



Reference Material

All the questions in this questionnaire are based on “Bhagavad Gita As It Is” by ‘His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada’ - Founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

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For Spreading the Message of Bhagavad Gita As It Is

By Srila Prabhupada in English & Hindi, if BBT have any objection it will be removed.

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi had often acknowledged the Bhagavad Gita's profound effect on his life. He said, "When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and I see not one ray of hope on the horizon, I turn to Bhagavad-Gita and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. Those who meditate on the Gita will derive fresh joy and new meanings from it every day." Have you ever faced with a disappointment despite giving your best? Have you seen or experienced bad things that happen to good people or vice-versa? Or have you ever wondered deeply about who you are, who God is, whether He exists & if He does, how are the three related? What is my higher responsibility as a man/woman? What is real love? What is real happiness? These are pertinent questions every man or woman must ask themselves and strive to get answers for to lead a harmonious and peaceful life. Ignorance is the real problem and self-enlightenment is the solution.

Gita Talent Search Examination

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Gita Talent Search Examination (GTSE) Rules & Regulations

Registration

1. The Registration Fees is Rs. 100/-
(For Online Registrations Please visit our website: www.gtse.co.in)
2. The Participants will be given Enrolment Form cum Admit Card which is enclosed at the last page of Gita Talent Search Examination Questionnaire, which participant has to fill and return along with the Registration Fees.

Examination

3. The exam paper will contain 100 Multiple Choice Questions from GTSE Questionnaire. Time allotted to solve the paper is 90 minutes.
4. Medium of contest will be English and Hindi.
5. Examination date is 17th January 2016. Timings and Centers will be declared later on to our website "www.gtse.co.in".
6. No Participant will be allowed to enter into the Examination Hall after half an hour of start of exam.
7. Participants found in possession of any material, which the organizers feel is objectionable, will be treated as a case of mal-practice. His candidature will stand immediately cancelled and such participant shall be debarred from the examination. No fees shall be refunded in such case. The decision of the organizers shall be the final and shall be abiding to one and all.
8. The Participants have to get their own pens, pencils, & writing boards for the exam.

Results and Prize Distribution

9. The venue and the date for the prizes distribution ceremony shall be decided at the sole discretion of the organizers, as per their convenience and the information will be available on **GTSE website: www.gtse.co.in**
10. In all cases and for all decisions, the decision of the organizers shall be final and shall be abiding to all the Participants.

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11. Only the Participants who have won the Prizes will be informed by Phone / SMS about their results.
12. For Results please visit our **website: www.gtse.co.in**
13. Revaluation / Rechecking request will not be entertained from any of the participants.

Gita Talent Search Examination Prizes

- **First Prize – Cash Rs. 40,000/-**
- **Second Prize – Cash Rs. 11,000/-**
- **Third Prize – Cash Rs. 5,100/-**
- 500 Consolation Prizes for Highly Talented Winners which includes
 - Trip to Avantipuri for 1st 50 Winners.
 - Divine Yoga Club Gift Passes for 2nd 50 Winners. Valid for one month.
 - Matchless Gift for Next 150 Winners.
 - Passes for Mrityu Ki Parajaya Seminar by World Renowned Speaker His Holiness Bhakti Prema Swami Maharaj for Next 150 winners.
 - Special 50 Prizes Only for Women.
 - Participation Certificates will be given to all participants.
 - Personality Development Course free Membership pass for next 50 winners with validity of 1 month of GTSE Club By Highly Effective Speakers:-
 1. Mr. Ajay Vyas (Ph.D, M Phil., MCA)
 2. Mr. Abhinav Berdia [MBA(XLRI), B.Tech (NIT-B), Financial Expert & Portfolio Manager at Goldman Sachs].
 3. Mr. Saurabh Tiwari [B.tech, M.tech, Ph.D (IIT Indore)].

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Chapter One: Observing the Armies on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra

(1.1)

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 the *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

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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.

(1.24)

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.

(1.30)

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,

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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.

(1.32-35)

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.

(1.42)

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

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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.

Exercise

1. Which book glorifies Bhagavad Gita specifically?

- a. *Gita Mahatmya.* b. *Bhagavat Puran.* c. *Vishnu Puran.* d. *None of the above.*

2. One should learn Gita from?

- a. *Old people.* b. *Experienced people.* c. *Devotee of Krishna.* d. *Scholars.*

3. O Sanjaya, after assembling in the place of at Kuruksetra, what did my sons and the sons of Pandu do, being desirous to fight ?

- a. *Worship.* b. *Warfare.* c. *Pilgrimage.* d. *Anxiety.*

4. How can a devotee of Krishna overcome sleep and ignorance?

- a. *By constantly thinking of Krishna .* b. *By reading Vedic philosophy.*
c. *By doing Yoga asana .* d. *By regularly reciting slokas*

5. Krishna could understand Arjuna's purpose of placing chariot in the midst of army because he is?

- a. *Madhusudana.* b. *Madan Mohan.* c. *Hrisikesa.* d. *Partha- Sarthi.*

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(c)	(c)	(a)	(c)

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Contents of the Gītā Summarized

(2.2)

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. The 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 tattvaṃ yaj jñānam advayam

brahmeti paramātmēti 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.

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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 cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokam mṛdayanti 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

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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.

(2.7)

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 aviditvāsmāl 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

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who is intelligent enough to utilize this body to solve all the problems of life. *Ya etad akṣaram gārgi viditvāsmāl 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*.

(2.12)

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-sthaṁ ye ’nupaśyanti dhīrās teṣāṁ śāntiḥ śāśvatī netareṣāṁ

(*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13)

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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

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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 the Lord is an eternal fact, and it is confirmed by the *Vedas* as above mentioned.

(2.13)

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.

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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*.

(2.14)

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

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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.

(2.22)

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

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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 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.

(2.23)

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. Fire weapons 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 the 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

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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.

(2.27)

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.

(2.38)

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 loss, 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:

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devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇāṃ pitṛṇāṃ na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan

sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇaṃ śaraṇyaṃ gato mukundaṃ 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.

(2.41)

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

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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 stuvamś 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.

Exercise

1.What is mentioned in Katha Upanishad as well as in the Svet- Asvatara Upanishad about the Supreme lord ?

a. He is destructor. b. He is creator. c. He is maintainer. d. All of above.

2.Why are the statements of Kṛṣṇa authoritative?

a. Krishna is Jiva b. Krishna cannot be subjected to illusion.
c. Krishna is speaking from shastras d. Krishna is yogi .

3.What pervades the entire body which is the indestructible ?

a. Mind. b. Blood . c. Water d. Soul

4.Soul is described as one ten-thousandth part of the upper portion of _?

a. Nail. b. Hand. c. Hair. d. Head.

5.What is the symptom of the soul?

a. Blood. b. Growth . c. Breathing. d. Consciousness

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(c)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(d)

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Chapter Three: Karma-yoga

(3.3)

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

(3.5)

It is not a question of embodied life, but it is the nature of the soul to be always active. Without the presence of the spirit soul, the material body cannot move. The body is only a dead vehicle to be worked by the spirit soul, which is always active and cannot stop even for a moment. As such, the spirit soul has to be engaged in the good work of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, otherwise it will be

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engaged in occupations dictated by the illusory energy. In contact with material energy, the spirit soul acquires material modes, and to purify the soul from such affinities it is necessary to engage in the prescribed duties enjoined in the *śāstras*. But if the soul is engaged in his natural function of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whatever he is able to do is good for him. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.17) affirms this:

tyaktvā sva-dharmam caraṇāmbujam harer bhajann apakvo 'tha patet tato yadi

yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kiṁ ko vārtha āpto 'bhajatām sva-dharmataḥ

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

(3.6)

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

(3.7)

Instead of becoming a pseudo transcendentalist for the sake of wanton living and sense enjoyment, it is far better to remain in one's own business and execute the purpose of life, which is to get free from material bondage and enter into the kingdom of God. The prime *svārtha-gati*, or goal of self-interest, is to reach Viṣṇu. The whole institution of *varṇa* and *āśrama* is designed to help us reach this goal of life. A householder can also reach this destination by

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regulated service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For self-realization, one can live a controlled life, as prescribed in the *śāstras*, and continue carrying out his business without attachment, and in that way make progress. A sincere person who follows this method is far better situated than the false pretender who adopts show-bottle spiritualism to cheat the innocent public. A sincere sweeper in the street is far better than the charlatan meditator who meditates only for the sake of making a living.

(3.10)

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

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

The *prajā-pati* is Lord Viṣṇu, and He is the Lord of all living creatures, all worlds, and all beauties, and the protector of everyone. The Lord created this material world to enable the conditioned souls to learn how to perform *yajñas* (sacrifices) for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, so that while in the material world they can live very comfortably without anxiety, and after finishing the present material body they can enter into the kingdom of God. That is the whole program for the conditioned soul. By performance of *yajña*, the conditioned souls gradually become Kṛṣṇa conscious and become godly in all respects. In the Age of Kali, the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* (the chanting of the names of God) is recommended by the Vedic scriptures, and this transcendental system was introduced by Lord Caitanya for the deliverance of all men in this age. *Saṅkīrtana-yajña* and Kṛṣṇa consciousness go well together. Lord Kṛṣṇa in His devotional form (as Lord Caitanya) is mentioned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.32) as follows, with special reference to the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*:

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kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam

yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ

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

(3.14)

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

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

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

(3.21)

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

(3.27)

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Two persons, one in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the other in material consciousness, working on the same level, may appear to be working on the same platform, but there is a wide gulf of difference in their respective positions. The person in material consciousness is convinced by false ego that he is the doer of everything. He does not know that the mechanism of the body is produced by material nature, which works under the supervision of the Supreme Lord. The materialistic person has no knowledge that ultimately he is under the control of Kṛṣṇa. The person in false ego takes all credit for doing everything independently, and that is the symptom of his nescience. He does not know that this gross and subtle body is the creation of material nature, under the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and as such his bodily and mental activities should be engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The ignorant man forgets that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is known as Hṛṣīkeśa, or the master of the senses of the material body, for due to his long misuse of the senses in sense gratification, he is factually bewildered by the false ego, which makes him forget his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.(3.37)

When a living entity comes in contact with the material creation, his eternal love for Kṛṣṇa is transformed into lust, in association with the mode of passion. Or, in other words, the sense of love of God becomes transformed into lust, as milk in contact with sour tamarind is transformed into yogurt. Then again, when lust is unsatisfied, it turns into wrath; wrath is transformed into illusion, and illusion continues the material existence. Therefore, lust is the greatest enemy of the living entity, and it is lust only which induces the pure living entity to remain entangled in the material world. Wrath is the manifestation of the mode of ignorance; these modes exhibit themselves as wrath and other corollaries. If, therefore, the mode of passion, instead of being degraded into the mode of ignorance, is elevated to the mode of goodness by the prescribed method of living and acting, then one can be saved from the degradation of wrath by spiritual attachment.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead expanded Himself into many for His ever-increasing spiritual bliss, and the living entities are parts and parcels of this spiritual bliss. They also have partial independence, but by misuse of their independence, when the service attitude is transformed into the propensity for sense enjoyment, they come under the sway of lust. This

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material creation is created by the Lord to give facility to the conditioned souls to fulfill these lustful propensities, and when completely baffled by prolonged lustful activities, the living entities begin to inquire about their real position.

This inquiry is the beginning of the *Vedānta-sūtras*, wherein it is said, *athāto brahma-jijñāsā*: one should inquire into the Supreme. And the Supreme is defined in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as *janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś ca*, or, “The origin of everything is the Supreme Brahman.” Therefore the origin of lust is also in the Supreme. If, therefore, lust is transformed into love for the Supreme, or transformed into Kṛṣṇa consciousness – or, in other words, desiring everything for Kṛṣṇa – then both lust and wrath can be spiritualized. Hanumān, the great servitor of Lord Rāma, exhibited his wrath by burning the golden city of Rāvaṇa, but by doing so he became the greatest devotee of the Lord. Here also, in *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Lord induces Arjuna to engage his wrath upon his enemies for the satisfaction of the Lord. Therefore, lust and wrath, when they are employed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, become our friends instead of our enemies.

(3.42)

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

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has already been explained. *Param dr̥ṣṭvā nivartate*. If the mind is engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord, there is no chance of its being engaged in the lower propensities. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the soul has been described as *mahān*, the great. Therefore the soul is above all – namely, the sense objects, the senses, the mind and the intelligence. Therefore, directly understanding the constitutional position of the soul is the solution of the whole problem.

