed.

PURPORT

There is always a class of philosophers, almost akin to the Buddhists, who do not believe in the separate existence of the soul beyond the body. When Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it appears that such philosophers existed, and they were known as the *lokāyatikas* and *vaibhāṣikas*. Such philosophers maintain that life symptoms take place at a certain mature condition of material combination. The modern material scientist and materialist philosophers also think similarly. According to them, the body is a combination of physical elements, and at a certain stage the life symptoms develop by interaction of the physical and chemical elements. The science of anthropology is based on this philosophy. Currently, many pseudo religions—now becoming fashionable in America—are also adhering to this philosophy, as well as to the nihilistic nondevotional Buddhist sects.

Even if Arjuna did not believe in the existence of the soul—as in the *vaibhāṣika* philosophy—there would still have been no cause for lamentation. No one laments the loss of a certain bulk of chemicals and stops discharging his prescribed duty. On the other hand, in modern science and scientific warfare, so many tons of chemicals are wasted for achieving victory over the enemy. According to the *vaibhāṣika* philosophy, the so-called soul or *ātmā* vanishes along with the deterioration of the body. So, in any case, whether

Arjuna accepted the Vedic conclusion that there is an atomic soul or he did not believe in the existence of the soul, he had no reason to lament. According to this theory, since there are so many living entities generating out of matter every moment, and so many of them are being vanquished every moment, there is no need to grieve for such incidents. If there were no rebirth for the soul, Arjuna had no reason to be afraid of being affected by sinful reactions due to his killing his grandfather and teacher. But at the same time, Kṛṣṇa sarcastically addressed Arjuna as *mahā-bāhu*, mighty-armed, because He, at least, did not accept the theory of the *vaibhāṣikas*, which leaves aside the Vedic wisdom. As a *kṣatriya*, Arjuna belonged to the Vedic culture, and it behooved him to continue to follow its principles.

TEXT 27

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

*jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur
dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca
tasmād aparihārye 'rthe
na tvam śocitum arhasi*

SYNONYMS

jātasya—of one who has taken his birth; *hi*—certainly; *dhruvaḥ*—a fact; *mṛtyuḥ*—death; *dhruvam*—it is also a fact; *janma*—birth; *mṛtasya*—of the dead; *ca*—also; *tasmāt*—therefore; *aparihārye*—of that which is unavoidable; *arthe*—in the matter; *na*—do not; *tvam*—you; *śocitum*—to lament; *arhasi*—deserve.

TRANSLATION

One who has taken his birth is sure to die, and after death one is sure to take birth again. Therefore, in the unavoidable discharge of your duty, you

should not lament.

PURPORT

One has to take birth according to one's activities of life. And after finishing one term of activities, one has to die to take birth for the next. In this way one is going through one cycle of birth and death after another without liberation. This cycle of birth and death does not, however, support unnecessary murder, slaughter and war. But at the same time, violence and war are inevitable factors in human society for keeping law and order.

The Battle of Kurukṣetra, being the will of the Supreme, was an inevitable event, and to fight for the right cause is the duty of a *kṣatriya*. Why should he be afraid of or aggrieved at the death of his relatives since he was discharging his proper duty? He did not deserve to break the law, thereby becoming subjected to the reactions of sinful acts, of which he was so afraid. By avoiding the discharge of his proper duty, he would not be able to stop the death of his relatives, and he would be degraded due to his selection of the wrong path of action.

TEXT 28

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

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

SYNONYMS

avyakta-ādīni—in the beginning unmanifested; *bhūtāni*—all that are created; *vyakta*—manifested; *madhyāni*—in the middle; *bhārata*—O descendant of Bharata; *avyakta*—nonmanifested; *nidhanāni*—when vanquished; *eva*—it is all

like that; *tatra*—therefore; *kā*—what; *paridevanā*—lamentation.

TRANSLATION

All created beings are unmanifest in their beginning, manifest in their interim state, and unmanifest again when annihilated. So what need is there for lamentation?

PURPORT

Accepting that there are two classes of philosophers, one believing in the existence of the soul and the other not believing in the existence of the soul, there is no cause for lamentation in either case. Nonbelievers in the existence of the soul are called atheists by followers of Vedic wisdom. Yet even if, for argument's sake, we accept this atheistic theory, there is still no cause for lamentation. Apart from the separate existence of the soul, the material elements remain unmanifested before creation. From this subtle state of nonmanifestation comes manifestation, just as from ether, air is generated; from air, fire is generated; from fire, water is generated; and from water, earth becomes manifested. From the earth, many varieties of manifestations take place. Take, for example, a big skyscraper manifested from the earth. When it is dismantled, the manifestation becomes again unmanifested and remains as atoms in the ultimate stage. The law of conservation of energy remains, but in course of time things are manifested and unmanifested—that is the difference. Then what cause is there for lamentation either in the stage of manifestation or in unmanifestation? Somehow or other, even in the unmanifested stage, things are not lost. Both at the beginning and at the end, all elements remain unmanifested, and only in the middle are they manifested, and this does not make any real material difference.

And if we accept the Vedic conclusion as stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that these material bodies are perishable in due course of time (*antavanta ime dehāḥ*) but that the soul is eternal (*nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ*), then we must remember always that the body is like a dress; therefore why lament the changing of a dress? The material body has no factual existence in relation to

the eternal soul. It is something like a dream. In a dream we may think of flying in the sky, or sitting on a chariot as a king, but when we wake up we can see that we are neither in the sky nor seated on the chariot. The Vedic wisdom encourages self-realization on the basis of the nonexistence of the material body. Therefore, in either case, whether one believes in the existence of the soul or one does not believe in the existence of the soul, there is no cause for lamentation for loss of the body.

TEXT 29

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-
माश्चर्यवद्ब्रूति तथैव चान्यः ।
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति
श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥ २९ ॥

*āścarya-vat paśyati kaścīd enam
āścarya-vad vadati tathaiiva cānyaḥ
āścarya-vac cainam anyaḥ śṛṇoti
śrutvāpy enam veda na caiva kaścīd*

SYNONYMS

āścarya-vat—as amazing; *paśyati*—sees; *kaścīd*—someone; *enam*—this soul;
āścarya-vat—as amazing; *vadati*—speaks of; *tathā*—thus; *eva*—certainly;
ca—also; *anyaḥ*—another; *āścarya-vat*—similarly amazing; *ca*—also;
enam—this soul; *anyaḥ*—another; *śṛṇoti*—hears of; *śrutvā*—having heard;
api—even; *enam*—this soul; *veda*—knows; *na*—never; *ca*—and;
eva—certainly; *kaścīd*—someone.

TRANSLATION

Some look on the soul as amazing, some describe him as amazing, and some hear of him as amazing, while others, even after hearing about him, cannot

understand him at all.

PURPORT

Since *Gītapaniṣad* is largely based on the principles of the *Upaniṣads*, it is not surprising to also find this passage in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.7):

*śravaṇayāpi bahubhir yo na labhyaḥ
śṛṇvanto 'pi bahavo yaṁ na vidyuḥ
āścāryo vaktā kuśalo 'sya labdhā
āścāryo 'sya jñātā kuśalānuśiṣṭaḥ*

The fact that the atomic soul is within the body of a gigantic animal, in the body of a gigantic banyan tree, and also in the microbic germs, millions and billions of which occupy only an inch of space, is certainly very amazing. Men with a poor fund of knowledge and men who are not austere cannot understand the wonders of the individual atomic spark of spirit, even though it is explained by the greatest authority of knowledge, who imparted lessons even to Brahmā, the first living being in the universe. Owing to a gross material conception of things, most men in this age cannot imagine how such a small particle can become both so great and so small. So men look at the soul proper as wonderful either by constitution or by description. Illusioned by the material energy, people are so engrossed in subject matters for sense gratification that they have very little time to understand the question of self-understanding, even though it is a fact that without this self-understanding all activities result in ultimate defeat in the struggle for existence. Perhaps they have no idea that one must think of the soul, and thus make a solution to the material miseries.

Some people who are inclined to hear about the soul may be attending lectures, in good association, but sometimes, owing to ignorance, they are misguided by acceptance of the Supersoul and the atomic soul as one without distinction of magnitude. It is very difficult to find a man who perfectly understands the position of the Supersoul, the atomic soul, their respective functions and relationships and all other major and minor details. And it is

still more difficult to find a man who has actually derived full benefit from knowledge of the soul, and who is able to describe the position of the soul in different aspects. But if, somehow or other, one is able to understand the subject matter of the soul, then one's life is successful.

The easiest process for understanding the subject matter of self, however, is to accept the statements of the *Bhagavad-gītā* spoken by the greatest authority, Lord Kṛṣṇa, without being deviated by other theories. But it also requires a great deal of penance and sacrifice, either in this life or in the previous ones, before one is able to accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Kṛṣṇa can, however, be known as such by the causeless mercy of the pure devotee and by no other way.

TEXT 30

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ ३० ॥

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

SYNONYMS

dehī—the owner of the material body; *nityam*—eternally; *avadhyaḥ*—cannot be killed; *ayam*—this soul; *dehe*—in the body; *sarvasya*—of everyone; *bhārata*—O descendant of Bharata; *tasmāt*—therefore; *sarvāṇi*—all; *bhūtāni*—living entities (that are born); *na*—never; *tvam*—you; *śocitum*—to lament; *arhasi*—deserve.

TRANSLATION

O descendant of Bharata, he who dwells in the body can never be slain.
Therefore you need not grieve for any living being.

PURPORT

The Lord now concludes the chapter of instruction on the immutable spirit soul. In describing the immortal soul in various ways, Lord Kṛṣṇa establishes that the soul is immortal and the body is temporary. Therefore Arjuna as a *kṣatriya* should not abandon his duty out of fear that his grandfather and teacher—Bhīṣma and Droṇa—will die in the battle. On the authority of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one has to believe that there is a soul different from the material body, not that there is no such thing as soul, or that living symptoms develop at a certain stage of material maturity resulting from the interaction of chemicals. Though the soul is immortal, violence is not encouraged, but at the time of war it is not discouraged when there is actual need for it. That need must be justified in terms of the sanction of the Lord, and not capriciously.

TEXT 31

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।
धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥ ३१ ॥

*sva-dharmam api cāvekṣya
na vikampitum arhasi
dharmyād dhi yuddhāc chreyo 'nyat
kṣatriyasya na vidyate*

SYNONYMS

sva-dharmam—one's own religious principles; *api*—also; *ca*—indeed; *avekṣya*—considering; *na*—never; *vikampitum*—to hesitate; *arhasi*—you deserve; *dharmyāt*—for religious principles; *hi*—indeed; *yuddhāt*—than fighting; *śreyaḥ*—better engagement; *anyat*—any other; *kṣatriyasya*—of the *kṣatriya*; *na*—does not; *vidyate*—exist.