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

Exercise

1. Philosophy without religion is _____? (BG 3.3)

a. *Mental speculation.* b. *Useless.* c. *Useful.* d. *Sentiment*

2. Religion without philosophy is sentiment, or sometimes , while philosophy without religion is (BG 3.3)

a. *fanaticism, intelligence.*

b. *faith, smartness.*

c. *fanaticism, superficial.*

d. *fanaticism, mental speculation.*

3. How many classes of men does Krishna explain Arjuna who try to realize self? (BG 3.3)

a. *One*

b. *Two*

c. *Three*

d. *Four*

4. Sankhya yoga means, analytical study of the nature of? (BG 3.3)

a. *Spirit and matter.*

b. *Matter and earth.* c. *Soul and earth.*

d. *Number and spirit.*

5. Religion without philosophy is? (BG 3.3)

a. *Mental speculation.* b. *Useless.*

c. *Useful.*

d. *Sentiment.*

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(d)	(b)	(a)	(d)

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Chapter Four: Transcendental Knowledge

(4.1)

Herein we find the history of the *Bhagavad-gītā* traced from a remote time when it was delivered to the royal order of all planets, beginning from the sun planet. The kings of all planets are especially meant for the protection of the inhabitants, and therefore the royal order should understand the science of *Bhagavad-gītā* in order to be able to rule the citizens and protect them from material bondage to lust. Human life is meant for cultivation of spiritual knowledge, in eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the executive heads of all states and all planets are obliged to impart this lesson to the citizens by education, culture and devotion. In other words, the executive heads of all states are intended to spread the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness so that the people may take advantage of this great science and pursue a successful path, utilizing the opportunity of the human form of life.

In this millennium, the sun-god is known as Vivasvān, the king of the sun, which is the origin of all planets within the solar system. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.52) it is stated:

yac-cakṣur eṣa savitā sakala-grahāṇām rājā samasta-sura-mūrtir aśeṣa-tejāḥ

yasyājñayā bhramati sambhṛta-kāla-cakro govindam ādi-puruṣam tam ahaṁ bhajāmi

“Let me worship,” Lord Brahmā said, “the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda [Kṛṣṇa], who is the original person and under whose order the sun, which is the king of all planets, is assuming immense power and heat. The sun represents the eye of the Lord and traverses its orbit in obedience to His order.”

The sun is the king of the planets, and the sun-god (at present of the name Vivasvān) rules the sun planet, which is controlling all other planets by supplying heat and light. He is rotating under the order of Kṛṣṇa, and Lord Kṛṣṇa originally made Vivasvān His first disciple to understand the science of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The *Gītā* is not, therefore, a speculative treatise for the insignificant mundane scholar but is a standard book of knowledge coming down from time immemorial.

In the *Mahābhārata* (*Śānti-parva* 348.51–52) we can trace out the history of the *Gītā* as follows:

tretā-yugādau ca tato vivasvān manave dadau

manuś ca loka-bhṛty-arthaṁ sutāyekṣvākave dadau

ikṣvākuṇā ca kathito vyāpya lokān avasthitaḥ

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“In the beginning of the millennium known as Tretā-yuga this science of the relationship with the Supreme was delivered by Vivasvān to Manu. Manu, being the father of mankind, gave it to his son Mahārāja Ikṣvāku, the king of this earth planet and forefather of the Raghu dynasty, in which Lord Rāmacandra appeared.” Therefore, *Bhagavad-gītā* existed in human society from the time of Mahārāja Ikṣvāku.

At the present moment we have just passed through five thousand years of the Kali-yuga, which lasts 432,000 years. Before this there was Dvāpara-yuga (800,000 years), and before that there was Tretā-yuga (1,200,000 years). Thus, some 2,005,000 years ago, Manu spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* to his disciple and son Mahārāja Ikṣvāku, the king of this planet earth. The age of the current Manu is calculated to last some 305,300,000 years, of which 120,400,000 have passed. Accepting that before the birth of Manu the *Gītā* was spoken by the Lord to His disciple the sun-god Vivasvān, a rough estimate is that the *Gītā* was spoken at least 120,400,000 years ago; and in human society it has been extant for two million years. It was respoken by the Lord again to Arjuna about five thousand years ago. That is the rough estimate of the history of the *Gītā*, according to the *Gītā* itself and according to the version of the speaker, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It was spoken to the sun-god Vivasvān because he is also a *kṣatriya* and is the father of all *kṣatriyas* who are descendants of the sun-god, or the *sūrya-vamśa kṣatriyas*. Because *Bhagavad-gītā* is as good as the *Vedas*, being spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this knowledge is *apauruṣeya*, superhuman. Since the Vedic instructions are accepted as they are, without human interpretation, the *Gītā* must therefore be accepted without mundane interpretation. The mundane wranglers may speculate on the *Gītā* in their own ways, but that is not *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. Therefore, *Bhagavad-gītā* has to be accepted as it is, from the disciplic succession, and it is described herein that the Lord spoke to the sun-god, the sun-god spoke to his son Manu, and Manu spoke to his son Ikṣvāku.

(4.2)

It is clearly stated that the *Gītā* was especially meant for the saintly kings because they were to execute its purpose in ruling over the citizens. Certainly *Bhagavad-gītā* was never meant for the demonic persons, who would dissipate its value for no one's benefit and would devise all types of interpretations according to personal whims. As soon as the original purpose was scattered by the motives of the unscrupulous commentators, there arose the need to reestablish the disciplic succession. Five thousand years ago it was detected by the Lord Himself that the disciplic

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succession was broken, and therefore He declared that the purpose of the *Gītā* appeared to be lost. In the same way, at the present moment also there are so many editions of the *Gītā* (especially in English), but almost all of them are not according to authorized disciplic succession. There are innumerable interpretations rendered by different mundane scholars, but almost all of them do not accept the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, although they make a good business on the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This spirit is demonic, because demons do not believe in God but simply enjoy the property of the Supreme. Since there is a great need of an edition of the *Gītā* in English, as it is received by the *paramparā* (disciplic succession) system, an attempt is made herewith to fulfill this great want. *Bhagavad-gītā* – accepted as it is – is a great boon to humanity; but if it is accepted as a treatise of philosophical speculations, it is simply a waste of time.

(4.7)

The word *srjāmi* is significant herein. *Srjāmi* cannot be used in the sense of creation, because, according to the previous verse, there is no creation of the Lord's form or body, since all of the forms are eternally existent. Therefore, *srjāmi* means that the Lord manifests Himself as He is. Although the Lord appears on schedule, namely at the end of the Dvāpara-yuga of the twenty-eighth millennium of the seventh Manu in one day of Brahmā, He has no obligation to adhere to such rules and regulations, because He is completely free to act in many ways at His will. He therefore appears by His own will whenever there is a predominance of irreligiosity and a disappearance of true religion. Principles of religion are laid down in the *Vedas*, and any discrepancy in the matter of properly executing the rules of the *Vedas* makes one irreligious. In the *Bhāgavatam* it is stated that such principles are the laws of the Lord. Only the Lord can manufacture a system of religion. The *Vedas* are also accepted as originally spoken by the Lord Himself to Brahmā, from within his heart. Therefore, the principles of *dharma*, or religion, are the direct orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*dharmam tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam*). These principles are clearly indicated throughout the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The purpose of the *Vedas* is to establish such principles under the order of the Supreme Lord, and the Lord directly orders, at the end of the *Gītā*, that the highest principle of religion is to surrender unto Him only, and nothing more. The Vedic principles push one towards complete surrender unto Him; and whenever such principles are disturbed by the demoniac, the Lord appears. From

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the *Bhāgavatam* we understand that Lord Buddha is the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who appeared when materialism was rampant and materialists were using the pretext of the authority of the *Vedas*. Although there are certain restrictive rules and regulations regarding animal sacrifice for particular purposes in the *Vedas*, people of demonic tendency still took to animal sacrifice without reference to the Vedic principles. Lord Buddha appeared in order to stop this nonsense and to establish the Vedic principles of nonviolence. Therefore each and every *avatāra*, or incarnation of the Lord, has a particular mission, and they are all described in the revealed scriptures. No one should be accepted as an *avatāra* unless he is referred to by scriptures. It is not a fact that the Lord appears only on Indian soil. He can manifest Himself anywhere and everywhere, and whenever He desires to appear. In each and every incarnation, He speaks as much about religion as can be understood by the particular people under their particular circumstances. But the mission is the same – to lead people to God consciousness and obedience to the principles of religion. Sometimes He descends personally, and sometimes He sends His bona fide representative in the form of His son, or servant, or Himself in some disguised form. The principles of the *Bhagavad-gītā* were spoken to Arjuna, and, for that matter, to other highly elevated persons, because he was highly advanced compared to ordinary persons in other parts of the world. Two plus two equals four is a mathematical principle that is true in the beginner's arithmetic class and in the advanced class as well. Still, there are higher and lower mathematics. In all incarnations of the Lord, therefore, the same principles are taught, but they appear to be higher and lower in varied circumstances. The higher principles of religion begin with the acceptance of the four orders and the four statuses of social life, as will be explained later. The whole purpose of the mission of incarnations is to arouse Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere. Such consciousness is manifest and nonmanifest only under different circumstances.

(4.8)

According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, a *sādhū* (holy man) is a man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A person may appear to be irreligious, but if he has the qualifications of Kṛṣṇa consciousness wholly and fully, he is to be understood to be *asādhū*. And *duṣkṛtām* applies to those who do not care for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such miscreants, or *duṣkṛtām*, are described as foolish and the lowest of mankind, even though they may be decorated with mundane education, whereas a person who is one hundred percent engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is accepted as a *sādhū*, even though such a

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person may be neither learned nor well cultured. As far as the atheistic are concerned, it is not necessary for the Supreme Lord to appear as He is to destroy them, as He did with the demons Rāvaṇa and Kāṁsa. The Lord has many agents who are quite competent to vanquish demons. But the Lord especially descends to appease His unalloyed devotees, who are always harassed by the demoniac. The demon harasses the devotee, even though the latter may happen to be his kin. Although Prahlāda Mahārāja was the son of Hiranyaśipu, he was nonetheless persecuted by his father; although Devakī, the mother of Kṛṣṇa, was the sister of Kāṁsa, she and her husband Vasudeva were persecuted only because Kṛṣṇa was to be born of them. So Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared primarily to deliver Devakī rather than kill Kāṁsa, but both were performed simultaneously. Therefore it is said here that to deliver the devotee and vanquish the demon miscreants, the Lord appears in different incarnations.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the following verses (*Madhya* 20.263–264) summarize these principles of incarnation:

sṛṣṭi-hetu yei mūrti prapañce avatare sei īśvara-mūrti ‘avatāra’ nāma dhare

māyātīta paravyome sabāra avasthāna viśve avatari’ dhare ‘avatāra’ nāma

“The *avatāra*, or incarnation of Godhead, descends from the kingdom of God for material manifestation. And the particular form of the Personality of Godhead who so descends is called an incarnation, or *avatāra*. Such incarnations are situated in the spiritual world, the kingdom of God. When they descend to the material creation, they assume the name *avatāra*.”

There are various kinds of *avatāras*, such as *puruṣāvatāras*, *guṇāvatāras*, *līlāvatāras*, *śakty-āveśa avatāras*, *manvantara-avatāras* and *yugāvatāras* – all appearing on schedule all over the universe. But Lord Kṛṣṇa is the primeval Lord, the fountainhead of all *avatāras*. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa descends for the specific purpose of mitigating the anxieties of the pure devotees, who are very anxious to see Him in His original Vṛndāvana pastimes. Therefore, the prime purpose of the Kṛṣṇa *avatāra* is to satisfy His unalloyed devotees.

The Lord says that He incarnates Himself in every millennium. This indicates that He incarnates also in the Age of Kali. As stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the incarnation in the Age of Kali is Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who spread the worship of Kṛṣṇa by the *saṅkīrtana* movement (congregational chanting of the holy names) and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout India. He predicted that this culture of *saṅkīrtana* would be broadcast all over the world, from town to town and village to village. Lord Caitanya as the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of

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Godhead, is described secretly but not directly in the confidential parts of the revealed scriptures, such as the *Upaniṣads*, *Mahābhārata* and *Bhāgavatam*. The devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa are very much attracted by the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya. This *avatāra* of the Lord does not kill the miscreants, but delivers them by His causeless mercy.

(4.9)

The Lord's descent from His transcendental abode is already explained in the sixth verse. One who can understand the truth of the appearance of the Personality of Godhead is already liberated from material bondage, and therefore he returns to the kingdom of God immediately after quitting this present material body. Such liberation of the living entity from material bondage is not at all easy. The impersonalists and the *yogīs* attain liberation only after much trouble and many, many births. Even then, the liberation they achieve – merging into the impersonal *brahma-jyotir* of the Lord – is only partial, and there is the risk of returning to this material world. But the devotee, simply by understanding the transcendental nature of the body and activities of the Lord, attains the abode of the Lord after ending this body and does not run the risk of returning to this material world. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.33) it is stated that the Lord has many, many forms and incarnations: *advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam*. Although there are many transcendental forms of the Lord, they are still one and the same Supreme Personality of Godhead. One has to understand this fact with conviction, although it is incomprehensible to mundane scholars and empiric philosophers. As stated in the *Vedas* (*Puruṣa-bodhinī Upaniṣad*):

eko devo nitya-līlānurakto bhakta-vyāpī hr̥dy antar-ātmā

“The one Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally engaged in many, many transcendental forms in relationships with His unalloyed devotees.” This Vedic version is confirmed in this verse of the *Gītā* personally by the Lord. He who accepts this truth on the strength of the authority of the *Vedas* and of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and who does not waste time in philosophical speculations attains the highest perfectional stage of liberation. Simply by accepting this truth on faith, one can, without a doubt, attain liberation. The Vedic version *tat tvam asi* is actually applied in this case. Anyone who understands Lord Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme, or who says unto the Lord, “You are the same Supreme Brahman, the Personality of Godhead,” is certainly liberated instantly, and consequently his entrance into the transcendental association

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of the Lord is guaranteed. In other words, such a faithful devotee of the Lord attains perfection, and this is confirmed by the following Vedic assertion:

tam eva viditvāti mṛtyum eti nānyaḥ panthā vidyate 'yanāya

“One can attain the perfect stage of liberation from birth and death simply by knowing the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and there is no other way to achieve this perfection.” (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 3.8) That there is no alternative means that anyone who does not understand Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead is surely in the mode of ignorance and consequently he will not attain salvation simply, so to speak, by licking the outer surface of the bottle of honey, or by interpreting the *Bhagavad-gītā* according to mundane scholarship. Such empiric philosophers may assume very important roles in the material world, but they are not necessarily eligible for liberation. Such puffed-up mundane scholars have to wait for the causeless mercy of the devotee of the Lord. One should therefore cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness with faith and knowledge, and in this way attain perfection.

(4.11)

Everyone is searching for Kṛṣṇa in the different aspects of His manifestations. Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is partially realized in His impersonal *brahma-jyotir* effulgence and as the all-pervading Supersoul dwelling within everything, including the particles of atoms. But Kṛṣṇa is fully realized only by His pure devotees. Consequently, Kṛṣṇa is the object of everyone's realization, and thus anyone and everyone is satisfied according to one's desire to have Him. In the transcendental world also, Kṛṣṇa reciprocates with His pure devotees in the transcendental attitude, just as the devotee wants Him. One devotee may want Kṛṣṇa as supreme master, another as his personal friend, another as his son and still another as his lover. Kṛṣṇa rewards all the devotees equally, according to their different intensities of love for Him. In the material world, the same reciprocations of feelings are there, and they are equally exchanged by the Lord with the different types of worshipers. The pure devotees both here and in the transcendental abode associate with Him in person and are able to render personal service to the Lord and thus derive transcendental bliss in His loving service. As for those who are impersonalists and who want to commit spiritual suicide by annihilating the individual existence of the living entity, Kṛṣṇa helps also by absorbing them into His effulgence. Such impersonalists do not agree to accept the eternal, blissful Personality of Godhead; consequently they cannot

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relish the bliss of transcendental personal service to the Lord, having extinguished their individuality. Some of them, who are not firmly situated even in the impersonal existence, return to this material field to exhibit their dormant desires for activities. They are not admitted into the spiritual planets, but they are again given a chance to act on the material planets. For those who are fruitive workers, the Lord awards the desired results of their prescribed duties, as the *yajñeśvara*; and those who are *yogīs* seeking mystic powers are awarded such powers. In other words, everyone is dependent for success upon His mercy alone, and all kinds of spiritual processes are but different degrees of success on the same path. Unless, therefore, one comes to the highest perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all attempts remain imperfect, as is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.10):

akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param

“Whether one is without desire [the condition of the devotees], or is desirous of all fruitive results or is after liberation, one should with all efforts try to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead for complete perfection, culminating in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

(4.12)

There is a great misconception about the gods or demigods of this material world, and men of less intelligence, although passing as great scholars, take these demigods to be various forms of the Supreme Lord. Actually, the demigods are not different forms of God, but they are God’s different parts and parcels. God is one, and the parts and parcels are many. The *Vedas* say, *nityo nityānām*: God is one. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*. The Supreme God is one – Kṛṣṇa – and the demigods are delegated with powers to manage this material world. These demigods are all living entities (*nityānām*) with different grades of material power. They cannot be equal to the Supreme God – Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa. Anyone who thinks that God and the demigods are on the same level is called an atheist, or *pāṣaṇḍī*. Even the great demigods like Brahmā and Śiva cannot be compared to the Supreme Lord. In fact, the Lord is worshiped by demigods such as Brahmā and Śiva (*śiva-virīñci-nutam*). Yet curiously enough there are many human leaders who are worshiped by foolish men under the misunderstanding of anthropomorphism or zoomorphism. *Iha devatāḥ* denotes a powerful man or demigod of this material world. But Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, does not belong to this world.

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He is above, or transcendental to, material creation. Even Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya, the leader of the impersonalists, maintains that Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa, is beyond this material creation. However, foolish people (*hṛta-jñāna*) worship the demigods because they want immediate results. They get the results, but do not know that results so obtained are temporary and are meant for less intelligent persons. The intelligent person is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and he has no need to worship the paltry demigods for some immediate, temporary benefit. The demigods of this material world, as well as their worshipers, will vanish with the annihilation of this material world. The boons of the demigods are material and temporary. Both the material worlds and their inhabitants, including the demigods and their worshipers, are bubbles in the cosmic ocean. In this world, however, human society is mad after temporary things such as the material opulence of possessing land, family and enjoyable paraphernalia. To achieve such temporary things, people worship the demigods or powerful men in human society. If a man gets some ministership in the government by worshiping a political leader, he considers that he has achieved a great boon. All of them are therefore kowtowing to the so-called leaders or “big guns” in order to achieve temporary boons, and they indeed achieve such things. Such foolish men are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the permanent solution to the hardships of material existence. They are all after sense enjoyment, and to get a little facility for sense enjoyment they are attracted to worshiping empowered living entities known as demigods. This verse indicates that people are rarely interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are mostly interested in material enjoyment, and therefore they worship some powerful living entity.

(4.16)

Action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has to be executed in accord with the examples of previous bona fide devotees. This is recommended in the fifteenth verse. Why such action should not be independent will be explained in the text to follow.

To act in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one has to follow the leadership of authorized persons who are in a line of disciplic succession as explained in the beginning of this chapter. The system of Kṛṣṇa consciousness was first narrated to the sun-god, the sun-god explained it to his son Manu, Manu explained it to his son Ikṣvāku, and the system is current on this earth from that very remote time. Therefore, one has to follow in the footsteps of previous authorities in the line of disciplic

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succession. Otherwise even the most intelligent men will be bewildered regarding the standard actions of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For this reason, the Lord decided to instruct Arjuna in Kṛṣṇa consciousness directly. Because of the direct instruction of the Lord to Arjuna, anyone who follows in the footsteps of Arjuna is certainly not bewildered.

It is said that one cannot ascertain the ways of religion simply by imperfect experimental knowledge. Actually, the principles of religion can only be laid down by the Lord Himself. *Dharmaṁ tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam* (Bhāg.6.3.19). No one can manufacture a religious principle by imperfect speculation. One must follow in the footsteps of great authorities like Brahmā, Śiva, Nārada, Manu, the Kumāras, Kapila, Prahlāda, Bhīṣma, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Yamarāja, Janaka and Bali Mahārāja. By mental speculation one cannot ascertain what is religion or self-realization. Therefore, out of causeless mercy to His devotees, the Lord explains directly to Arjuna what action is and what inaction is. Only action performed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can deliver a person from the entanglement of material existence.

(4.34)

The path of spiritual realization is undoubtedly difficult. The Lord therefore advises us to approach a bona fide spiritual master in the line of disciplic succession from the Lord Himself. No one can be a bona fide spiritual master without following this principle of disciplic succession. The Lord is the original spiritual master, and a person in the disciplic succession can convey the message of the Lord as it is to his disciple. No one can be spiritually realized by manufacturing his own process, as is the fashion of the foolish pretenders. The *Bhāgavatam*(6.3.19) says, *dharmaṁ tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam*: the path of religion is directly enunciated by the Lord. Therefore, mental speculation or dry arguments cannot help lead one to the right path. Nor by independent study of books of knowledge can one progress in spiritual life. One has to approach a bona fide spiritual master to receive the knowledge. Such a spiritual master should be accepted in full surrender, and one should serve the spiritual master like a menial servant, without false prestige. Satisfaction of the self-realized spiritual master is the secret of advancement in spiritual life. Inquiries and submission constitute the proper combination for spiritual understanding. Unless there is submission and service, inquiries from the learned spiritual master will not be effective. One must be able to pass the test of the spiritual

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master, and when he sees the genuine desire of the disciple, he automatically blesses the disciple with genuine spiritual understanding. In this verse, both blind following and absurd inquiries are condemned. Not only should one hear submissively from the spiritual master, but one must also get a clear understanding from him, in submission and service and inquiries. A bona fide spiritual master is by nature very kind toward the disciple. Therefore when the student is submissive and is always ready to render service, the reciprocation of knowledge and inquiries becomes perfect.

Exercise

1. Bhagavad-Gita was especially meant for..... (BG 4.2)

- a. Saintly Kings. b. People in General.
c. Only some sect of Learned Brahmins. d. None of the above.

2. What is the great boon to Humanity? (BG 4.2)

- a. Bhagavad-Gita accepted as it is. b. Bhagavad-Gita accepted as philosophical treatise.
c. Bhagavad-Gita accepted as story line. d. None of the above.

3. Whose sister was Devaki? (BG 4.8)

- a. Kamsa. b. Ravana c .Vasudeva. d. Nanda.

4. Prahalad Maharaj was a son of _____(BG 4.8)

- a. Ravana. b. Hiranyakashipu. c. Duryodhana. d. KumbhaKarëa,.

5.Principles of religion are laid down in (BG 4.7)

- a. Vedas. b. Literatures by Ascetics. c. Writes of great souls. d. Ancient Novels and Literatures.

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(a)	(a)	(b)	(a)

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Chapter Five: Karma-yoga – Action in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

(5.2)

Fruitive activities (seeking sense gratification) are cause for material bondage. As long as one is engaged in activities aimed at improving the standard of bodily comfort, one is sure to transmigrate to different types of bodies, thereby continuing material bondage perpetually. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.5.4–6) confirms this as follows:

*nūnaṁ pramattaḥ kurute vikarma yad indriya-prītaya āprṇoti
na sādhu manye yata ātmano 'yam asann api kleśa-da āsa dehaḥ
parābhavas tāvad abodha-jāto yāvan na jijñāsata ātma-tattvam
yāvat kriyās tāvad idaṁ mano vai karmātmakaṁ yena śarīra-bandhaḥ
evaṁ manaḥ karma-vaśaṁ prayuñkte avidyayātmany upadhīyamāne
prītir na yāvan mayi vāsudeve na mucyate deha-yogena tāvat*

“People are mad after sense gratification, and they do not know that this present body, which is full of miseries, is a result of one’s fruitive activities in the past. Although this body is temporary, it is always giving one trouble in many ways. Therefore, to act for sense gratification is not good. One is considered to be a failure in life as long as he makes no inquiry about his real identity. As long as he does not know his real identity, he has to work for fruitive results for sense gratification, and as long as one is engrossed in the consciousness of sense gratification one has to transmigrate from one body to another. Although the mind may be engrossed in fruitive activities and influenced by ignorance, one must develop a love for devotional service to Vāsudeva. Only then can one have the opportunity to get out of the bondage of material existence.”