TRANSLATION

Considering your specific duty as a *kṣatriya*, you should know that there is no better engagement for you than fighting on religious principles; and so there is no need for hesitation.

PURPORT

Out of the four orders of social administration, the second order, for the matter of good administration, is called *kṣatriya*. *Kṣat* means hurt. One who gives protection from harm is called *kṣatriya* (*trāyate*—to give protection). The *kṣatriyas* are trained for killing in the forest. A *kṣatriya* would go into the forest and challenge a tiger face to face and fight with the tiger with his sword. When the tiger was killed, it would be offered the royal order of cremation. This system has been followed even up to the present day by the *kṣatriya* kings of Jaipur state. The *kṣatriyas* are specially trained for challenging and killing because religious violence is sometimes a necessary factor. Therefore, *kṣatriyas* are never meant for accepting directly the order of *sannyāsa*, or renunciation. Nonviolence in politics may be a diplomacy, but it is never a factor or principle. In the religious law books it is stated:

*āhaveṣu mitho 'nyonyam
jighāmsanto mahī-kṣitaḥ
yuddhamānāḥ param śaktyā
svargam yānty aparāṇ-mukhāḥ*

*yajñeṣu paśavo brahman
hanyante satataṁ dvijaiḥ
saṁskṛtāḥ kila mantraiś ca
te 'pi svargam avāpnuvan*

“In the battlefield, a king or *kṣatriya*, while fighting another king envious of him, is eligible for achieving heavenly planets after death, as the *brāhmaṇas* also attain the heavenly planets by sacrificing animals in the sacrificial fire.”

Therefore, killing on the battlefield on religious principles and killing animals in the sacrificial fire are not at all considered to be acts of violence, because everyone is benefited by the religious principles involved. The animal sacrificed gets a human life immediately without undergoing the gradual evolutionary process from one form to another, and the *kṣatriyas* killed on the battlefield also attain the heavenly planets as do the *brāhmaṇas* who attain them by offering sacrifice.

There are two kinds of *sva-dharmas*, specific duties. As long as one is not liberated, one has to perform the duties of his particular body in accordance with religious principles in order to achieve liberation. When one is liberated, one's *sva-dharma*—specific duty—becomes spiritual and is not in the material bodily concept. In the bodily conception of life there are specific duties for the *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas* respectively, and such duties are unavoidable. *Sva-dharma* is ordained by the Lord, and this will be clarified in the Fourth Chapter. On the bodily plane *sva-dharma* is called *varṇāśrama-dharma*, or man's steppingstone for spiritual understanding. Human civilization begins from the stage of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, or specific duties in terms of the specific modes of nature of the body obtained. Discharging one's specific duty in any field of action in accordance with the orders of higher authorities serves to elevate one to a higher status of life.

TEXT 32

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

yadṛcchayā copapannam
svarga-dvāram apāvṛtam
sukhinaḥ kṣatriyāḥ pārtha
labhante yuddham idṛśam

SYNONYMS

yadṛcchayā—by its own accord; *ca*—also; *upapannam*—arrived at; *svarga*—of the heavenly planets; *dvāram*—door; *apāvṛtam*—wide open; *sukhinaḥ*—very happy; *kṣatriyāḥ*—the members of the royal order; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *labhante*—do achieve; *yuddham*—war; *īdṛśam*—like this.

TRANSLATION

O Pārtha, happy are the kṣatriyas to whom such fighting opportunities come unsought, opening for them the doors of the heavenly planets.

PURPORT

As supreme teacher of the world, Lord Kṛṣṇa condemns the attitude of Arjuna, who said, “I do not find any good in this fighting. It will cause perpetual habitation in hell.” Such statements by Arjuna were due to ignorance only. He wanted to become nonviolent in the discharge of his specific duty. For a *kṣatriya* to be on the battlefield and to become nonviolent is the philosophy of fools. In the *Parāśara-smṛiti*, or religious codes made by Parāśara, the great sage and father of Vyāsadeva, it is stated:

*kṣatriyo hi prajā rakṣan
śastra-pāṇiḥ pradaṇḍayan
nirjitya para-sainyādi
kṣitim dharmeṇa pālayet*

“The *kṣatriya*’s duty is to protect the citizens from all kinds of difficulties, and for that reason he has to apply violence in suitable cases for law and order. Therefore he has to conquer the soldiers of inimical kings, and thus, with religious principles, he should rule over the world.”

Considering all aspects, Arjuna had no reason to refrain from fighting. If he should conquer his enemies, he would enjoy the kingdom; and if he should die in the battle, he would be elevated to the heavenly planets, whose doors were wide open to him. Fighting would be for his benefit in either case.

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं सङ्ग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ३३ ॥

*atha cet tvam imam dharmyam
saṅgrāmaṁ na kariṣyasi
tataḥ sva-dharmaṁ kīrtiṁ ca
hitvā pāpam avāpsyasi*

SYNONYMS

atha—therefore; *cet*—if; *tvam*—you; *imam*—this; *dharmyam*—as a religious duty; *saṅgrāmaṁ*—fighting; *na*—do not; *kariṣyasi*—perform; *tataḥ*—then; *sva-dharmaṁ*—your religious duty; *kīrtiṁ*—reputation; *ca*—also; *hitvā*—losing; *pāpam*—sinful reaction; *avāpsyasi*—will gain.

TRANSLATION

If, however, you do not perform your religious duty of fighting, then you will certainly incur sins for neglecting your duties and thus lose your reputation as a fighter.

PURPORT

Arjuna was a famous fighter, and he attained fame by fighting many great demigods, including even Lord Śiva. After fighting and defeating Lord Śiva in the dress of a hunter, Arjuna pleased the lord and received as a reward a weapon called *pāśupata-astra*. Everyone knew that he was a great warrior. Even Droṇācārya gave him benedictions and awarded him the special weapon by which he could kill even his teacher. So he was credited with so many military certificates from many authorities, including his adopted father Indra, the heavenly king. But if he abandoned the battle, not only would he neglect his specific duty as a *kṣatriya*, but he would lose all his fame and good name and thus prepare his royal road to hell. In other words, he would go to hell, not

by fighting, but by withdrawing from battle.

TEXT 34

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।
सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥ ३४ ॥

*akīrtim cāpi bhūtāni
kathayiṣyanti te 'vyayām
sambhāvitasya cākīrtir
maraṇād atiricyate*

SYNONYMS

akīrtim—infamy; *ca*—also; *api*—over and above; *bhūtāni*—all people; *kathayiṣyanti*—will speak; *te*—of you; *avyayām*—forever; *sambhāvitasya*—for a respectable man; *ca*—also; *akīrtiḥ*—ill fame; *maraṇāt*—than death; *atiricyate*—becomes more.

TRANSLATION

People will always speak of your infamy, and for a respectable person, dishonor is worse than death.

PURPORT

Both as friend and philosopher to Arjuna, Lord Kṛṣṇa now gives His final judgment regarding Arjuna's refusal to fight. The Lord says, "Arjuna, if you leave the battlefield before the battle even begins, people will call you a coward. And if you think that people may call you bad names but that you will save your life by fleeing the battlefield, then My advice is that you'd do better to die in the battle. For a respectable man like you, ill fame is worse than death. So, you should not flee for fear of your life; better to die in the battle. That will save you from the ill fame of misusing My friendship and from losing

your prestige in society.”

So, the final judgment of the Lord was for Arjuna to die in the battle and not withdraw.

TEXT 35

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

*bhayād raṇād uparataṁ
maṁsyante tvāṁ mahā-rathāḥ
yeṣāṁ ca tvāṁ bahu-mato
bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam*

SYNONYMS

bhayāt—out of fear; *raṇāt*—from the battlefield; *uparataṁ*—ceased;
maṁsyante—they will consider; *tvāṁ*—you; *mahā-rathāḥ*—the great generals;
yeṣāṁ—for whom; *ca*—also; *tvāṁ*—you; *bahu-mataḥ*—in great estimation;
bhūtvā—having been; *yāsyasi*—you will go; *lāghavam*—decreased in value.

TRANSLATION

The great generals who have highly esteemed your name and fame will think that you have left the battlefield out of fear only, and thus they will consider you insignificant.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa continued to give His verdict to Arjuna: “Do not think that the great generals like Duryodhana, Karṇa, and other contemporaries will think that you have left the battlefield out of compassion for your brothers and grandfather. They will think that you have left out of fear for your life. And thus their high estimation of your personality will go to hell.”

TEXT 36

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।
निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥ ३६ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

avācya—unkind; *vādān*—fabricated words; *ca*—also; *bahūn*—many;
vadiṣyanti—will say; *tava*—your; *ahitāḥ*—enemies; *nindantaḥ*—while vilifying;
tava—your; *sāmāthyam*—ability; *tataḥ*—than that; *duḥkha-taram*—more
painful; *nu*—of course; *kim*—what is there.

TRANSLATION

Your enemies will describe you in many unkind words and scorn your ability. What could be more painful for you?

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa was astonished in the beginning at Arjuna's uncalled-for plea for compassion, and He described his compassion as befitting the non-Āryans. Now in so many words, He has proved His statements against Arjuna's so-called compassion.

TEXT 37

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥ ३७ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

hataḥ—being killed; *vā*—either; *prāpsyasi*—you gain; *svargam*—the heavenly kingdom; *jitvā*—by conquering; *vā*—or; *bhokṣyase*—you enjoy; *mahīm*—the world; *tasmāt*—therefore; *uttiṣṭha*—get up; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *yuddhāya*—to fight; *kṛta*—determined; *niścayaḥ*—in certainty.

TRANSLATION

O son of Kuntī, either you will be killed on the battlefield and attain the heavenly planets, or you will conquer and enjoy the earthly kingdom. Therefore, get up with determination and fight.

PURPORT

Even though there was no certainty of victory for Arjuna's side, he still had to fight; for, even being killed there, he could be elevated into the heavenly planets.

TEXT 38

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

*sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā
lābhālābhau jayājayaḥ
tato yuddhāya yujyasva*

naivam pāpam avāpsyasi

SYNONYMS

sukha—happiness; *duḥkhe*—and distress; *same*—in equanimity; *kṛtvā*—doing so; *lābha-alābhau*—both profit and loss; *jaya-ajayau*—both victory and defeat; *tataḥ*—thereafter; *yuddhāya*—for the sake of fighting; *yujyasva*—engage (fight); *na*—never; *evam*—in this way; *pāpam*—sinful reaction; *avāpsyasi*—you will gain.