Therefore, *jñāna* (or knowledge that one is not this material body but spirit soul) is not sufficient for liberation. One has to *act* in the status of spirit soul, otherwise there is no escape from material bondage. Action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not, however, action on the fruitive platform. Activities performed in full knowledge strengthen one’s advancement in real knowledge. Without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, mere renunciation of fruitive activities does not actually purify the heart of a conditioned soul. As long as the heart is not purified, one has to work on the fruitive platform. But action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness automatically helps one escape the result of fruitive

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action so that one need not descend to the material platform. Therefore action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is always superior to renunciation, which always entails a risk of falling. Renunciation without Kṛṣṇa consciousness is incomplete, as is confirmed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.258):

*prāpañcikatayā buddhyān hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo vairāgyam phalgu kathyate*

“When persons eager to achieve liberation renounce things related to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, thinking them to be material, their renunciation is called incomplete.” Renunciation is complete when it is in the knowledge that everything in existence belongs to the Lord and that no one should claim proprietorship over anything. One should understand that, factually, nothing belongs to anyone. Then where is the question of renunciation? One who knows that everything is Kṛṣṇa’s property is always situated in renunciation. Since everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, everything should be employed in the service of Kṛṣṇa. This perfect form of action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is far better than any amount of artificial renunciation by a *sannyāsī* of the Māyāvādī school.

(5.3)

One who is fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is always a renouncer because he feels neither hatred nor desire for the results of his actions. Such a renouncer, dedicated to the transcendental loving service of the Lord, is fully qualified in knowledge because he knows his constitutional position in his relationship with Kṛṣṇa. He knows fully well that Kṛṣṇa is the whole and that he is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. Such knowledge is perfect because it is qualitatively and quantitatively correct. The concept of oneness with Kṛṣṇa is incorrect because the part cannot be equal to the whole. Knowledge that one is one in quality yet different in quantity is correct transcendental knowledge leading one to become full in himself, having nothing to aspire to or lament over. There is no duality in his mind because whatever he does, he does for Kṛṣṇa. Being thus freed from the platform of dualities, he is liberated – even in this material world.

(5.6)

The real purpose of philosophical research is to find the ultimate goal of life. Since the ultimate goal of life is self-realization, there is no difference between the conclusions reached by the two processes. By Sāṅkhya philosophical research one comes to the conclusion that a living entity is not a part and parcel of the material world but of the supreme spirit whole. Consequently, the

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spirit soul has nothing to do with the material world; his actions must be in some relation with the Supreme. When he acts in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he is actually in his constitutional position. In the first process, Sāṅkhya, one has to become detached from matter, and in the devotional *yoga* process one has to attach himself to the work of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Factually, both processes are the same, although superficially one process appears to involve detachment and the other process appears to involve attachment. Detachment from matter and attachment to Kṛṣṇa are one and the same. One who can see this sees things as they are.

(5.7)

One who is on the path of liberation by Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very dear to every living being, and every living being is dear to him. This is due to his Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such a person cannot think of any living being as separate from Kṛṣṇa, just as the leaves and branches of a tree are not separate from the tree. He knows very well that by pouring water on the root of the tree, the water will be distributed to all the leaves and branches, or by supplying food to the stomach, the energy is automatically distributed throughout the body. Because one who works in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is servant to all, he is very dear to everyone. And because everyone is satisfied by his work, he is pure in consciousness. Because he is pure in consciousness, his mind is completely controlled. And because his mind is controlled, his senses are also controlled. Because his mind is always fixed on Kṛṣṇa, there is no chance of his being deviated from Kṛṣṇa. Nor is there a chance that he will engage his senses in matters other than the service of the Lord. He does not like to hear anything except topics relating to Kṛṣṇa; he does not like to eat anything which is not offered to Kṛṣṇa; and he does not wish to go anywhere if Kṛṣṇa is not involved. Therefore, his senses are controlled. A man of controlled senses cannot be offensive to anyone. One may ask, “Why then was Arjuna offensive (in battle) to others? Wasn’t he in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?” Arjuna was only superficially offensive because (as has already been explained in the Second Chapter) all the assembled persons on the battlefield would continue to live individually, as the soul cannot be slain. So, spiritually, no one was killed on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. Only their dresses were changed by the order of Kṛṣṇa, who was personally present. Therefore Arjuna, while fighting on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, was not really fighting at all; he was simply carrying out the orders of Kṛṣṇa in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such a person is never entangled in the reactions of work.

(5.18)

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A Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not make any distinction between species or castes. The *brāhmaṇa* and the outcaste may be different from the social point of view, or a dog, a cow and an elephant may be different from the point of view of species, but these differences of body are meaningless from the viewpoint of a learned transcendentalist. This is due to their relationship to the Supreme, for the Supreme Lord, by His plenary portion as Paramātmā, is present in everyone's heart. Such an understanding of the Supreme is real knowledge. As far as the bodies are concerned in different castes or different species of life, the Lord is equally kind to everyone because He treats every living being as a friend yet maintains Himself as Paramātmā regardless of the circumstances of the living entities. The Lord as Paramātmā is present both in the outcaste and in the *brāhmaṇa*, although the body of *abrāhmaṇa* and that of an outcaste are not the same. The bodies are material productions of different modes of material nature, but the soul and the Supersoul within the body are of the same spiritual quality. The similarity in the quality of the soul and the Supersoul, however, does not make them equal in quantity, for the individual soul is present only in that particular body whereas the Paramātmā is present in each and every body. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has full knowledge of this, and therefore he is truly learned and has equal vision. The similar characteristics of the soul and Supersoul are that they are both conscious, eternal and blissful. But the difference is that the individual soul is conscious within the limited jurisdiction of the body whereas the Supersoul is conscious of all bodies. The Supersoul is present in all bodies without distinction.

(5.29)

The conditioned souls within the clutches of the illusory energy are all anxious to attain peace in the material world. But they do not know the formula for peace, which is explained in this part of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The greatest peace formula is simply this: Lord Kṛṣṇa is the beneficiary in all human activities. Men should offer everything to the transcendental service of the Lord because He is the proprietor of all planets and the demigods thereon. No one is greater than He. He is greater than the greatest of the demigods, Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā. In the *Vedas* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.7) the Supreme Lord is described as *tam īśvarāṇām paramam maheśvaram*. Under the spell of illusion, living entities are trying to be lords of all they survey, but actually they are dominated by the material energy of the Lord. The Lord is the

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master of material nature, and the conditioned souls are under the stringent rules of material nature. Unless one understands these bare facts, it is not possible to achieve peace in the world either individually or collectively. This is the sense of Kṛṣṇa consciousness: Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme predominator, and all living entities, including the great demigods, are His subordinates. One can attain perfect peace only in complete Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

This Fifth Chapter is a practical explanation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, generally known as *karma-yoga*. The question of mental speculation as to how *karma-yoga* can give liberation is answered herewith. To work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is to work with the complete knowledge of the Lord as the predominator. Such work is not different from transcendental knowledge. Direct Kṛṣṇa consciousness is *bhakti-yoga*, and *jñāna-yoga* is a path leading to *bhakti-yoga*. Kṛṣṇa consciousness means to work in full knowledge of one's relationship with the Supreme Absolute, and the perfection of this consciousness is full knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A pure soul is the eternal servant of God as His fragmental part and parcel. He comes into contact with *māyā* (illusion) due to the desire to lord it over *māyā*, and that is the cause of his many sufferings. As long as he is in contact with matter, he has to execute work in terms of material necessities. Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, brings one into spiritual life even while one is within the jurisdiction of matter, for it is an arousing of spiritual existence by practice in the material world. The more one is advanced, the more he is freed from the clutches of matter. The Lord is not partial toward anyone. Everything depends on one's practical performance of duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which helps one control the senses in every respect and conquer the influence of desire and anger. And one who stands fast in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, controlling the abovementioned passions, remains factually in the transcendental stage, or *brahma-nirvāṇa*. The eightfold *yoga* mysticism is automatically practiced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness because the ultimate purpose is served. There is a gradual process of elevation in the practice of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*. But these only preface perfection by devotional service, which alone can award peace to the human being. It is the highest perfection of life.

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Exercise

1. Who said to whom? (BG 5.3)

“One who neither hates nor desires the fruits of his activities is known to be always renounced.”

- a. Krishna to Arjuna. b. Arjuna to Krishna.
c. Sanjaya to Dhrtrashtra. d. Krishna to Yudhishtira.

2. What do you mean by “Fruitive Activities”? (BG 5.2)

- a. Fruit giving activities. b. Good activities.
c. Bad activities. d. Seeking sense gratification.

3. What is the cause for material bondage? (BG 5.2)

- a. Desires. b. Fruitive Activities. c. Friends. d. Material World.

4. Guess the right word? (BG 5.2)

“But, of the two, work in devotional service is better than _____ of work”

- a. Attachment. b. Atonement. c. Renunciation. d. Attraction.

5. One who is fully in _____ is always a renouncer, because he feels neither hatred nor desire for the results of his action. (BG 5.3)

- a. Material consciousness b. Maya consciousness c. Krishna consciousness. d. Body consciousness.

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(d)	(b)	(c)	(c)

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Chapter Six: Dhyāna-yoga

(6.6)

The purpose of practicing eightfold *yoga* is to control the mind in order to make it a friend in discharging the human mission. Unless the mind is controlled, the practice of *yoga* (for show) is simply a waste of time. One who cannot control his mind lives always with the greatest enemy, and thus his life and its mission are spoiled. The constitutional position of the living entity is to carry out the order of the superior. As long as one's mind remains an unconquered enemy, one has to serve the dictations of lust, anger, avarice, illusion, etc. But when the mind is conquered, one voluntarily agrees to abide by the dictation of the Personality of Godhead, who is situated within the heart of everyone as *Paramātmā*. Real *yoga* practice entails meeting the *Paramātmā* within the heart and then following His dictation. For one who takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness directly, perfect surrender to the dictation of the Lord follows automatically.

(6.16)

Regulation of diet and sleep is recommended herein for the *yogīs*. Too much eating means eating more than is required to keep the body and soul together. There is no need for men to eat animals, because there is an ample supply of grains, vegetables, fruits and milk. Such simple foodstuff is considered to be in the mode of goodness according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Animal food is for those in the mode of ignorance. Therefore, those who indulge in animal food, drinking, smoking and eating food which is not first offered to Kṛṣṇa will suffer sinful reactions because of eating only polluted things. *Bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā ye pacanty ātmakāraṇāt*. Anyone who eats for sense pleasure, or cooks for himself, not offering his food to Kṛṣṇa, eats only sin. One who eats sin and eats more than is allotted to him cannot execute perfect *yoga*. It is best that one eat only the remnants of foodstuff offered to Kṛṣṇa. A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness does not eat anything which is not first offered to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, only the Kṛṣṇa conscious person can attain perfection in *yoga* practice. Nor can one who artificially abstains from eating, manufacturing his own personal process of fasting, practice *yoga*. The Kṛṣṇa conscious person observes fasting as it is recommended in the scriptures. He does not fast or eat more than is required, and he is thus competent to perform *yoga* practice. One who eats

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more than required will dream very much while sleeping, and he must consequently sleep more than is required. One should not sleep more than six hours daily. One who sleeps more than six hours out of twenty-four is certainly influenced by the mode of ignorance. A person in the mode of ignorance is lazy and prone to sleep a great deal. Such a person cannot perform *yoga*.

(6.17)

Extravagance in the matter of eating, sleeping, defending and mating – which are demands of the body – can block advancement in the practice of *yoga*. As far as eating is concerned, it can be regulated only when one is practiced to take and accept *prasādam*, sanctified food. Lord Kṛṣṇa is offered, according to the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.26), vegetables, flowers, fruits, grains, milk, etc. In this way, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness becomes automatically trained not to accept food not meant for human consumption, or not in the category of goodness. As far as sleeping is concerned, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is always alert in the discharge of his duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and therefore any unnecessary time spent sleeping is considered a great loss. *Avyārtha-kālatvam*: a Kṛṣṇa conscious person cannot bear to pass a minute of his life without being engaged in the service of the Lord. Therefore, his sleeping is kept to a minimum. His ideal in this respect is Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who was always engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa and who could not sleep more than two hours a day, and sometimes not even that. Ṭhākura Haridāsa would not even accept *prasādam* nor even sleep for a moment without finishing his daily routine of chanting with his beads three hundred thousand names. As far as work is concerned, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not do anything which is not connected with Kṛṣṇa's interest, and thus his work is always regulated and is untainted by sense gratification. Since there is no question of sense gratification, there is no material leisure for a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And because he is regulated in all his work, speech, sleep, wakefulness and all other bodily activities, there is no material misery for him.

(6.18)

The activities of the *yogī* are distinguished from those of an ordinary person by his characteristic cessation from all kinds of material desires – of which sex is the chief. A perfect *yogī* is so well disciplined in the activities of the mind that he can no longer be disturbed by any kind of material

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desire. This perfectional stage can automatically be attained by persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.4.18–20):

*sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor vacāṁsi vaikunṭha-guṇānuvarṇane
karau harer mandira-mārjanādiṣu śrutim cakārācyuta-sat-kathodaye
mukunda-līṅgālaya-darśane dṛṣau tad-bhṛtya-gātra-sparśe 'ṅga-saṅgamam
ghrāṇam ca tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe śrīmat-tulasyā rasanām tad-arpite
pādau hareḥ kṣetra-padānusarpaṇe śiro hṛṣīkeśa-padābhivandane
kāmaṁ ca dāsyē na tu kāma-kāmyayā yathottama-śloka-janāśrayā ratih*

“King Ambarīṣa first of all engaged his mind on the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa; then, one after another, he engaged his words in describing the transcendental qualities of the Lord, his hands in mopping the temple of the Lord, his ears in hearing of the activities of the Lord, his eyes in seeing the transcendental forms of the Lord, his body in touching the bodies of the devotees, his sense of smell in smelling the scents of the lotus flowers offered to the Lord, his tongue in tasting the *tulasī* leaf offered at the lotus feet of the Lord, his legs in going to places of pilgrimage and the temple of the Lord, his head in offering obeisances unto the Lord, and his desires in executing the mission of the Lord. All these transcendental activities are quite befitting a pure devotee.”

This transcendental stage may be inexpressible subjectively by the followers of the impersonalist path, but it becomes very easy and practical for a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as is apparent in the above description of the engagements of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. Unless the mind is fixed on the lotus feet of the Lord by constant remembrance, such transcendental engagements are not practical. In the devotional service of the Lord, therefore, these prescribed activities are called *arcana*, or engaging all the senses in the service of the Lord. The senses and the mind require engagements. Simple abnegation is not practical. Therefore, for people in general – especially those who are not in the renounced order of life – transcendental engagement of the senses and the mind as described above is the perfect process for transcendental achievement, which is called *yukta* in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

(6.26)

The nature of the mind is flickering and unsteady. But a self-realized *yogī* has to control the mind; the mind should not control him. One who controls the mind (and therefore the senses as

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well) is called *gosvāmī*, or *svāmī*, and one who is controlled by the mind is called *go-dāsa*, or the servant of the senses. A *gosvāmī* knows the standard of sense happiness. In transcendental sense happiness, the senses are engaged in the service of Hṛṣīkeśa, or the supreme owner of the senses – Kṛṣṇa. Serving Kṛṣṇa with purified senses is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is the way of bringing the senses under full control. What is more, that is the highest perfection of *yoga* practice.

(6.32)

One who is Kṛṣṇa conscious is a perfect *yogī*; he is aware of everyone's happiness and distress by dint of his own personal experience. The cause of the distress of a living entity is forgetfulness of his relationship with God. And the cause of happiness is knowing Kṛṣṇa to be the supreme enjoyer of all the activities of the human being, the proprietor of all lands and planets, and the sincerest friend of all living entities. The perfect *yogī* knows that the living being who is conditioned by the modes of material nature is subjected to the threefold material miseries due to forgetfulness of his relationship with Kṛṣṇa. And because one in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is happy, he tries to distribute the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa everywhere. Since the perfect *yogī* tries to broadcast the importance of becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is the best philanthropist in the world, and he is the dearest servitor of the Lord. *Na ca tasmān manuṣyeṣu kaścin me priya-kṛttamaḥ* (Bg. 18.69). In other words, a devotee of the Lord always looks to the welfare of all living entities, and in this way he is factually the friend of everyone. He is the best *yogī* because he does not desire perfection in *yoga* for his personal benefit, but tries for others also. He does not envy his fellow living entities. Here is a contrast between a pure devotee of the Lord and a *yogī* interested only in his personal elevation. The *yogī* who has withdrawn to a secluded place in order to meditate perfectly may not be as perfect as a devotee who is trying his best to turn every man toward Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(6.34)

The mind is so strong and obstinate that it sometimes overcomes the intelligence, although the mind is supposed to be subservient to the intelligence. For a man in the practical world who has to fight so many opposing elements, it is certainly very difficult to control the mind. Artificially, one may establish a mental equilibrium toward both friend and enemy, but ultimately no worldly

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man can do so, for this is more difficult than controlling the raging wind. In the Vedic literature (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1.3.3–4) it is said:

*ātmānaṁ rathinaṁ viddhi śarīraṁ ratham eva ca
buddhiṁ tu sārathīṁ viddhi manaḥ pragrahaṁ eva ca
indriyāṇi hayān āhur viṣayāṁś teṣu gocarān
ātmendriya-mano-yuktaṁ bhoktety āhur manīṣiṇaḥ*

“The individual is the passenger in the car of the material body, and intelligence is the driver. Mind is the driving instrument, and the senses are the horses. The self is thus the enjoyer or sufferer in the association of the mind and senses. So it is understood by great thinkers.” Intelligence is supposed to direct the mind, but the mind is so strong and obstinate that it often overcomes even one’s own intelligence, as an acute infection may surpass the efficacy of medicine. Such a strong mind is supposed to be controlled by the practice of *yoga*, but such practice is never practical for a worldly person like Arjuna. And what can we say of modern man? The simile used here is appropriate: one cannot capture the blowing wind. And it is even more difficult to capture the turbulent mind. The easiest way to control the mind, as suggested by Lord Caitanya, is chanting “Hare Kṛṣṇa,” the great *mantra* for deliverance, in all humility. The method prescribed is *sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoḥ*: one must engage one’s mind fully in Kṛṣṇa. Only then will there remain no other engagements to agitate the mind.

(6.35)

The difficulty of controlling the obstinate mind, as expressed by Arjuna, is accepted by the Personality of Godhead. But at the same time He suggests that by practice and detachment it is possible. What is that practice? In the present age no one can observe the strict rules and regulations of placing oneself in a sacred place, focusing the mind on the Supersoul, restraining the senses and mind, observing celibacy, remaining alone, etc. By the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, one engages in nine types of devotional service to the Lord. The first and foremost of such devotional engagements is hearing about Kṛṣṇa. This is a very powerful transcendental method for purging the mind of all misgivings. The more one hears about Kṛṣṇa, the more one becomes enlightened and detached from everything that draws the mind away from Kṛṣṇa. By detaching the mind from activities not devoted to the Lord, one can very easily learn *vairāgya*. *Vairāgya* means detachment from matter and engagement of the mind in spirit.

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Impersonal spiritual detachment is more difficult than attaching the mind to the activities of Kṛṣṇa. This is practical because by hearing about Kṛṣṇa one becomes automatically attached to the Supreme Spirit. This attachment is called *pareśānubhava*, spiritual satisfaction. It is just like the feeling of satisfaction a hungry man has for every morsel of food he eats. The more one eats while hungry, the more one feels satisfaction and strength. Similarly, by discharge of devotional service one feels transcendental satisfaction as the mind becomes detached from material objectives. It is something like curing a disease by expert treatment and appropriate diet. Hearing of the transcendental activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa is therefore expert treatment for the mad mind, and eating the foodstuff offered to Kṛṣṇa is the appropriate diet for the suffering patient. This treatment is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(6.38)

There are two ways to progress. Those who are materialists have no interest in transcendence; therefore they are more interested in material advancement by economic development, or in promotion to the higher planets by appropriate work. When one takes to the path of transcendence, one has to cease all material activities and sacrifice all forms of so-called material happiness. If the aspiring transcendentalist fails, then he apparently loses both ways; in other words, he can enjoy neither material happiness nor spiritual success. He has no position; he is like a riven cloud. A cloud in the sky sometimes deviates from a small cloud and joins a big one. But if it cannot join a big one, then it is blown away by the wind and becomes a nonentity in the vast sky. The *brahmaṇaḥ pathi* is the path of transcendental realization through knowing oneself to be spiritual in essence, part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, who is manifested as Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the fullest manifestation of the Supreme Absolute Truth, and therefore one who is surrendered to the Supreme Person is a successful transcendentalist. To reach this goal of life through Brahman and Paramātmā realization takes many, many births (*bahūnām janmanām ante*). Therefore the supermost path of transcendental realization is *bhakti-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the direct method.

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Exercise

1. Animal food, drinking, smoking is for those in the mode of _____. (BG 6.16)

a. Ignorance b. Passion c. Goodness d. none of the above

2. According to Bhagavad Gita how much one should sleep? (BG 6.16)

a. Less than 4 hours. b. Around 6 hrs. c. More than 8 hrs. d. One should sleep as much one gets time.

3. How eating can be regulated? (BG 6.16)

a. By accepting Krsna Prasad only b. It will get regulated slowly when we eat everything we desire c. By strict fasting under the instruction of physical trainer d. It can never be regulated

4. To attain perfection stage in yoga how maharaja Ambarisha uses his legs? (BG 6.18)

a. To go to temple of Lord Sri Hari. b. To kick his servant. c. To chase after criminals. d. All the above.

5. What is the perfect and practical process of achieving transcendence? (BG 6.18)

a. Engaging mind and senses in service of the supreme. b. By attending yoga classes. c. Going to.

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(b)	(a)	(a)	(a)

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Chapter Seven: Knowledge of the Absolute

(7.3)

There are various grades of men, and out of many thousands, one may be sufficiently interested in transcendental realization to try to know what is the self, what is the body, and what is the Absolute Truth. Generally mankind is simply engaged in the animal propensities, namely eating, sleeping, defending and mating, and hardly anyone is interested in transcendental knowledge. The first six chapters of the *Gītā* are meant for those who are interested in transcendental knowledge, in understanding the self, the Superself and the process of realization by *jñāna-yoga*, *dhyāna-yoga* and discrimination of the self from matter. However, Kṛṣṇa can be known only by persons who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Other transcendentalists may achieve impersonal Brahman realization, for this is easier than understanding Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person, but at the same time He is beyond the knowledge of Brahman and Paramātmā. The *yogīs* and *jñānīs* are confused in their attempts to understand Kṛṣṇa. Although the greatest of the impersonalists, Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya, has admitted in his *Gītā* commentary that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his followers do not accept Kṛṣṇa as such, for it is very difficult to know Kṛṣṇa, even though one has transcendental realization of impersonal Brahman. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, the primeval Lord Govinda. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ/ anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*. It is very difficult for the nondevotees to know Him. Although nondevotees declare that the path of *bhakti*, or devotional service, is very easy, they cannot practice it. If the path of *bhakti* is so easy, as the nondevotee class of men proclaim, then why do they take up the difficult path? Actually the path of *bhakti* is not easy. The so-called path of *bhakti* practiced by unauthorized persons without knowledge of *bhakti* may be easy, but when it is practiced factually according to the rules and regulations, the speculative scholars and philosophers fall away from the path. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.101):

*śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi- pañcarātra-vidhiṁ vinā
aikāntikī harer bhaktir utpātāyaiva kalpate*

“Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas* and *Nārada Pañcarātra* is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society.”