TRANSLATION

Do thou fight for the sake of fighting, without considering happiness or distress, loss or gain, victory or defeat—and by so doing you shall never incur sin.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa now directly says that Arjuna should fight for the sake of fighting because He desires the battle. There is no consideration of happiness or distress, profit or gain, victory or defeat in the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That everything should be performed for the sake of Kṛṣṇa is transcendental consciousness; so there is no reaction to material activities. He who acts for his own sense gratification, either in goodness or in passion, is subject to the reaction, good or bad. But he who has completely surrendered himself in the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is no longer obliged to anyone, nor is he a debtor to anyone, as one is in the ordinary course of activities. It is said:

*devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇi ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam*

“Anyone who has completely surrendered unto Kṛṣṇa, Mukunda, giving up all other duties, is no longer a debtor, nor is he obliged to anyone—not the

demigods, nor the sages, nor the people in general, nor kinsmen, nor humanity, nor forefathers.” (*Bhāg.* 11.5.41) That is the indirect hint given by Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna in this verse, and the matter will be more clearly explained in the following verses.

TEXT 39

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥ ३९ ॥

*eṣā te 'bhihitā sāṅkhye
buddhir yoge tv imāṁ śṛṇu
buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha
karma-bandhaṁ prahāsyasi*

SYNONYMS

eṣā—all this; *te*—unto you; *abhihitā*—described; *sāṅkhye*—by analytical study; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *yoge*—in work without fruitive result; *tu*—but; *imāṁ*—this; *śṛṇu*—just hear; *buddhyā*—by intelligence; *yuktaḥ*—dovetailed; *yayā*—by which; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *karma-bandham*—bondage of reaction; *prahāsyasi*—you can be released from.

TRANSLATION

Thus far I have described this knowledge to you through analytical study. Now listen as I explain it in terms of working without fruitive results. O son of Pṛthā, when you act in such knowledge you can free yourself from the bondage of works.

PURPORT

According to the *Nirukti*, or the Vedic dictionary, *sāṅkhyā* means that which describes things in detail, and *sāṅkhyā* refers to that philosophy which

describes the real nature of the soul. And *yoga* involves controlling the senses. Arjuna's proposal not to fight was based on sense gratification. Forgetting his prime duty, he wanted to cease fighting, because he thought that by not killing his relatives and kinsmen he would be happier than by enjoying the kingdom after conquering his cousins and brothers, the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. In both ways, the basic principles were for sense gratification. Happiness derived from conquering them and happiness derived by seeing kinsmen alive are both on the basis of personal sense gratification, even at a sacrifice of wisdom and duty. Kṛṣṇa, therefore, wanted to explain to Arjuna that by killing the body of his grandfather he would not be killing the soul proper, and He explained that all individual persons, including the Lord Himself, are eternal individuals; they were individuals in the past, they are individuals in the present, and they will continue to remain individuals in the future, because all of us are individual souls eternally. We simply change our bodily dress in different manners, but actually we keep our individuality even after liberation from the bondage of material dress. An analytical study of the soul and the body has been very graphically explained by Lord Kṛṣṇa. And this descriptive knowledge of the soul and the body from different angles of vision has been described here as Sāṅkhya, in terms of the *Nirukti* dictionary. This Sāṅkhya has nothing to do with Sāṅkhya philosophy of the atheist Kapila. Long before the imposter Kapila's Sāṅkhya, the Sāṅkhya philosophy was expounded in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by the true Lord Kapila, the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who explained it to His mother, Devahūti. It is clearly explained by Him that the *puruṣa*, or the Supreme Lord, is active and that He creates by looking over the *prakṛti*. This is accepted in the *Vedas* and in the *Gītā*. The description in the *Vedas* indicates that the Lord glanced over the *prakṛti*, or nature, and impregnated it with atomic individual souls. All these individuals are working in the material world for sense gratification, and under the spell of material energy they are thinking of being enjoyers. This mentality is dragged to the last point of liberation when the living entity wants to become one with the Lord. This is the last snare of *māyā*, or sense gratificatory illusion, and it is only after many, many births of such sense gratificatory activities that a great soul surrenders unto Vāsudeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa, thereby fulfilling the search after

the ultimate truth.

Arjuna has already accepted Kṛṣṇa as his spiritual master by surrendering himself unto Him: *śiṣyas te 'haṁ śādhi mām tvām prapannam*. Consequently, Kṛṣṇa will now tell him about the working process in *buddhi-yoga*, or *karma-yoga*, or in other words, the practice of devotional service only for the sense gratification of the Lord. This *buddhi-yoga* is clearly explained in Chapter Ten, verse ten, as being direct communion with the Lord, who is sitting as Paramātmā in everyone's heart. But such communion does not take place without devotional service. One who is therefore situated in devotional or transcendental loving service to the Lord, or, in other words, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, attains to this stage of *buddhi-yoga* by the special grace of the Lord. The Lord says, therefore, that only to those who are always engaged in devotional service out of transcendental love does He award the pure knowledge of devotion in love. In that way the devotee can reach Him easily in the ever-blissful kingdom of God.

Thus the *buddhi-yoga* mentioned in this verse is the devotional service of the Lord, and the word Sāṅkhya mentioned herein has nothing to do with the atheistic *sāṅkhya-yoga* enunciated by the imposter Kapila. One should not, therefore, misunderstand that the *sāṅkhya-yoga* mentioned herein has any connection with the atheistic Sāṅkhya. Nor did that philosophy have any influence during that time; nor would Lord Kṛṣṇa care to mention such godless philosophical speculations. Real Sāṅkhya philosophy is described by Lord Kapila in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but even that Sāṅkhya has nothing to do with the current topics. Here, Sāṅkhya means analytical description of the body and the soul. Lord Kṛṣṇa made an analytical description of the soul just to bring Arjuna to the point of *buddhi-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*. Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa's Sāṅkhya and Lord Kapila's Sāṅkhya, as described in the *Bhāgavatam*, are one and the same. They are all *bhakti-yoga*. Lord Kṛṣṇa Said, therefore, that only the less intelligent class of men make a distinction between *sāṅkhya-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga* (*sāṅkhya-yogau pṛthag bālāḥ pravadanti na paṇḍitāḥ*).

Of course, atheistic *sāṅkhya-yoga* has nothing to do with *bhakti-yoga*, yet the unintelligent claim that the atheistic *sāṅkhya-yoga* is referred to in the

Bhagavad-gītā.

One should therefore understand that *buddhi-yoga* means to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in the full bliss and knowledge of devotional service. One who works for the satisfaction of the Lord only, however difficult such work may be, is working under the principles of *buddhi-yoga* and finds himself always in transcendental bliss. By such transcendental engagement, one achieves all transcendental understanding automatically, by the grace of the Lord, and thus his liberation is complete in itself, without his making extraneous endeavors to acquire knowledge. There is much difference between work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and work for fruitive results, especially in the matter of sense gratification for achieving results in terms of family or material happiness. *Buddhi-yoga* is therefore the transcendental quality of the work that we perform.

TEXT 40

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ ४० ॥

nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti
pratyavāyo na vidyate
sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya
trāyate mahato bhayāt

SYNONYMS

na—there is not; *iha*—in this yoga; *abhikrama*—in endeavoring; *nāśaḥ*—loss; *asti*—there is; *pratyavāyaḥ*—diminution; *na*—never; *vidyate*—there is; *su-alpam*—a little; *api*—although; *asya*—of this; *dharmasya*—occupation; *trāyate*—releases; *mahataḥ*—from very great; *bhayāt*—danger.

TRANSLATION

In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on

this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear.

PURPORT

Activity in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or acting for the benefit of Kṛṣṇa without expectation of sense gratification, is the highest transcendental quality of work. Even a small beginning of such activity finds no impediment, nor can that small beginning be lost at any stage. Any work begun on the material plane has to be completed, otherwise the whole attempt becomes a failure. But any work begun in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has a permanent effect, even though not finished. The performer of such work is therefore not at a loss even if his work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is incomplete. One percent done in Kṛṣṇa consciousness bears permanent results, so that the next beginning is from the point of two percent, whereas in material activity without a hundred percent success there is no profit. Ajāmila performed his duty in some percentage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but the result he enjoyed at the end was a hundred percent, by the grace of the Lord. There is a nice verse in this connection in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.17):

*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 gives up his occupational duties and works in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and then falls down on account of not completing his work, what loss is there on his part? And what can one gain if one performs his material activities perfectly?” Or, as the Christians say, “What profiteth a man if he gain the whole world yet suffers the loss of his eternal soul?”

Material activities and their results end with the body. But work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness carries a person again to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even after the loss of the body. At least one is sure to have a chance in the next life of being born again as a human being, either in the family of a great cultured *brāhmaṇa* or in a rich aristocratic family that will give one a further chance for elevation.

That is the unique quality of work done in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 41

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।
बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥ ४१ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

vyavasāya-ātmikā—resolute in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *ekā*—only one; *iha*—in this world; *kuru-nandana*—O beloved child of the Kurus; *bahu-śākhāḥ*—having various branches; *hi*—indeed; *anantāḥ*—unlimited; *ca*—also; *buddhayaḥ*—intelligence; *avyavasāyinām*—of those who are not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TRANSLATION

Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the intelligence of those who are irresolute is many-branched.

PURPORT

A strong faith that by Kṛṣṇa consciousness one will be elevated to the highest perfection of life is called *vyavasāyātmikā* intelligence. The Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Madhya* 22.62) states:

*'śraddhā'-śabde—viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niścaya
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*

Faith means unflinching trust in something sublime. When one is engaged in the duties of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he need not act in relationship to the material world with obligations to family traditions, humanity, or nationality. Fruitive activities are the engagements of one's reactions from past good or bad deeds. When one is awake in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he need no longer endeavor for good results in his activities. When one is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all activities are on the absolute plane, for they are no longer subject to dualities like good and bad. The highest perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is renunciation of the material conception of life. This state is automatically achieved by progressive Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The resolute purpose of a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is based on knowledge. *Vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā su-durlabhaḥ*: a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the rare good soul who knows perfectly that Vāsudeva, or Kṛṣṇa, is the root of all manifested causes. As by watering the root of a tree one automatically distributes water to the leaves and branches, so by acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can render the highest service to everyone—namely self, family, society, country, humanity, etc. If Kṛṣṇa is satisfied by one's actions, then everyone will be satisfied.