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It is not possible for the Brahman-realized impersonalist or the Paramātmā-realized *yogī* to understand Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the son of mother Yaśodā or the charioteer of Arjuna. Even the great demigods are sometimes confused about Kṛṣṇa (*muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ*). *Mām tu veda na kaścana*: “No one knows Me as I am,” the Lord says. And if one does know Him, then *sa mahātmā su-durlabhaḥ*: “Such a great soul is very rare.” Therefore unless one practices devotional service to the Lord, one cannot know Kṛṣṇa as He is (*tattvataḥ*), even though one is a great scholar or philosopher. Only the pure devotees can know something of the inconceivable transcendental qualities in Kṛṣṇa – His being the cause of all causes, His omnipotence and opulence, and His wealth, fame, strength, beauty, knowledge and renunciation – because Kṛṣṇa is benevolently inclined to His devotees. He is the last word in Brahman realization, and the devotees alone can realize Him as He is. Therefore it is said:

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

“No one can understand Kṛṣṇa as He is by the blunt material senses. But He reveals Himself to the devotees, being pleased with them for their transcendental loving service unto Him.” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.234)

(7.4)

The science of God analyzes the constitutional position of God and His diverse energies. Material nature is called *prakṛti*, or the energy of the Lord in His different *puruṣa* incarnations (expansions) as described in the *Nārada Pañcarātra*, one of the *Sātvata-tantras*:

*viṣṇoḥ tu trīṇi rūpāṇi puruṣākhyāny atho viduḥ
ekam tu mahataḥ sraṣṭṛ dvitīyaṁ tv aṇḍa-saṁsthitam
tr̥tīyaṁ sarva-bhūta-stham tāni jñātvā vimucyate*

“For material creation, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s plenary expansion assumes three Viṣṇus. The first one, Mahā-viṣṇu, creates the total material energy, known as the *mahat-tattva*. The second, Garbhodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu, enters into all the universes to create diversities in each of them. The third, Kṣīrodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu, is diffused as the all-pervading Supersoul in all the universes and is known as Paramātmā. He is present even within the atoms. Anyone who knows these three Viṣṇus can be liberated from material entanglement.”

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This material world is a temporary manifestation of one of the energies of the Lord. All the activities of the material world are directed by these three Viṣṇu expansions of Lord Kṛṣṇa. These *puruṣas* are called incarnations. Generally one who does not know the science of God (Kṛṣṇa) assumes that this material world is for the enjoyment of the living entities and that the living entities are the *puruṣas* – the causes, controllers and enjoyers of the material energy. According to *Bhagavad-gītā* this atheistic conclusion is false. In the verse under discussion it is stated that Kṛṣṇa is the original cause of the material manifestation. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also confirms this. The ingredients of the material manifestation are separated energies of the Lord. Even the *brahma-jyotir*, which is the ultimate goal of the impersonalists, is a spiritual energy manifested in the spiritual sky. There are no spiritual diversities in the *brahma-jyotir* as there are in the Vaikuṇṭha-lokas, and the impersonalist accepts this *brahma-jyotir* as the ultimate eternal goal. The Paramātmā manifestation is also a temporary all-pervasive aspect of the Kṣīrodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu. The Paramātmā manifestation is not eternal in the spiritual world. Therefore the factual Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa. He is the complete energetic person, and He possesses different separated and internal energies.

In the material energy, the principal manifestations are eight, as above mentioned. Out of these, the first five manifestations, namely earth, water, fire, air and sky, are called the five gigantic creations or the gross creations, within which the five sense objects are included. They are the manifestations of physical sound, touch, form, taste and smell. Material science comprises these ten items and nothing more. But the other three items, namely mind, intelligence and false ego, are neglected by the materialists. Philosophers who deal with mental activities are also not perfect in knowledge because they do not know the ultimate source, Kṛṣṇa. The false ego – “I am,” and “It is mine,” which constitute the basic principle of material existence – includes ten sense organs for material activities. Intelligence refers to the total material creation, called the *mahat-tattva*. Therefore from the eight separated energies of the Lord are manifest the twenty-four elements of the material world, which are the subject matter of Sāṅkhya atheistic philosophy; they are originally offshoots from Kṛṣṇa’s energies and are separated from Him, but atheistic Sāṅkhya philosophers with a poor fund of knowledge do not know Kṛṣṇa as the cause of all causes. The subject matter for discussion in the Sāṅkhya philosophy is only the manifestation of the external energy of Kṛṣṇa, as it is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

(7.10)

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Bījam means seed; Kṛṣṇa is the seed of everything. There are various living entities, movable and inert. Birds, beasts, men and many other living creatures are moving living entities; trees and plants, however, are inert – they cannot move, but only stand. Every entity is contained within the scope of 8,400,000 species of life; some of them are moving and some of them are inert. In all cases, however, the seed of their life is Kṛṣṇa. As stated in Vedic literature, Brahman, or the Supreme Absolute Truth, is that from which everything is emanating. Kṛṣṇa is Para-brahman, the Supreme Spirit. Brahman is impersonal and Para-brahman is personal. Impersonal Brahman is situated in the personal aspect – that is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Therefore, originally, Kṛṣṇa is the source of everything. He is the root. As the root of a tree maintains the whole tree, Kṛṣṇa, being the original root of all things, maintains everything in this material manifestation. This is also confirmed in the Vedic literature (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13):

nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān

He is the prime eternal among all eternals. He is the supreme living entity of all living entities, and He alone is maintaining all life. One cannot do anything without intelligence, and Kṛṣṇa also says that He is the root of all intelligence. Unless a person is intelligent he cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

(7.14)

The Supreme Personality of Godhead has innumerable energies, and all these energies are divine. Although the living entities are part of His energies and are therefore divine, due to contact with material energy their original superior power is covered. Being thus covered by material energy, one cannot possibly overcome its influence. As previously stated, both the material and spiritual natures, being emanations from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are eternal. The living entities belong to the eternal superior nature of the Lord, but due to contamination by the inferior nature, matter, their illusion is also eternal. The conditioned soul is therefore called *nitya-baddha*, or eternally conditioned. No one can trace out the history of his becoming conditioned at a certain date in material history. Consequently, his release from the clutches of material nature is very difficult, even though that material nature is an inferior energy, because material energy is ultimately conducted by the supreme will, which the living entity cannot overcome. Inferior, material nature is defined herein as divine nature due to its

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divine connection and movement by the divine will. Being conducted by divine will, material nature, although inferior, acts so wonderfully in the construction and destruction of the cosmic manifestation. The *Vedas* confirm this as follows: *māyām tu prakṛtiṁ vidyān māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram*. “Although *māyā* [illusion] is false or temporary, the background of *māyā* is the supreme magician, the Personality of Godhead, who is Maheśvara, the supreme controller.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 4.10)

Another meaning of *guṇa* is rope; it is to be understood that the conditioned soul is tightly tied by the ropes of illusion. A man bound by the hands and feet cannot free himself – he must be helped by a person who is unbound. Because the bound cannot help the bound, the rescuer must be liberated. Therefore, only Lord Kṛṣṇa, or His bona fide representative the spiritual master, can release the conditioned soul. Without such superior help, one cannot be freed from the bondage of material nature. Devotional service, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, can help one gain such release. Kṛṣṇa, being the Lord of the illusory energy, can order this insurmountable energy to release the conditioned soul. He orders this release out of His causeless mercy on the surrendered soul and out of His paternal affection for the living entity, who is originally a beloved son of the Lord. Therefore surrender unto the lotus feet of the Lord is the only means to get free from the clutches of the stringent material nature.

The words *mām eva* are also significant. *Mām* means unto Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) only, and not Brahmā or Śiva. Although Brahmā and Śiva are greatly elevated and are almost on the level of Viṣṇu, it is not possible for such incarnations of *rajo-guṇa* (passion) and *tamo-guṇa* (ignorance) to release the conditioned soul from the clutches of *māyā*. In other words, both Brahmā and Śiva are also under the influence of *māyā*. Only Viṣṇu is the master of *māyā*; therefore He alone can give release to the conditioned soul. The *Vedas* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.8) confirm this in the phrase *tam eva veditvā*, or “Freedom is possible only by understanding Kṛṣṇa.” Even Lord Śiva affirms that liberation can be achieved only by the mercy of Viṣṇu. Lord Śiva says, *mukti-pradātā sarveṣāṁ viṣṇur eva na saṁśayaḥ*: “There is no doubt that Viṣṇu is the deliverer of liberation for everyone.”

(7.16)

Unlike the miscreants, these are adherents of the regulative principles of the scriptures, and they are called *su-kṛtinaḥ*, or those who obey the rules and regulations of scriptures, the moral and

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social laws, and are, more or less, devoted to the Supreme Lord. Out of these there are four classes of men – those who are sometimes distressed, those who are in need of money, those who are sometimes inquisitive, and those who are sometimes searching after knowledge of the Absolute Truth. These persons come to the Supreme Lord for devotional service under different conditions. These are not pure devotees, because they have some aspiration to fulfill in exchange for devotional service. Pure devotional service is without aspiration and without desire for material profit. The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.11) defines pure devotion thus:

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir uttamā*

“One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.”

When these four kinds of persons come to the Supreme Lord for devotional service and are completely purified by the association of a pure devotee, they also become pure devotees. As far as the miscreants are concerned, for them devotional service is very difficult because their lives are selfish, irregular and without spiritual goals. But even some of them, by chance, when they come in contact with a pure devotee, also become pure devotees.

Those who are always busy with fruitive activities come to the Lord in material distress and at that time associate with pure devotees and become, in their distress, devotees of the Lord. Those who are simply frustrated also come sometimes to associate with the pure devotees and become inquisitive to know about God. Similarly, when the dry philosophers are frustrated in every field of knowledge, they sometimes want to learn of God, and they come to the Supreme Lord to render devotional service and thus transcend knowledge of the impersonal Brahman and the localized Paramātmā and come to the personal conception of Godhead by the grace of the Supreme Lord or His pure devotee. On the whole, when the distressed, the inquisitive, the seekers of knowledge, and those who are in need of money are free from all material desires, and when they fully understand that material remuneration has nothing to do with spiritual improvement, they become pure devotees. As long as such a purified stage is not attained, devotees in transcendental service to the Lord are tainted with fruitive activities, the search for

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mundane knowledge, etc. So one has to transcend all this before one can come to the stage of pure devotional service.

(7.19)

The living entity, while executing devotional service or transcendental rituals after many, many births, may actually become situated in transcendental pure knowledge that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the ultimate goal of spiritual realization. In the beginning of spiritual realization, while one is trying to give up one's attachment to materialism, there is some leaning towards impersonalism, but when one is further advanced he can understand that there are activities in the spiritual life and that these activities constitute devotional service. Realizing this, he becomes attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and surrenders to Him. At such a time one can understand that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy is everything, that He is the cause of all causes, and that this material manifestation is not independent from Him. He realizes the material world to be a perverted reflection of spiritual variegatedness and realizes that in everything there is a relationship with the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus he thinks of everything in relation to Vāsudeva, or Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Such a universal vision of Vāsudeva precipitates one's full surrender to the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the highest goal. Such surrendered great souls are very rare.

This verse is very nicely explained in the Third Chapter (verses 14 and 15) of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*:

sahasra-śīrṣā puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ sahasra-pāt, sa bhūmiṃ viśvato vṛtvā- tyātiṣṭhad daśāṅgulaṃ puruṣa evedaṃ sarvaṃ yad bhūtaṃ yac ca bhavyam, utāmṛtatvasyeśāno yad annenātirohati

“Lord Viṣṇu has thousands of heads, thousands of eyes and thousands of feet. Entirely encompassing the whole universe, He still extends beyond it by ten fingers' breadth. He is in fact this entire universe. He is all that was and all that will be. He is the Lord of immortality and of all that is nourished by food.” In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*(5.1.15) it is said, *na vai vāco na cakṣūṃṣi na śrotrāṇi na manāṃsīty ācakṣate prāṇa iti evācakṣate prāṇo hy evaitāni sarvāṇi bhavanti*: “In the body of a living being neither the power to speak, nor the power to see, nor the power to hear, nor the power to think is the prime factor; it is life which is the center of all activities.” Similarly Lord Vāsudeva, or the Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the prime entity in everything. In this body there are powers of speaking, of seeing, of hearing, of mental

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activities, etc. But these are not important if not related to the Supreme Lord. And because Vāsudeva is all-pervading and everything is Vāsudeva, the devotee surrenders in full knowledge (cf. *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.17 and 11.40).

(7.20)

Those who are freed from all material contaminations surrender unto the Supreme Lord and engage in His devotional service. As long as the material contamination is not completely washed off, they are by nature nondevotees. But even those who have material desires and who resort to the Supreme Lord are not so much attracted by external nature; because of approaching the right goal, they soon become free from all material lust. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is recommended that whether one is a pure devotee and is free from all material desires, or is full of material desires, or desires liberation from material contamination, he should in all cases surrender to Vāsudeva and worship Him. As stated in the *Bhāgavatam* (2.3.10):

akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ

tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣam param

Less intelligent people who have lost their spiritual sense take shelter of demigods for immediate fulfillment of material desires. Generally, such people do not go to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, because they are in the lower modes of nature (ignorance and passion) and therefore worship various demigods. Following the rules and regulations of worship, they are satisfied. The worshipers of demigods are motivated by small desires and do not know how to reach the supreme goal, but a devotee of the Supreme Lord is not misguided. Because in Vedic literature there are recommendations for worshipping different gods for different purposes (e.g., a diseased man is recommended to worship the sun), those who are not devotees of the Lord think that for certain purposes demigods are better than the Supreme Lord. But a pure devotee knows that the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is the master of all. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 5.142) it is said, *ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa, āra saba bhr̥tya*: only the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is master, and all others are servants. Therefore a pure devotee never goes to demigods for satisfaction of his material needs. He depends on the Supreme Lord. And the pure devotee is satisfied with whatever He gives.

(7.24)

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Those who are worshipers of demigods have been described as less intelligent persons, and here the impersonalists are similarly described. Lord Kṛṣṇa in His personal form is here speaking before Arjuna, and still, due to ignorance, impersonalists argue that the Supreme Lord ultimately has no form. Yāmunācārya, a great devotee of the Lord in the disciplic succession of Rāmānujācārya, has written a very appropriate verse in this connection. He says,

*tvām śīla-rūpa-caritaiḥ parama-prakṛṣṭaiḥ sattvena sāttvikatayā prabalaś ca śāstraiḥ
prakhyāta-daiva-paramārtha-vidām mataiś ca naivāsura-prakṛtayaḥ prabhavanti boddhum*

“My dear Lord, devotees like Vyāsadeva and Nārada know You to be the Personality of Godhead. By understanding different Vedic literatures, one can come to know Your characteristics, Your form and Your activities, and one can thus understand that You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance, the demons, the nondevotees, cannot understand You. They are unable to understand You. However expert such nondevotees may be in discussing *Vedānta* and the *Upaniṣads* and other Vedic literatures, it is not possible for them to understand the Personality of Godhead.” (*Stotra-ratna* 12)

In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated that the Personality of Godhead cannot be understood simply by study of the *Vedānta* literature. Only by the mercy of the Supreme Lord can the Personality of the Supreme be known. Therefore in this verse it is clearly stated that not only are the worshipers of the demigods less intelligent, but those nondevotees who are engaged in *Vedānta* and speculation on Vedic literature without any tinge of true Kṛṣṇa consciousness are also less intelligent, and for them it is not possible to understand God’s personal nature. Persons who are under the impression that the Absolute Truth is impersonal are described as *abuddhayaḥ*, which means those who do not know the ultimate feature of the Absolute Truth. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that supreme realization begins from the impersonal Brahman and then rises to the localized Supersoul – but the ultimate word in the Absolute Truth is the Personality of Godhead. Modern impersonalists are still less intelligent, for they do not even follow their great predecessor Śaṅkarācārya, who has specifically stated that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Impersonalists, therefore, not knowing the Supreme Truth, think Kṛṣṇa to be only the son of Devakī and Vasudeva, or a prince, or a powerful living entity. This is also

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condemned in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.11). *Avajānanti mām mūḍhā mānuṣīm tanum āśritam*: “Only the fools regard Me as an ordinary person.”

The fact is that no one can understand Kṛṣṇa without rendering devotional service and without developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The *Bhāgavatam* (10.14.29) confirms this:

athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-prasāda-leśānugṛhīta eva hi

jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvan

“My Lord, if one is favored by even a slight trace of the mercy of Your lotus feet, he can understand the greatness of Your personality. But those who speculate to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead are unable to know You, even though they continue to study the *Vedas* for many years.” One cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, or His form, quality or name simply by mental speculation or by discussing Vedic literature. One must understand Him by devotional service. When one is fully engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, beginning by chanting the *mahā-mantra* – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – then only can one understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Nondevotee impersonalists think that Kṛṣṇa has a body made of this material nature and that all His activities, His form and everything are *māyā*. These impersonalists are known as *Māyāvādīs*. They do not know the ultimate truth.

The twentieth verse clearly states, *kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ*: “Those who are blinded by lusty desires surrender unto the different demigods.” It is accepted that besides the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there are demigods who have their different planets, and the Lord also has a planet. As stated in the twenty-third verse, *devān deva-yajo yānti mad-bhaktā yānti mām api*: the worshipers of the demigods go to the different planets of the demigods, and those who are devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa go to the Kṛṣṇaloka planet. Although this is clearly stated, the foolish impersonalists still maintain that the Lord is formless and that these forms are impositions. From the study of the *Gītā* does it appear that the demigods and their abodes are impersonal? Clearly, neither the demigods nor Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are impersonal. They are all persons; Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He has His own planet, and the demigods have theirs.

Therefore the monistic contention that ultimate truth is formless and that form is imposed does not hold true. It is clearly stated here that it is not imposed. From the *Bhagavad-gītā* we can clearly understand that the forms of the demigods and the form of the Supreme Lord are

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simultaneously existing and that Lord Kṛṣṇa is *sac-cid-ānanda*, eternal blissful knowledge. The Vedic literature confirms that the Supreme Absolute Truth is knowledge and blissful pleasure, *viññānam ānandam brahma* (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.9.28), and that He is the reservoir of unlimited auspicious qualities, *ananta-kalyāṇa-guṇātmako 'sau* (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 6.5.84). And in the *Gītā* the Lord says that although He is *aja* (unborn), He still appears. These are the facts that we should understand from the *Bhagavad-gītā*. We cannot understand how the Supreme Personality of Godhead can be impersonal; the imposition theory of the impersonalist monist is false as far as the statements of the *Gītā* are concerned. It is clear herein that the Supreme Absolute Truth, Lord Kṛṣṇa, has both form and personality.

(7.25)

It may be argued that since Kṛṣṇa was visible to everyone when He was present on this earth, how can it be said that He is not manifest to everyone? But actually He was not manifest to everyone. When Kṛṣṇa was present there were only a few people who could understand Him to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the assembly of Kurus, when Śiśupāla spoke against Kṛṣṇa's being elected president of the assembly, Bhīṣma supported Him and proclaimed Him to be the Supreme God. Similarly, the Pāṇḍavas and a few others knew that He was the Supreme, but not everyone. He was not revealed to the nondevotees and the common man. Therefore in the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says that but for His pure devotees, all men consider Him to be like themselves. He was manifest only to His devotees as the reservoir of all pleasure. But to others, to unintelligent nondevotees, He was covered by His internal potency.

In the prayers of Kuntī in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.8.19) it is said that the Lord is covered by the curtain of *yoga-māyā* and thus ordinary people cannot understand Him. This *yoga-māyā* curtain is also confirmed in the *Īśopaniṣad* (Mantra 15), in which the devotee prays:

*hiraṇmayena pātreṇa satyasyāpihitam mukham
tat tvaṁ pūṣann apāvṛṇu satya-dharmāya dṛṣṭaye*

“O my Lord, You are the maintainer of the entire universe, and devotional service to You is the highest religious principle. Therefore, I pray that You will also maintain me. Your transcendental form is covered by the *yoga-māyā*. The *brahma-jyotir* is the covering of the internal potency. May You kindly remove this glowing effulgence that impedes my seeing Your *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, Your eternal form of bliss and knowledge.” The Supreme Personality of Godhead in His

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transcendental form of bliss and knowledge is covered by the internal potency of the *brahma-jyotir*, and the less intelligent impersonalists cannot see the Supreme on this account.

Also in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.7) there is this prayer by Brahmā: “O Supreme Personality of Godhead, O Supersoul, O master of all mystery, who can calculate Your potency and pastimes in this world? You are always expanding Your internal potency, and therefore no one can understand You. Learned scientists and learned scholars can examine the atomic constitution of the material world or even the planets, but still they are unable to calculate Your energy and potency, although You are present before them.” The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is not only unborn but also *avyaya*, inexhaustible. His eternal form is bliss and knowledge, and His energies are all inexhaustible.

Exercise

1. Generally mankind is engaged in _____. (BG 7.3)

a. Animalistic propensity b. Scientific advancement c. Economic development d. Transcendental knowledge

2. How can one know Kṛṣṇa? (BG 7.3)

a. Studying Vedas b. Kṛṣṇa reveals c. Doing pranayam d. Getting up early in morning

3. Who is the greatest of all impersonalist (BG 7.3)

a. Sripada Ramanujacarya b. Sripada Sankaracarya c. Sripada Madhavacarya d. Sripada Vallabhacarya

4. Kṛṣṇa expands into how many forms of lord Viṣṇu (BG 7.4)

a. 12 b. 5 c. 8 d. 3 123.

5. Mahaviṣṇu creates (BG 7.4)

a. Total material energy b. Trees c. Stars d. Animals

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(a)	(b)	(d)	(a)

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Chapter Eight: Attaining the Supreme

(8.2)

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

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

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

(8.5)

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

(8.6)

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

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Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare is the best process for successfully changing one's state of being at the end of one's life.

(8.17)

The duration of the material universe is limited. It is manifested in cycles of *kalpas*. A *kalpa* is a day of Brahmā, and one day of Brahmā consists of a thousand cycles of four *yugas*, or ages: Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali. The cycle of Satya is characterized by virtue, wisdom and religion, there being practically no ignorance and vice, and the *yuga* lasts 1,728,000 years. In the Tretā-yuga vice is introduced, and this *yuga* lasts 1,296,000 years. In the Dvāpara-yuga there is an even greater decline in virtue and religion, vice increasing, and this *yuga* lasts 864,000 years. And finally in Kali-yuga (the *yuga* we have now been experiencing over the past 5,000 years) there is an abundance of strife, ignorance, irreligion and vice, true virtue being practically nonexistent, and this *yuga* lasts 432,000 years. In Kali-yuga vice increases to such a point that at the termination of the *yuga* the Supreme Lord Himself appears as the Kalki *avatāra*, vanquishes the demons, saves His devotees, and commences another Satya-yuga. Then the process is set rolling again. These four *yugas*, rotating a thousand times, comprise one day of Brahmā, and the same number comprise one night. Brahmā lives one hundred of such “years” and then dies. These “hundred years” by earth calculations total to 311 trillion and 40 billion earth years. By these calculations the life of Brahmā seems fantastic and interminable, but from the viewpoint of eternity it is as brief as a lightning flash. In the Causal Ocean there are innumerable Brahmās rising and disappearing like bubbles in the Atlantic. Brahmā and his creation are all part of the material universe, and therefore they are in constant flux.

In the material universe not even Brahmā is free from the process of birth, old age, disease and death. Brahmā, however, is directly engaged in the service of the Supreme Lord in the management of this universe – therefore he at once attains liberation. Elevated *sannyāsīs* are promoted to Brahmā's particular planet, Brahmaloka, which is the highest planet in the material universe and which survives all the heavenly planets in the upper strata of the planetary system, but in due course Brahmā and all the inhabitants of Brahmaloka are subject to death, according to the law of material nature.

(8.21)

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The supreme abode of the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* as *cintāmaṇi-dhāma*, a place where all desires are fulfilled. The supreme abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, known as Goloka Vṛndāvana, is full of palaces made of touchstone. There are also trees, called “desire trees,” that supply any type of eatable upon demand, and there are cows, known as *surabhi* cows, which supply a limitless supply of milk. In this abode, the Lord is served by hundreds of thousands of goddesses of fortune (Lakṣmīs), and He is called Govinda, the primal Lord and the cause of all causes. The Lord is accustomed to blow His flute (*veṇuṁ kvaṇantam*). His transcendental form is the most attractive in all the worlds – His eyes are like lotus petals, and the color of His body is like the color of clouds. He is so attractive that His beauty excels that of thousands of Cupids. He wears saffron cloth, a garland around His neck and a peacock feather in His hair. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa gives only a small hint of His personal abode, Goloka Vṛndāvana, which is the supermost planet in the spiritual kingdom. A vivid description is given in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Vedic literatures (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1.3.11) state that there is nothing superior to the abode of the Supreme Godhead, and that that abode is the ultimate destination (*puruṣān na param kiñcit sā kāṣṭhā paramā gatiḥ*). When one attains to it, he never returns to the material world. Kṛṣṇa’s supreme abode and Kṛṣṇa Himself are nondifferent, being of the same quality. On this earth, Vṛndāvana, ninety miles southeast of Delhi, is a replica of that supreme Goloka Vṛndāvana located in the spiritual sky. When Kṛṣṇa descended on this earth, He sported on that particular tract of land known as Vṛndāvana, comprising about 168 square miles in the district of Mathurā, India.