Service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is, however, best practiced under the able guidance of a spiritual master who is a bona fide representative of Kṛṣṇa, who knows the nature of the student and who can guide him to act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As such, to be well versed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness one has to act firmly and obey the representative of Kṛṣṇa, and one should accept the instruction of the bona fide spiritual master as one's mission in life. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura instructs us, in his famous prayers for the spiritual master, as follows:

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi
dhyāyan stuvāms tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“By satisfaction of the spiritual master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes satisfied. And by not satisfying the spiritual master, there is

no chance of being promoted to the plane of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I should, therefore, meditate and pray for his mercy three times a day, and offer my respectful obeisances unto him, my spiritual master.”

The whole process, however, depends on perfect knowledge of the soul beyond the conception of the body—not theoretically but practically, when there is no longer a chance for sense gratification manifested in fruitive activities. One who is not firmly fixed in mind is diverted by various types of fruitive acts.

TEXTS 42–43

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।
वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥ ४२ ॥
कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥ ४३ ॥

*yām imāṁ puṣpitāṁ vācam
pravadanty avipaścitaḥ
veda-vāda-ratāḥ pārtha
nānyad astīti vādinaḥ*

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

SYNONYMS

yām imāṁ—all these; *puṣpitāṁ*—flowery; *vācam*—words; *pravadanti*—say; *avipaścitaḥ*—men with a poor fund of knowledge; *veda-vāda-ratāḥ*—supposed followers of the Vedas; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *na*—never; *anyat*—anything else; *asti*—there is; *iti*—thus; *vādinaḥ*—the advocates; *kāma-ātmānaḥ*—desirous of sense gratification; *svarga-parāḥ*—aiming to achieve heavenly planets; *janma-karma-phala-pradām*—resulting in good birth

and other fruitive reactions; *kriyā-viśeṣa*—pompous ceremonies; *bahulām*—various; *bhoga*—in sense enjoyment; *aiśvarya*—and opulence; *gatim*—progress; *prati*—towards.

TRANSLATION

Men of small knowledge are very much attached to the flowery words of the Vedas, which recommend various fruitive activities for elevation to heavenly planets, resultant good birth, power, and so forth. Being desirous of sense gratification and opulent life, they say that there is nothing more than this.

PURPORT

People in general are not very intelligent, and due to their ignorance they are most attached to the fruitive activities recommended in the *karma-kāṇḍa* portions of the Vedas. They do not want anything more than sense gratificatory proposals for enjoying life in heaven, where wine and women are available and material opulence is very common. In the Vedas many sacrifices are recommended for elevation to the heavenly planets, especially the *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifices. In fact, it is stated that anyone desiring elevation to heavenly planets must perform these sacrifices, and men with a poor fund of knowledge think that this is the whole purpose of Vedic wisdom. It is very difficult for such inexperienced persons to be situated in the determined action of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As fools are attached to the flowers of poisonous trees without knowing the results of such attractions, unenlightened men are similarly attracted by such heavenly opulence and the sense enjoyment thereof.

In the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the Vedas it is said, *apāma somam amṛtā abhūma* and *akṣayyaṁ ha vai cāturmasya-yājinaḥ sukṛtaṁ bhavati*. In other words, those who perform the four-month penances become eligible to drink the *soma-rasa* beverages to become immortal and happy forever. Even on this earth some are very eager to have *soma-rasa* to become strong and fit to enjoy sense gratifications. Such persons have no faith in liberation from material bondage, and they are very much attached to the pompous ceremonies of

Vedic sacrifices. They are generally sensual, and they do not want anything other than the heavenly pleasures of life. It is understood that there are gardens called Nandana-kānana in which there is good opportunity for association with angelic, beautiful women and having a profuse supply of *soma-rasa* wine. Such bodily happiness is certainly sensual; therefore there are those who are purely attached to such material, temporary happiness, as lords of the material world.

TEXT 44

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहतचेतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥ ४४ ॥

bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām
tayāpahṛta-cetasām
vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ
samādhau na vidhīyate

SYNONYMS

bhoga—to material enjoyment; *aiśvarya*—and opulence; *prasaktānām*—for those who are attached; *tayā*—by such things; *apahṛta-cetasām*—bewildered in mind; *vyavasāya-ātmikā*—fixed in determination; *buddhiḥ*—devotional service to the Lord; *samādhau*—in the controlled mind; *na*—never; *vidhīyate*—does take place.

TRANSLATION

In the minds of those who are too attached to sense enjoyment and material opulence, and who are bewildered by such things, the resolute determination for devotional service to the Supreme Lord does not take place.

PURPORT

Samādhi means “fixed mind.” The Vedic dictionary, the *Nirukti*, says, *samyag ādhīyate ’sminn ātma-tattva-yāthātmyam*: “When the mind is fixed for understanding the self, it is said to be in *samādhi*. ” *Samādhi* is never possible for persons interested in material sense enjoyment, nor for those who are bewildered by such temporary things. They are more or less condemned by the process of material energy.

TEXT 45

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

traī-guṇya-viṣayā vedā
nīstrai-guṇyo bhavārjuna
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho
niryoga-kṣema ātmavān

SYNONYMS

traī-guṇya—pertaining to the three modes of material nature; *viṣayāḥ*—on the subject matter; *vedāḥ*—Vedic literatures; *nīstrai-guṇyaḥ*—transcendental to the three modes of material nature; *bhava*—be; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *nirdvandvaḥ*—without duality; *nitya-sattva-sthaḥ*—in a pure state of spiritual existence; *niryoga-kṣemaḥ*—free from ideas of gain and protection; *ātma-vān*—established in the self.

TRANSLATION

The Vedas deal mainly with the subject of the three modes of material nature. O Arjuna, become transcendental to these three modes. Be free from all dualities and from all anxieties for gain and safety, and be established in the self.

PURPORT

All material activities involve actions and reactions in the three modes of material nature. They are meant for fruitive results, which cause bondage in the material world. The *Vedas* deal mostly with fruitive activities to gradually elevate the general public from the field of sense gratification to a position on the transcendental plane. Arjuna, as a student and friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa, is advised to raise himself to the transcendental position of *Vedānta* philosophy where, in the beginning, there is *brahma-jijñāsā*, or questions on the supreme transcendence. All the living entities who are in the material world are struggling very hard for existence. For them the Lord, after creation of the material world, gave the Vedic wisdom advising how to live and get rid of the material entanglement. When the activities for sense gratification, namely the *karma-kāṇḍa* chapter, are finished, then the chance for spiritual realization is offered in the form of the *Upaniṣads*, which are part of different *Vedas*, as the *Bhagavad-gītā* is a part of the fifth *Veda*, namely the *Mahābhārata*. The *Upaniṣads* mark the beginning of transcendental life.

As long as the material body exists, there are actions and reactions in the material modes. One has to learn tolerance in the face of dualities such as happiness and distress, or cold and warmth, and by tolerating such dualities become free from anxieties regarding gain and loss. This transcendental position is achieved in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness when one is fully dependent on the good will of Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 46

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वतः सम्प्लुतोदके ।
तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥ ४६ ॥

*yāvān artha udapāne
sarvataḥ samplutodake
tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu*

brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ

SYNONYMS

yāvān—all that; *arthaḥ*—is meant; *uda-pāne*—in a well of water; *sarvataḥ*—in all respects; *sampluta-udake*—in a great reservoir of water; *tāvān*—similarly; *sarveṣu*—in all; *vedeṣu*—Vedic literatures; *brāhmaṇasya*—of the man who knows the Supreme Brahman; *vijānataḥ*—who is in complete knowledge.

TRANSLATION

All purposes served by a small well can at once be served by a great reservoir of water. Similarly, all the purposes of the Vedas can be served to one who knows the purpose behind them.

PURPORT

The rituals and sacrifices mentioned in the *karma-kāṇḍa* division of the Vedic literature are meant to encourage gradual development of self-realization. And the purpose of self-realization is clearly stated in the Fifteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15): the purpose of studying the Vedas is to know Lord Kṛṣṇa, the primeval cause of everything. So, self-realization means understanding Kṛṣṇa and one's eternal relationship with Him. The relationship of the living entities with Kṛṣṇa is also mentioned in the Fifteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.7). The living entities are parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa; therefore, revival of Kṛṣṇa consciousness by the individual living entity is the highest perfectional stage of Vedic knowledge. This is confirmed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.33.7) as follows:

*aho bata śva-paco 'to garīyān
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā
brahmānūcur nāma grṇanti ye te*

“O my Lord, a person who is chanting Your holy name, although born of a

low family like that of a *caṇḍāla* [dog-eater], is situated on the highest platform of self-realization. Such a person must have performed all kinds of penances and sacrifices according to Vedic rituals and studied the Vedic literatures many, many times after taking his bath in all the holy places of pilgrimage. Such a person is considered to be the best of the Āryan family.

So one must be intelligent enough to understand the purpose of the *Vedas*, without being attached to the rituals only, and must not desire to be elevated to the heavenly kingdoms for a better quality of sense gratification. It is not possible for the common man in this age to follow all the rules and regulations of the Vedic rituals, nor is it possible to study all of the *Vedānta* and the *Upaniṣads* thoroughly. It requires much time, energy, knowledge and resources to execute the purposes of the *Vedas*. This is hardly possible in this age. The best purpose of Vedic culture is served, however, by chanting the holy name of the Lord, as recommended by Lord Caitanya, the deliverer of all fallen souls. When Lord Caitanya was asked by a great Vedic scholar, Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, why He, the Lord, was chanting the holy name of the Lord like a sentimentalist instead of studying *Vedānta* philosophy, the Lord replied that His spiritual master had found Him to be a great fool and thus asked Him to chant the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He did so, and became ecstatic like a madman. In this Age of Kali, most of the population is foolish and not adequately educated to understand *Vedānta* philosophy; the best purpose of *Vedānta* philosophy is served by inoffensively chanting the holy name of the Lord. *Vedānta* is the last word in Vedic wisdom, and the author and knower of the *Vedānta* philosophy is Lord Kṛṣṇa; and the highest Vedāntist is the great soul who takes pleasure in chanting the holy name of the Lord. That is the ultimate purpose of all Vedic mysticism.

TEXT 47

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

karmaṇy evādhikāras te

mā phaleṣu kadācana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr
mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmaṇi

SYNONYMS

karmaṇi—in prescribed duties; *eva*—certainly; *adhikāraḥ*—right; *te*—of you; *mā*—never; *phaleṣu*—in the fruits; *kadācana*—at any time; *mā*—never; *karma-phala*—in the result of the work; *hetuḥ*—cause; *bhūḥ*—become; *mā*—never; *te*—of you; *saṅgaḥ*—attachment; *astu*—there should be; *akarmaṇi*—in not doing prescribed duties.

TRANSLATION

You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty.

PURPORT

There are three considerations here: prescribed duties, capricious work, and inaction. Prescribed duties are activities enjoined in terms of one's acquired modes of material nature. Capricious work means actions without the sanction of authority, and inaction means not performing one's prescribed duties. The Lord advised that Arjuna not be inactive, but that he perform his prescribed duty without being attached to the result. One who is attached to the result of his work is also the cause of the action. Thus he is the enjoyer or sufferer of the result of such actions.

As far as prescribed duties are concerned, they can be fitted into three subdivisions, namely routine work, emergency work and desired activities. Routine work performed as an obligation in terms of the scriptural injunctions, without desire for results, is action in the mode of goodness. Work with results becomes the cause of bondage; therefore such work is not auspicious. Everyone has his proprietary right in regard to prescribed duties,

but should act without attachment to the result; such disinterested obligatory duties doubtlessly lead one to the path of liberation.

Arjuna was therefore advised by the Lord to fight as a matter of duty without attachment to the result. His nonparticipation in the battle is another side of attachment. Such attachment never leads one to the path of salvation. Any attachment, positive or negative, is cause for bondage. Inaction is sinful. Therefore, fighting as a matter of duty was the only auspicious path of salvation for Arjuna.

TEXT 48

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्धयसिद्धयोः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥ ४८ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

yoga-sthaḥ—equipoised; *kuru*—perform; *karmāṇi*—your duties;
saṅgam—attachment; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *dhanañjaya*—O Arjuna;
siddhi-asiddhyoḥ—in success and failure; *samaḥ*—equipoised;
bhūtvā—becoming; *samatvam*—equanimity; *yogaḥ*—yoga; *ucyate*—is called.

TRANSLATION

Perform your duty equipoised, O Arjuna, abandoning all attachment to success or failure. Such equanimity is called yoga.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that he should act in *yoga*. And what is that *yoga*? *Yoga*

means to concentrate the mind upon the Supreme by controlling the ever-disturbing senses. And who is the Supreme? The Supreme is the Lord. And because He Himself is telling Arjuna to fight, Arjuna has nothing to do with the results of the fight. Gain or victory are Kṛṣṇa's concern; Arjuna is simply advised to act according to the dictation of Kṛṣṇa. The following of Kṛṣṇa's dictation is real *yoga*, and this is practiced in the process called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By Kṛṣṇa consciousness only can one give up the sense of proprietorship. One has to become the servant of Kṛṣṇa, or the servant of the servant of Kṛṣṇa. That is the right way to discharge duty in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which alone can help one to act in *yoga*.

Arjuna is a *kṣatriya*, and as such he is participating in the *varṇāśrama-dharma* institution. It is said in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that in the *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the whole aim is to satisfy Viṣṇu. No one should satisfy himself, as is the rule in the material world, but one should satisfy Kṛṣṇa. So unless one satisfies Kṛṣṇa, one cannot correctly observe the principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Indirectly, Arjuna was advised to act as Kṛṣṇa told him.

TEXT 49

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥ ४९ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

dūreṇa—discard it at a long distance; *hi*—certainly; *avaram*—abominable; *karma*—activity; *buddhi-yogāt*—on the strength of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *dhanañjaya*—O conqueror of wealth; *buddhau*—in such consciousness; *śaraṇam*—full surrender; *anviccha*—try for; *kṛpaṇāḥ*—misers;

phala-hetavaḥ—those desiring fruitive results.

TRANSLATION

O Dhanañjaya, keep all abominable activities far distant by devotional service, and in that consciousness surrender unto the Lord. Those who want to enjoy the fruits of their work are misers.

PURPORT

One who has actually come to understand one's constitutional position as an eternal servitor of the Lord gives up all engagements save working in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As already explained, *buddhi-yoga* means transcendental loving service to the Lord. Such devotional service is the right course of action for the living entity. Only misers desire to enjoy the fruit of their own work just to be further entangled in material bondage. Except for work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all activities are abominable because they continually bind the worker to the cycle of birth and death. One should therefore never desire to be the cause of work. Everything should be done in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. Misers do not know how to utilize the assets of riches which they acquire by good fortune or by hard labor. One should spend all energies working in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that will make one's life successful. Like misers, unfortunate persons do not employ their human energy in the service of the Lord.

TEXT 50

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥ ५० ॥

*buddhi-yukto jahātiha
ubhe sukr̥ta-duṣkr̥te
tasmād yogāya yujyasva
yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*

SYNONYMS

buddhi-yuktaḥ—one who is engaged in devotional service; *jahāti*—can get rid of; *iha*—in this life; *ubhe*—both; *sukṛta-duṣkṛte*—good and bad results; *tasmāt*—therefore; *yogāya*—for the sake of devotional service; *yujyasva*—be so engaged; *yogaḥ*—Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *karmasu*—in all activities; *kauśalam*—art.

TRANSLATION

A man engaged in devotional service rids himself of both good and bad actions even in this life. Therefore strive for yoga, which is the art of all work.

PURPORT

Since time immemorial each living entity has accumulated the various reactions of his good and bad work. As such, he is continuously ignorant of his real constitutional position. One's ignorance can be removed by the instruction of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which teaches one to surrender unto Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in all respects and become liberated from the chained victimization of action and reaction, birth after birth. Arjuna is therefore advised to act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the purifying process of resultant action.

TEXT 51

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

karma-jam buddhi-yuktā hi
phalam tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ
janma-bandha-vinirmuktāḥ
padam gacchanty anāmayam

SYNONYMS

karma-jam—due to fruitive activities; *buddhi-yuktāḥ*—being engaged in devotional service; *hi*—certainly; *phalam*—results; *tyaktvā*—giving up; *manīṣiṇaḥ*—great sages or devotees; *janma-bandha*—from the bondage of birth and death; *vinirmuktāḥ*—liberated; *padam*—position; *gacchanti*—they reach; *anāmayam*—without miseries.

TRANSLATION

By thus engaging in devotional service to the Lord, great sages or devotees free themselves from the results of work in the material world. In this way they become free from the cycle of birth and death and attain the state beyond all miseries [by going back to Godhead].

PURPORT

The liberated living entities belong to that place where there are no material miseries. The *Bhāgavatam* (10.14.58) says:

*samāṣṛitā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ padaṁ
padaṁ padaṁ yad vipadāṁ na teṣāṁ*

“For one who has accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Mukunda, or the giver of *mukti*, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf’s footprint. *paraṁ padaṁ*, or the place where there are no material miseries, or Vaikuṇṭha, is his goal, not the place where there is danger in every step of life.”

Owing to ignorance, one does not know that this material world is a miserable place where there are dangers at every step. Out of ignorance only, less intelligent persons try to adjust to the situation by fruitive activities,

thinking that the resultant actions will make them happy. They do not know that no kind of material body anywhere within the universe can give life without miseries. The miseries of life, namely birth, death, old age and diseases, are present everywhere within the material world. But one who understands his real constitutional position as the eternal servitor of the Lord, and thus knows the position of the Personality of Godhead, engages himself in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Consequently he becomes qualified to enter into the Vaikuṇṭha planets, where there is neither material, miserable life nor the influence of time and death. To know one's constitutional position means to know also the sublime position of the Lord. One who wrongly thinks that the living entity's position and the Lord's position are on the same level is to be understood to be in darkness and therefore unable to engage himself in the devotional service of the Lord. He becomes a lord himself and thus paves the way for the repetition of birth and death. But one who, understanding that his position is to serve, transfers himself to the service of the Lord, at once becomes eligible for Vaikuṇṭhaloka. Service for the cause of the Lord is called *karma-yoga* or *buddhi-yoga*, or in plain words, devotional service to the Lord.

TEXT 52

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

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

SYNONYMS

yadā—when; *te*—your; *moha*—of illusion; *kalilam*—dense forest;
buddhiḥ—transcendental service with intelligence; *vyatitariṣyati*—surpasses;
tadā—at that time; *gantā asi*—you shall go; *nirvedam*—callousness;

śrotavyasya—toward all that is to be heard; *śrutasya*—all that is already heard; *ca*—also.

TRANSLATION

When your intelligence has passed out of the dense forest of delusion, you shall become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is to be heard.

PURPORT

There are many good examples in the lives of the great devotees of the Lord of those who became indifferent to the rituals of the *Vedas* simply by devotional service to the Lord. When a person factually understands Kṛṣṇa and his relationship with Kṛṣṇa, he naturally becomes completely indifferent to the rituals of fruitive activities, even though an experienced *brāhmaṇa*. Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, a great devotee and *ācārya* in the line of the devotees, says:

*sandhyā-vandana bhadram astu bhavato bhoḥ snāna tubhyaṁ namo
bho devāḥ pitaraś ca tarpaṇa-vidhau nāhaṁ kṣamaḥ kṣamyatām
yatra kvāpi niṣadya yādava-kulottamasya kaṁsa-dviṣaḥ
smāraṁ smāraṁ aghaṁ harāmi tad alaṁ manye kim anyena me*

“O my prayers three times a day, all glory to you. O bathing, I offer my obeisances unto you. O demigods! O forefathers! Please excuse me for my inability to offer you my respects. Now wherever I sit, I can remember the great descendant of the Yadu dynasty [Kṛṣṇa], the enemy of Kaṁsa, and thereby I can free myself from all sinful bondage. I think this is sufficient for me.”

The Vedic rites and rituals are imperative for neophytes: comprehending all kinds of prayer three times a day, taking a bath early in the morning, offering respects to the forefathers, etc. But when one is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and is engaged in His transcendental loving service, one becomes indifferent to all these regulative principles because he has already attained perfection. If one can reach the platform of understanding by service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, he has no longer to execute different types of penances and sacrifices as

recommended in revealed scriptures. And, similarly, if one has not understood that the purpose of the *Vedas* is to reach Kṛṣṇa and simply engages in the rituals, etc., then he is uselessly wasting time in such engagements. Persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness transcend the limit of *śabda-brahma*, or the range of the *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*.

TEXT 53

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ५३ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

śruti—of Vedic revelation; *vipratipannā*—without being influenced by the fruitive results; *te*—your; *yadā*—when; *sthāsyati*—remains; *niścalā*—unmoved; *samādhau*—in transcendental consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *acalā*—unflinching; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *tadā*—at that time; *yogam*—self-realization; *avāpsyasi*—you will achieve.

TRANSLATION

When your mind is no longer disturbed by the flowery language of the *Vedas*, and when it remains fixed in the trance of self-realization, then you will have attained the divine consciousness.

PURPORT

To say that one is in *samādhi* is to say that one has fully realized Kṛṣṇa consciousness; that is, one in full *samādhi* has realized Brahman, Paramātmā

and Bhagavān. The highest perfection of self-realization is to understand that one is eternally the servitor of Kṛṣṇa and that one's only business is to discharge one's duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person, or unflinching devotee of the Lord, should not be disturbed by the flowery language of the *Vedas* nor be engaged in fruitive activities for promotion to the heavenly kingdom. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one comes directly into communion with Kṛṣṇa, and thus all directions from Kṛṣṇa may be understood in that transcendental state. One is sure to achieve results by such activities and attain conclusive knowledge. One has only to carry out the orders of Kṛṣṇa or His representative, the spiritual master.

TEXT 54

अर्जुन उवाच
स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत् ब्रजेत किम् ॥ ५४ ॥

arjuna uvāca
sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣā
samādhī-sthasya keśava
sthita-dhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta
kim āsīta vrajeta kim

SYNONYMS

arjunaḥ uvāca—Arjuna said; *sthita-prajñasya*—of one who is situated in fixed Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *kā*—what; *bhāṣā*—language; *samādhī-sthasya*—of one situated in trance; *keśava*—O Kṛṣṇa; *sthita-dhīḥ*—one fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *kim*—what; *prabhāṣeta*—speaks; *kim*—how; *āsīta*—does remain still; *vrajeta*—walks; *kim*—how.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, what are the symptoms of one whose consciousness is

thus merged in transcendence? How does he speak, and what is his language?
How does he sit, and how does he walk?

PURPORT

As there are symptoms for each and every man, in terms of his particular situation, similarly one who is Kṛṣṇa conscious has his particular nature—talking, walking, thinking, feeling, etc. As a rich man has his symptoms by which he is known as a rich man, as a diseased man has his symptoms by which he is known as diseased, or as a learned man has his symptoms, so a man in transcendental consciousness of Kṛṣṇa has specific symptoms in various dealings. One can know his specific symptoms from the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Most important is how the man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness speaks; for speech is the most important quality of any man. It is said that a fool is undiscovered as long as he does not speak, and certainly a well-dressed fool cannot be identified unless he speaks, but as soon as he speaks, he reveals himself at once. The immediate symptom of a Kṛṣṇa conscious man is that he speaks only of Kṛṣṇa and of matters relating to Him. Other symptoms then automatically follow, as stated below.

TEXT 55

श्रीभगवानुवाच
प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ ५५ ॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
prajahāti yadā kāmān
sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ
sthita-prajñas tadocyate

SYNONYMS

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *prajahāti*—gives up; *yadā*—when; *kāmān*—desires for sense gratification; *sarvān*—of all varieties; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā; *manaḥ-gatān*—of mental concoction; *ātmani*—in the pure state of the soul; *eva*—certainly; *ātmanā*—by the purified mind; *tuṣṭaḥ*—satisfied; *sthita-prajñāḥ*—transcendentally situated; *tadā*—at that time; *ucyate*—is said.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O Pārtha, when a man gives up all varieties of desire for sense gratification, which arise from mental concoction, and when his mind, thus purified, finds satisfaction in the self alone, then he is said to be in pure transcendental consciousness.

PURPORT

The *Bhāgavatam* affirms that any person who is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or devotional service of the Lord, has all the good qualities of the great sages, whereas a person who is not so transcendently situated has no good qualifications, because he is sure to be taking refuge in his own mental concoctions. Consequently, it is rightly said herein that one has to give up all kinds of sense desire manufactured by mental concoction. Artificially, such sense desires cannot be stopped. But if one is engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then, automatically, sense desires subside without extraneous efforts. Therefore, one has to engage himself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness without hesitation, for this devotional service will instantly help one onto the platform of transcendental consciousness. The highly developed soul always remains satisfied in himself by realizing himself as the eternal servitor of the Supreme Lord. Such a transcendently situated person has no sense desires resulting from petty materialism; rather, he remains always happy in his natural position of eternally serving the Supreme Lord.

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ ५६ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

duḥkheṣu—in the threefold miseries; *anudvigna-manāḥ*—without being agitated in mind; *sukheṣu*—in happiness; *vigata-spr̥haḥ*—without being interested; *vīta*—free from; *rāga*—attachment; *bhaya*—fear; *krodhaḥ*—and anger; *sthita-dhīḥ*—whose mind is steady; *munīḥ*—a sage; *ucyate*—is called.

TRANSLATION

One who is not disturbed in mind even amidst the threefold miseries or elated when there is happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady mind.

PURPORT

The word *muni* means one who can agitate his mind in various ways for mental speculation without coming to a factual conclusion. It is said that every *muni* has a different angle of vision, and unless a *muni* differs from other *munis*, he cannot be called a *muni* in the strict sense of the term. *Nāsāv ṛṣir yasya mataṁ na bhinnam* (*Mahābhārata, Vana-parva* 313.117). But a *sthita-dhīr muni*, as mentioned herein by the Lord, is different from an ordinary *muni*. The *sthita-dhīr muni* is always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for he has exhausted all his business of creative speculation. He is called

praśānta-niḥśeṣa-mano-rathāntara (*Stotra-ratna* 43), or one who has surpassed the stage of mental speculations and has come to the conclusion that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or Vāsudeva, is everything (*vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā su-durlabhaḥ*). He is called a *muni* fixed in mind. Such a fully Kṛṣṇa conscious person is not at all disturbed by the onslaughts of the threefold miseries, for he accepts all miseries as the mercy of the Lord, thinking himself only worthy of more trouble due to his past misdeeds; and he sees that his miseries, by the grace of the Lord, are minimized to the lowest. Similarly, when he is happy he gives credit to the Lord, thinking himself unworthy of the happiness; he realizes that it is due only to the Lord's grace that he is in such a comfortable condition and able to render better service to the Lord. And, for the service of the Lord, he is always daring and active and is not influenced by attachment or aversion. Attachment means accepting things for one's own sense gratification, and detachment is the absence of such sensual attachment. But one fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has neither attachment nor detachment because his life is dedicated in the service of the Lord. Consequently he is not at all angry even when his attempts are unsuccessful. Success or no success, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is always steady in his determination.

TEXT 57

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५७ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

yaḥ—one who; *sarvatra*—everywhere; *anabhisnehaḥ*—without affection;
tat—that; *tat*—that; *prāpya*—achieving; *śubha*—good; *aśubham*—evil;

na—never; *abhinandati*—praises; *na*—never; *dveṣṭi*—envies; *tasya*—his; *prajñā*—perfect knowledge; *pratiṣṭhitā*—fixed.

TRANSLATION

In the material world, one who is unaffected by whatever good or evil he may obtain, neither praising it nor despising it, is firmly fixed in perfect knowledge.

PURPORT

There is always some upheaval in the material world which may be good or evil. One who is not agitated by such material upheavals, who is unaffected by good and evil, is to be understood to be fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As long as one is in the material world there is always the possibility of good and evil because this world is full of duality. But one who is fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not affected by good and evil, because he is simply concerned with Kṛṣṇa, who is all-good absolute. Such consciousness in Kṛṣṇa situates one in a perfect transcendental position called, technically, *samādhī*.

TEXT 58

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

yadā saṁharate cāyaṁ
kūrmō 'ṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā

SYNONYMS

yadā—when; *saṁharate*—winds up; *ca*—also; *ayaṁ*—he; *kūrmāḥ*—tortoise; *aṅgāni*—limbs; *iva*—like; *sarvaśaḥ*—altogether; *indriyāṇi*—senses;

indriya-arthebhyaḥ—from the sense objects; *tasya*—his; *prajñā*—consciousness; *pratiṣṭhitā*—fixed.

TRANSLATION

One who is able to withdraw his senses from sense objects, as the tortoise draws its limbs within the shell, is firmly fixed in perfect consciousness.

PURPORT

The test of a *yogī*, devotee, or self-realized soul is that he is able to control the senses according to his plan. Most people, however, are servants of the senses and are thus directed by the dictation of the senses. That is the answer to the question as to how the *yogī* is situated. The senses are compared to venomous serpents. They want to act very loosely and without restriction. The *yogī*, or the devotee, must be very strong to control the serpents—like a snake charmer. He never allows them to act independently. There are many injunctions in the revealed scriptures; some of them are do-not's, and some of them are do's. Unless one is able to follow the do's and the do-not's, restricting oneself from sense enjoyment, it is not possible to be firmly fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The best example, set herein, is the tortoise. The tortoise can at any moment wind up his senses and exhibit them again at any time for particular purposes. Similarly, the senses of the Kṛṣṇa conscious persons are used only for some particular purpose in the service of the Lord and are withdrawn otherwise. Arjuna is being taught here to use his senses for the service of the Lord, instead of for his own satisfaction. Keeping the senses always in the service of the Lord is the example set by the analogy of the tortoise, who keeps the senses within.

TEXT 59

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ ५९ ॥

*viṣayā vinivartante
nirāhārasya dehinaḥ
rasa-varjam raso 'py asya
param dṛṣṭvā nivartate*

SYNONYMS

viṣayāḥ—objects for sense enjoyment; *vinivartante*—are practiced to be refrained from; *nirāhārasya*—by negative restrictions; *dehinaḥ*—for the embodied; *rasa-varjam*—giving up the taste; *rasaḥ*—sense of enjoyment; *api*—although there is; *asya*—his; *param*—far superior things; *dṛṣṭvā*—by experiencing; *nivartate*—he ceases from.

TRANSLATION

The embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment, though the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness.

PURPORT

Unless one is transcendently situated, it is not possible to cease from sense enjoyment. The process of restriction from sense enjoyment by rules and regulations is something like restricting a diseased person from certain types of eatables. The patient, however, neither likes such restrictions nor loses his taste for eatables. Similarly, sense restriction by some spiritual process like *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, in the matter of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, etc., is recommended for less intelligent persons who have no better knowledge. But one who has tasted the beauty of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the course of his advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no longer has a taste for dead, material things. Therefore, restrictions are there for the less intelligent neophytes in the spiritual advancement of life, but such restrictions are only good until one actually has a taste for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When one is actually Kṛṣṇa conscious, he automatically loses his taste for pale things.

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥ ६० ॥

*yatato hy api kaunteya
puruṣasya vipaścitaḥ
indriyāṇi pramāthīni
haranti prasabham manaḥ*

SYNONYMS

yatataḥ—while endeavoring; *hi*—certainly; *api*—in spite of; *kaunteya*—O son of Kuntī; *puruṣasya*—of a man; *vipaścitaḥ*—full of discriminating knowledge; *indriyāṇi*—the senses; *pramāthīni*—agitating; *haranti*—throw; *prasabham*—by force; *manaḥ*—the mind.

TRANSLATION

The senses are so strong and impetuous, O Arjuna, that they forcibly carry away the mind even of a man of discrimination who is endeavoring to control them.

PURPORT

There are many learned sages, philosophers and transcendentalists who try to conquer the senses, but in spite of their endeavors, even the greatest of them sometimes fall victim to material sense enjoyment due to the agitated mind. Even Viśvāmitra, a great sage and perfect *yogī*, was misled by Menakā into sex enjoyment, although the *yogī* was endeavoring for sense control with severe types of penance and *yoga* practice. And, of course, there are so many similar instances in the history of the world. Therefore, it is very difficult to control the mind and senses without being fully Kṛṣṇa conscious. Without

engaging the mind in Kṛṣṇa, one cannot cease such material engagements. A practical example is given by Śrī Yāmunācārya, a great saint and devotee, who says:

*yad-avadhi mama cetaḥ kṛṣṇa-pādāravinde
nava-nava-rasa-dhāmany udyataṁ rantum āsīt
tad-avadhi bata nārī-saṅgame smaryamāne
bhavati mukha-vikāraḥ suṣṭhu niṣṭhīvanam ca*

“Since my mind has been engaged in the service of the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and I have been enjoying an ever new transcendental humor, whenever I think of sex life with a woman, my face at once turns from it, and I spit at the thought.”

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is such a transcendently nice thing that automatically material enjoyment becomes distasteful. It is as if a hungry man had satisfied his hunger by a sufficient quantity of nutritious eatables. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa also conquered a great yogī, Durvāsā Muni, simply because his mind was engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness (*sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-pādāravindayor vacāmsi vaikunṭha-guṇānuvarṇane*).

TEXT 61

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६१ ॥

*tāni sarvāṇi saṁyamya
yukta āsīta mat-paraḥ
vaśe hi yasyendriyāṇi
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

SYNONYMS

tāni—those senses; *sarvāṇi*—all; *saṁyamya*—keeping under control; *yuktaḥ*—engaged; *āsīta*—should be situated; *mat-paraḥ*—in relationship with Me; *vaśe*—in full subjugation; *hi*—certainly; *yasya*—one whose;

indriyāṇi—senses; *tasya*—his; *prajñā*—consciousness; *pratiṣṭhitā*—fixed.

TRANSLATION

One who restrains his senses, keeping them under full control, and fixes his consciousness upon Me, is known as a man of steady intelligence.

PURPORT

That the highest conception of yoga perfection is Kṛṣṇa consciousness is clearly explained in this verse. And unless one is Kṛṣṇa conscious it is not at all possible to control the senses. As cited above, the great sage Durvāsā Muni picked a quarrel with Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, and Durvāsā Muni unnecessarily became angry out of pride and therefore could not check his senses. On the other hand, the king, although not as powerful a yogī as the sage, but a devotee of the Lord, silently tolerated all the sage’s injustices and thereby emerged victorious. The king was able to control his senses because of the following qualifications, as mentioned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.4.18–20):

*sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-pādāravindayor
vacāṁsi vaikuṇṭha-guṇānuvarṇane
karau harer mandira-mārjanādiṣu
śrutim cakārācyuta-sat-kathodaye*

*mukunda-liṅgālaya-darśane dṛśau
tad-bhṛtya-gātra-sparśe 'nga-saṅgamam
ghrāṇam ca tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe
śrīmat-tulasyā rasanām tad-arpite*

*pādaḥ hareḥ kṣetra-padānusaṅgaḥ
śiro hṛṣīkeśa-padābhivandane
kāmaḥ ca dāsya na tu kāma-kāmyayā
yathottama-śloka-janāśrayā ratih*

“King Ambarīṣa fixed his mind on the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, engaged his words in describing the abode of the Lord, his hands in cleansing the temple of

the Lord, his ears in hearing the pastimes of the Lord, his eyes in seeing the form of the Lord, his body in touching the body of the devotee, his nostrils in smelling the flavor of the flowers offered to the lotus feet of the Lord, his tongue in tasting the *tulasī* leaves offered to Him, his legs in traveling to the holy place where His temple is situated, his head in offering obeisances unto the Lord, and his desires in fulfilling the desires of the Lord... and all these qualifications made him fit to become a *mat-para* devotee of the Lord.”

The word *mat-para* is most significant in this connection. How one can become *mat-para* is described in the life of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a great scholar and *ācārya* in the line of the *mat-para*, remarks, *mad-bhakti-prabhāvena sarvendriya-vijaya-pūrvikā svātma-dṛṣṭiḥ sulabheti bhāvaḥ*. “The senses can be completely controlled only by the strength of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.” Also, the example of fire is sometimes given: “As a blazing fire burns everything within a room, Lord Viṣṇu, situated in the heart of the *yogī*, burns up all kinds of impurities.” The *Yoga-sūtra* also prescribes meditation on Viṣṇu, and not meditation on the void. The so-called *yogīs* who meditate on something which is not on the Viṣṇu platform simply waste their time in a vain search after some phantasmagoria. We have to be Kṛṣṇa conscious—devoted to the Personality of Godhead. This is the aim of the real *yoga*.

TEXT 62

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात्सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ ६२ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

dhyāyataḥ—while contemplating; *viṣayān*—sense objects; *pumsaḥ*—of a person; *saṅgaḥ*—attachment; *teṣu*—in the sense objects; *upajāyate*—develops; *saṅgāt*—from attachment; *sañjāyate*—develops; *kāmaḥ*—desire; *kāmāt*—from desire; *krodhaḥ*—anger; *abhijāyate*—becomes manifest.

TRANSLATION

While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them, and from such attachment lust develops, and from lust anger arises.

PURPORT

One who is not Kṛṣṇa conscious is subjected to material desires while contemplating the objects of the senses. The senses require real engagements, and if they are not engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, they will certainly seek engagement in the service of materialism. In the material world everyone, including Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā—to say nothing of other demigods in the heavenly planets—is subjected to the influence of sense objects, and the only method to get out of this puzzle of material existence is to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Lord Śiva was deep in meditation, but when Pārvatī agitated him for sense pleasure, he agreed to the proposal, and as a result Kārtikeya was born. When Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a young devotee of the Lord, he was similarly allured by the incarnation of Māyā-devī, but Haridāsa easily passed the test because of his unalloyed devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. As illustrated in the above-mentioned verse of Śrī Yāmunācārya, a sincere devotee of the Lord shuns all material sense enjoyment due to his higher taste for spiritual enjoyment in the association of the Lord. That is the secret of success. One who is not, therefore, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however powerful he may be in controlling the senses by artificial repression, is sure ultimately to fail, for the slightest thought of sense pleasure will agitate him to gratify his desires.

TEXT 63

क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ ६३ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

krodhāt—from anger; *bhavati*—takes place; *sammohaḥ*—perfect illusion; *sammohāt*—from illusion; *smṛti*—of memory; *vibhramaḥ*—bewilderment; *smṛti-bhramśāt*—after bewilderment of memory; *buddhi-nāśaḥ*—loss of intelligence; *buddhi-nāśāt*—and from loss of intelligence; *praṇaśyati*—one falls down.

TRANSLATION

From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost one falls down again into the material pool.

PURPORT

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given us this direction:

*prāpañcikatayā buddhyā
hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo
vairāgyaṁ phalgu kathyate
(Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.258)*

By development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can know that everything has its use in the service of the Lord. Those who are without knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness artificially try to avoid material objects, and as a result, although

they desire liberation from material bondage, they do not attain to the perfect stage of renunciation. Their so-called renunciation is called *phalgu*, or less important. On the other hand, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness knows how to use everything in the service of the Lord; therefore he does not become a victim of material consciousness. For example, for an impersonalist, the Lord, or the Absolute, being impersonal, cannot eat. Whereas an impersonalist tries to avoid good eatables, a devotee knows that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme enjoyer and that He eats all that is offered to Him in devotion. So, after offering good eatables to the Lord, the devotee takes the remnants, called *prasādam*. Thus everything becomes spiritualized, and there is no danger of a downfall. The devotee takes *prasādam* in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whereas the nondevotee rejects it as material. The impersonalist, therefore, cannot enjoy life, due to his artificial renunciation; and for this reason, a slight agitation of the mind pulls him down again into the pool of material existence. It is said that such a soul, even though rising up to the point of liberation, falls down again due to his not having support in devotional service.

TEXT 64

रागद्वेषविमुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ ६४ ॥

*rāga-dveṣa-vimuktais tu
viṣayān indriyaiś caran
ātma-vaśyair vidheyātmā
prasādam adhigacchati*

SYNONYMS

rāga—attachment; *dveṣa*—and detachment; *vimuktaiḥ*—by one who has become free from; *tu*—but; *viṣayān*—sense objects; *indriyaiḥ*—by the senses; *caran*—acting upon; *ātma-vaśyaiḥ*—under one's control; *vidheya-ātmā*—one who follows regulated freedom; *prasādam*—the mercy of the Lord;

adhigacchati—attains.

TRANSLATION

But a person free from all attachment and aversion and able to control his senses through regulative principles of freedom can obtain the complete mercy of the Lord.

PURPORT

It is already explained that one may externally control the senses by some artificial process, but unless the senses are engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord, there is every chance of a fall. Although the person in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness may apparently be on the sensual plane, because of his being Kṛṣṇa conscious he has no attachment to sensual activities. The Kṛṣṇa conscious person is concerned only with the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, and nothing else. Therefore he is transcendental to all attachment and detachment. If Kṛṣṇa wants, the devotee can do anything which is ordinarily undesirable; and if Kṛṣṇa does not want, he shall not do that which he would have ordinarily done for his own satisfaction. Therefore to act or not to act is within his control because he acts only under the direction of Kṛṣṇa. This consciousness is the causeless mercy of the Lord, which the devotee can achieve in spite of his being attached to the sensual platform.

TEXT 65

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥ ६५ ॥

prasāde sarva-duḥkhānām
hānir asyopajāyate
prasanna-cetaso hy āśu
buddhiḥ paryavatiṣṭhate

SYNONYMS

prasāde—on achievement of the causeless mercy of the Lord; *sarva*—of all; *duḥkhānām*—material miseries; *hāniḥ*—destruction; *asya*—his; *upajāyate*—takes place; *prasanna-cetasah*—of the happy-minded; *hi*—certainly; *āśu*—very soon; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *pari*—sufficiently; *avatiṣṭhate*—becomes established.

TRANSLATION

For one thus satisfied [in Kṛṣṇa consciousness], the threefold miseries of material existence exist no longer; in such satisfied consciousness, one's intelligence is soon well established.

TEXT 66

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥ ६६ ॥

nāsti buddhir ayuktasya
na cāyuktasya bhāvanā
na cābhāvayataḥ śāntir
aśāntasya kutaḥ sukham

SYNONYMS

na asti—there cannot be; *buddhiḥ*—transcendental intelligence; *ayuktasya*—of one who is not connected (with Kṛṣṇa consciousness); *na*—not; *ca*—and; *ayuktasya*—of one devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *bhāvanā*—fixed mind (in happiness); *na*—not; *ca*—and; *abhāvayataḥ*—of one who is not fixed; *śāntiḥ*—peace; *aśāntasya*—of the unpeaceful; *kutaḥ*—where is; *sukham*—happiness.

TRANSLATION

One who is not connected with the Supreme [in Kṛṣṇa consciousness] can have neither transcendental intelligence nor a steady mind, without which there is no possibility of peace. And how can there be any happiness without peace?

PURPORT

Unless one is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no possibility of peace. So it is confirmed in the Fifth Chapter (5.29) that when one understands that Kṛṣṇa is the only enjoyer of all the good results of sacrifice and penance, that He is the proprietor of all universal manifestations, and that He is the real friend of all living entities, then only can one have real peace. Therefore, if one is not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there cannot be a final goal for the mind. Disturbance is due to want of an ultimate goal, and when one is certain that Kṛṣṇa is the enjoyer, proprietor and friend of everyone and everything, then one can, with a steady mind, bring about peace. Therefore, one who is engaged without a relationship with Kṛṣṇa is certainly always in distress and is without peace, however much he may make a show of peace and spiritual advancement in life. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a self-manifested peaceful condition which can be achieved only in relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 67

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥ ६७ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

indriyāṇām—of the senses; *hi*—certainly; *caratām*—while roaming; *yat*—with which; *manaḥ*—the mind; *anuvīdhīyate*—becomes constantly engaged; *tat*—that; *asya*—his; *harati*—takes away; *prajñām*—intelligence; *vāyuh*—wind; *nāvam*—a boat; *iva*—like; *ambhasi*—on the water.

TRANSLATION

As a strong wind sweeps away a boat on the water, even one of the roaming senses on which the mind focuses can carry away a man's intelligence.

PURPORT

Unless all of the senses are engaged in the service of the Lord, even one of them engaged in sense gratification can deviate the devotee from the path of transcendental advancement. As mentioned in the life of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, all of the senses must be engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, for that is the correct technique for controlling the mind.

TEXT 68

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६८ ॥

tasmād yasya mahā-bāho
nigṛhītāni sarvaśaḥ
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā

SYNONYMS

tasmāt—therefore; *yasya*—whose; *mahā-bāho*—O mighty-armed one; *nigṛhītāni*—so curbed down; *sarvaśaḥ*—all around; *indriyāṇi*—the senses;

indriya-arthebhyaḥ—from sense objects; *tasya*—his; *prajñā*—intelligence; *pratiṣṭhitā*—fixed.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O mighty-armed, one whose senses are restrained from their objects is certainly of steady intelligence.

PURPORT

One can curb the forces of sense gratification only by means of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or engaging all the senses in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. As enemies are curbed by superior force, the senses can similarly be curbed, not by any human endeavor, but only by keeping them engaged in the service of the Lord. One who has understood this—that only by Kṛṣṇa consciousness is one really established in intelligence and that one should practice this art under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master—is called *sādhaka*, or a suitable candidate for liberation.

TEXT 69

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥ ६९ ॥

yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām
tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni
sā niśā paśyato muneḥ

SYNONYMS

yā—what; *niśā*—is night; *sarva*—all; *bhūtānām*—of living entities; *tasyām*—in that; *jāgarti*—is wakeful; *saṁyamī*—the self-controlled; *yasyām*—in which; *jāgrati*—are awake; *bhūtāni*—all beings; *sā*—that is; *niśā*—night;

paśyataḥ—for the introspective; *muneḥ*—sage.

TRANSLATION

What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled;
and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage.

PURPORT

There are two classes of intelligent men. One is intelligent in material activities for sense gratification, and the other is introspective and awake to the cultivation of self-realization. Activities of the introspective sage, or thoughtful man, are night for persons materially absorbed. Materialistic persons remain asleep in such a night due to their ignorance of self-realization. The introspective sage remains alert in the “night” of the materialistic men. The sage feels transcendental pleasure in the gradual advancement of spiritual culture, whereas the man in materialistic activities, being asleep to self-realization, dreams of varieties of sense pleasure, feeling sometimes happy and sometimes distressed in his sleeping condition. The introspective man is always indifferent to materialistic happiness and distress. He goes on with his self-realization activities undisturbed by material reactions.

TEXT 70

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं
समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे
स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥ ७० ॥

āpūryamāṇam acala-pratiṣṭham
samudram āpaḥ praviśanti yadvat
tadvat kāmā yaṁ praviśanti sarve
sa śāntim āpnoti na kāma-kāmī

SYNONYMS

āpūryamāṇam—always being filled; *acala-pratiṣṭham*—steadily situated; *samudram*—the ocean; *āpaḥ*—waters; *praviśanti*—enter; *yadvat*—as; *tadvat*—so; *kāmāḥ*—desires; *yam*—unto whom; *praviśanti*—enter; *sarve*—all; *saḥ*—that person; *śāntim*—peace; *āpnoti*—achieves; *na*—not; *kāma-kāmī*—one who desires to fulfill desires.

TRANSLATION

A person who is not disturbed by the incessant flow of desires—that enter like rivers into the ocean, which is ever being filled but is always still—can alone achieve peace, and not the man who strives to satisfy such desires.

PURPORT

Although the vast ocean is always filled with water, it is always, especially during the rainy season, being filled with much more water. But the ocean remains the same—steady; it is not agitated, nor does it cross beyond the limit of its brink. That is also true of a person fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As long as one has the material body, the demands of the body for sense gratification will continue. The devotee, however, is not disturbed by such desires, because of his fullness. A Kṛṣṇa conscious man is not in need of anything, because the Lord fulfills all his material necessities. Therefore he is like the ocean—always full in himself. Desires may come to him like the waters of the rivers that flow into the ocean, but he is steady in his activities, and he is not even slightly disturbed by desires for sense gratification. That is the proof of a Kṛṣṇa conscious man—one who has lost all inclinations for material sense gratification, although the desires are present. Because he remains satisfied in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, he can remain steady, like the ocean, and therefore enjoy full peace. Others, however, who want to fulfill desires even up to the limit of liberation, what to speak of material success, never attain peace. The fruitive workers, the salvationists, and also the yogīs

who are after mystic powers are all unhappy because of unfulfilled desires. But the person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is happy in the service of the Lord, and he has no desires to be fulfilled. In fact, he does not even desire liberation from the so-called material bondage. The devotees of Kṛṣṇa have no material desires, and therefore they are in perfect peace.

TEXT 71

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥ ७१ ॥

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

SYNONYMS

vihāya—giving up; *kāmān*—material desires for sense gratification; *yaḥ*—who; *sarvān*—all; *pumān*—a person; *carati*—lives; *niḥspṛhaḥ*—desireless; *nirmamaḥ*—without a sense of proprietorship; *nirahaṅkāraḥ*—without false ego; *saḥ*—he; *śāntim*—perfect peace; *adhigacchati*—attains.

TRANSLATION

A person who has given up all desires for sense gratification, who lives free from desires, who has given up all sense of proprietorship and is devoid of false ego—he alone can attain real peace.

PURPORT

To become desireless means not to desire anything for sense gratification. In other words, desire for becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious is actually desirelessness. To understand one's actual position as the eternal servitor of Kṛṣṇa, without

falsely claiming this material body to be oneself and without falsely claiming proprietorship over anything in the world, is the perfect stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One who is situated in this perfect stage knows that because Kṛṣṇa is the proprietor of everything, everything must be used for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna did not want to fight for his own sense satisfaction, but when he became fully Kṛṣṇa conscious he fought because Kṛṣṇa wanted him to fight. For himself there was no desire to fight, but for Kṛṣṇa the same Arjuna fought to his best ability. Real desirelessness is desire for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, not an artificial attempt to abolish desires. The living entity cannot be desireless or senseless, but he does have to change the quality of the desires. A materially desireless person certainly knows that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa (*īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam*), and therefore he does not falsely claim proprietorship over anything. This transcendental knowledge is based on self-realization—namely, knowing perfectly well that every living entity is an eternal part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa in spiritual identity, and that the eternal position of the living entity is therefore never on the level of Kṛṣṇa or greater than Him. This understanding of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the basic principle of real peace.

TEXT 72

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।
स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥ ७२ ॥

*eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ pārtha
naināṁ prāpya vimuhyati
sthitvāsyām anta-kāle 'pi
brahma-nirvāṇam ṛcchati*

SYNONYMS

eṣā—this; *brāhmī*—spiritual; *sthitiḥ*—situation; *pārtha*—O son of Pṛthā;
na—never; *enām*—this; *prāpya*—achieving; *vimuhyati*—one is bewildered;

sthitvā—being situated; *asyām*—in this; *anta-kāle*—at the end of life; *api*—also; *brahma-nirvāṇam*—the spiritual kingdom of God; *ṛcchati*—one attains.

TRANSLATION

That is the way of the spiritual and godly life, after attaining which a man is not bewildered. If one is thus situated even at the hour of death, one can enter into the kingdom of God.

PURPORT

One can attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness or divine life at once, within a second—or one may not attain such a state of life even after millions of births. It is only a matter of understanding and accepting the fact. Khaṭvāṅga Mahārāja attained this state of life just a few minutes before his death, by surrendering unto Kṛṣṇa. *Nirvāṇa* means ending the process of materialistic life. According to Buddhist philosophy, there is only void after the completion of this material life, but *Bhagavad-gītā* teaches differently. Actual life begins after the completion of this material life. For the gross materialist it is sufficient to know that one has to end this materialistic way of life, but for persons who are spiritually advanced, there is another life after this materialistic life. Before ending this life, if one fortunately becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious, he at once attains the stage of *brahma-nirvāṇa*. There is no difference between the kingdom of God and the devotional service of the Lord. Since both of them are on the absolute plane, to be engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord is to have attained the spiritual kingdom. In the material world there are activities of sense gratification, whereas in the spiritual world there are activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Attainment of Kṛṣṇa consciousness even during this life is immediate attainment of Brahman, and one who is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has certainly already entered into the kingdom of God.

Brahman is just the opposite of matter. Therefore *brāhmī sthiti* means “not on the platform of material activities.” Devotional service of the Lord is