Exercise

1. Which great devotee compared his mind to be like a swan (BG 8.2)

a. Prataprudra b. Bharata c. Kulasekhara d. Kṛṣṇadevaraya

2. Who is the lord of sacrifice other than lord Viṣṇu (BG 8.2)

a. Indra b. Varuṇa c. Chandra d. Yamarāja

3. Arjuna addressed Kṛṣṇa as Madhusudana because Kṛṣṇa kills the demon of (BG 8.2)

a. lust b. doubt c. anger d. illusion

4. When the living entities’ merits are exhausted he fell down from heavenly planet as (BG 8.3)

a. Shooting star b. Rain c. Meteor d. Sunlight

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5.The duration of material universe is manifested in cycles of (BG 8.17)

a. Jalpa b. Yuga c. Kalpa d. Divya-yuga

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(c)	(a)	(a)	(b)	(c)

Chapter Nine: The Most Confidential Knowledge

(9.2)

This chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* is called the king of education because it is the essence of all doctrines and philosophies explained before. Among the principal philosophers in India are Gautama, Kaṇāda, Kapila, Yājñavalkya, Śāṇḍilya and Vaiśvānara. And finally there is Vyāsadeva, the author of the *Vedānta-sūtra*. So there is no dearth of knowledge in the field of philosophy or transcendental knowledge. Now the Lord says that this Ninth Chapter is the king of all such knowledge, the essence of all knowledge that can be derived from the study of the *Vedas* and different kinds of philosophy. It is the most confidential because confidential or transcendental knowledge involves understanding the difference between the soul and the body. And the king of all confidential knowledge culminates in devotional service.

Generally, people are not educated in this confidential knowledge; they are educated in external knowledge. As far as ordinary education is concerned, people are involved with so many departments: politics, sociology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, engineering, etc. There are so many departments of knowledge all over the world and many huge universities, but there is, unfortunately, no university or educational institution where the science of the spirit soul is instructed. Yet the soul is the most important part of the body; without the presence of the soul, the body has no value. Still people are placing great stress on the bodily necessities of life, not caring for the vital soul.

The *Bhagavad-gītā*, especially from the Second Chapter on, stresses the importance of the soul. In the very beginning, the Lord says that this body is perishable and that the soul is not perishable (*antavanta ime dehā nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ*). That is a confidential part of knowledge:

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simply knowing that the spirit soul is different from this body and that its nature is immutable, indestructible and eternal. But that gives no positive information about the soul. Sometimes people are under the impression that the soul is different from the body and that when the body is finished, or one is liberated from the body, the soul remains in a void and becomes impersonal. But actually that is not the fact. How can the soul, which is so active within this body, be inactive after being liberated from the body? It is always active. If it is eternal, then it is eternally active, and its activities in the spiritual kingdom are the most confidential part of spiritual knowledge. These activities of the spirit soul are therefore indicated here as constituting the king of all knowledge, the most confidential part of all knowledge.

This knowledge is the purest form of all activities, as explained in Vedic literature. In the *Padma Purāṇa*, man's sinful activities have been analyzed and are shown to be the results of sin after sin. Those who are engaged in fruitive activities are entangled in different stages and forms of sinful reactions. For instance, when the seed of a particular tree is sown, the tree does not appear immediately to grow; it takes some time. It is first a small, sprouting plant, then it assumes the form of a tree, then it flowers and bears fruit, and, when it is complete, the flowers and fruits are enjoyed by persons who have sown the seed of the tree. Similarly, a man performs a sinful act, and like a seed it takes time to fructify. There are different stages. The sinful action may have already stopped within the individual, but the results or the fruit of that sinful action are still to be enjoyed. There are sins which are still in the form of a seed, and there are others which are already fructified and are giving us fruit, which we are enjoying as distress and pain.

As explained in the twenty-eighth verse of the Seventh Chapter, a person who has completely ended the reactions of all sinful activities and who is fully engaged in pious activities, being freed from the duality of this material world, becomes engaged in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. In other words, those who are actually engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord are already freed from all reactions. This statement is confirmed in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*aprārabdha-phalaṁ pāpaṁ kūṭaṁ bījaṁ phalonmukham
krameṇaiva pralīyeta viṣṇu-bhakti-ratātmanām*

For those who are engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, all sinful reactions, whether fructified, in the stock, or in the form of a seed, gradually vanish. Therefore the purifying potency of devotional service is very strong, and it is called *pavitram*

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uttamam, the purest. *Uttama* means transcendental. *Tamas* means this material world or darkness, and *uttama* means that which is transcendental to material activities. Devotional activities are never to be considered material, although sometimes it appears that devotees are engaged just like ordinary men. One who can see and is familiar with devotional service will know that they are not material activities. They are all spiritual and devotional, uncontaminated by the material modes of nature.

It is said that the execution of devotional service is so perfect that one can perceive the results directly. This direct result is actually perceived, and we have practical experience that any person who is chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa (Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare) in course of chanting without offenses feels some transcendental pleasure and very quickly becomes purified of all material contamination. This is actually seen. Furthermore, if one engages not only in hearing but in trying to broadcast the message of devotional activities as well, or if he engages himself in helping the missionary activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he gradually feels spiritual progress. This advancement in spiritual life does not depend on any kind of previous education or qualification. The method itself is so pure that by simply engaging in it one becomes pure.

In the *Vedānta-sūtra* (3.2.26) this is also described in the following words: *prakāśaś ca karmaṇy abhyāsāt*. “Devotional service is so potent that simply by engaging in the activities of devotional service one becomes enlightened without a doubt.” A practical example of this can be seen in the previous life of Nārada, who in that life happened to be the son of a maidservant. He had no education, nor was he born into a high family. But when his mother was engaged in serving great devotees, Nārada also became engaged, and sometimes, in the absence of his mother, he would serve the great devotees himself. Nārada personally says,

ucchiṣṭa-lepān anumodito dvijaiḥ sakṛt sma bhuñje tad-apāsta-kilbiṣaḥ
evam pravṛttasya viśuddha-cetasas tad-dharma evātma-ruciḥ prajāyate

In this verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.25) Nārada describes his previous life to his disciple Vyāsadeva. He says that while engaged as a boy servant for those purified devotees during the four months of their stay, he was intimately associating with them. Sometimes those sages left remnants of food on their dishes, and the boy, who would wash their dishes, wanted to taste the remnants. So he asked the great devotees for their permission, and when they gave it Nārada ate

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those remnants and consequently became freed from all sinful reactions. As he went on eating, he gradually became as pure-hearted as the sages. The great devotees relished the taste of unceasing devotional service to the Lord by hearing and chanting, and Nārada gradually developed the same taste. Nārada says further,

tatrānv-aham kṛṣṇa-kathāḥ pragāyatām anugraheṇāśṛṇavam mano-harāḥ

tāḥ śraddhayā me 'nu-padam viśṛṇvataḥ priyaśravasy aṅga mamābhavad ruciḥ

By associating with the sages, Nārada got the taste for hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord, and he developed a great desire for devotional service. Therefore, as described in the *Vedānta-sūtra*, *prakāśaś ca karmany abhyāsāt*: if one is engaged simply in the acts of devotional service, everything is revealed to him automatically, and he can understand. This is called *pratyakṣa*, directly perceived.

The word *dharmyam* means “the path of religion.” Nārada was actually a son of a maidservant. He had no opportunity to go to school. He was simply assisting his mother, and fortunately his mother rendered some service to the devotees. The child Nārada also got the opportunity and simply by association achieved the highest goal of all religion. The highest goal of all religion is devotional service, as stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (*sa vai puṁsām paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje*). Religious people generally do not know that the highest perfection of religion is the attainment of devotional service. As we have already discussed in regard to the last verse of Chapter Eight (*vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva*), generally Vedic knowledge is required for self-realization. But here, although Nārada never went to the school of the spiritual master and was not educated in the Vedic principles, he acquired the highest results of Vedic study. This process is so potent that even without performing the religious process regularly, one can be raised to the highest perfection. How is this possible? This is also confirmed in Vedic literature: *ācāryavān puruṣo veda*. One who is in association with great *ācāryas*, even if he is not educated or has never studied the *Vedas*, can become familiar with all the knowledge necessary for realization.

The process of devotional service is a very happy one (*su-sukham*). Why? Devotional service consists of *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*, so one can simply hear the chanting of the glories of the Lord or can attend philosophical lectures on transcendental knowledge given by authorized *ācāryas*. Simply by sitting, one can learn; then one can eat the remnants of the food offered to God, nice palatable dishes. In every state devotional service is joyful. One can execute devotional service even in the most poverty-stricken condition. The Lord says, *patraṁ puṣpaṁ*

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phalaṁ toyam: He is ready to accept from the devotee any kind of offering, never mind what. Even a leaf, a flower, a bit of fruit, or a little water, which are all available in every part of the world, can be offered by *any* person, regardless of social position, and will be accepted if offered with love. There are many instances in history. Simply by tasting the *tulasī* leaves offered to the lotus feet of the Lord, great sages like Sanat-kumāra became great devotees. Therefore the devotional process is very nice, and it can be executed in a happy mood. God accepts only the love with which things are offered to Him.

It is said here that this devotional service is eternally existing. It is not as the Māyāvādī philosophers claim. Although they sometimes take to so-called devotional service, their idea is that as long as they are not liberated they will continue their devotional service, but at the end, when they become liberated, they will “become one with God.” Such temporary time-serving devotional service is not accepted as pure devotional service. Actual devotional service continues even after liberation. When the devotee goes to the spiritual planet in the kingdom of God, he is also engaged there in serving the Supreme Lord. He does not try to become one with the Supreme Lord.

As will be seen in *Bhagavad-gītā*, actual devotional service begins after liberation. After one is liberated, when one is situated in the Brahman position (*brahma-bhūta*), one’s devotional service begins (*samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*). No one can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead by executing *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* or any other *yoga* independently. By these yogic methods one may make a little progress toward *bhakti-yoga*, but without coming to the stage of devotional service one cannot understand what is the Personality of Godhead. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is also confirmed that when one becomes purified by executing the process of devotional service, especially by hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Bhagavad-gītā* from realized souls, then he can understand the science of Kṛṣṇa, or the science of God. *Evam prasanna-manaso bhagavad-bhakti-yogataḥ*. When one’s heart is cleared of all nonsense, then one can understand what God is. Thus the process of devotional service, of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is the king of all education and the king of all confidential knowledge. It is the purest form of religion, and it can be executed joyfully without difficulty. Therefore one should adopt it.

(9.10)

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It is clearly stated here that the Supreme Lord, although aloof from all the activities of the material world, remains the supreme director. The Supreme Lord is the supreme will and the background of this material manifestation, but the management is being conducted by material nature. Kṛṣṇa also states in *Bhagavad-gītā* that of all the living entities in different forms and species, “I am the father.” The father gives seeds to the womb of the mother for the child, and similarly the Supreme Lord by His mere glance injects all the living entities into the womb of material nature, and they come out in their different forms and species, according to their last desires and activities. All these living entities, although born under the glance of the Supreme Lord, take their different bodies according to their past deeds and desires. So the Lord is not directly attached to this material creation. He simply glances over material nature; material nature is thus activated, and everything is created immediately. Because He glances over material nature, there is undoubtedly activity on the part of the Supreme Lord, but He has nothing to do with the manifestation of the material world directly. This example is given in the *smṛti*: when there is a fragrant flower before someone, the fragrance is touched by the smelling power of the person, yet the smelling and the flower are detached from one another. There is a similar connection between the material world and the Supreme Personality of Godhead; actually He has nothing to do with this material world, but He creates by His glance and ordains. In summary, material nature, without the superintendence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, cannot do anything. Yet the Supreme Personality is detached from all material activities.

(9.11)

From the other explanations of the previous verses in this chapter, it is clear that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although appearing like a human being, is not a common man. The Personality of Godhead, who conducts the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the complete cosmic manifestation, cannot be a human being. Yet there are many foolish men who consider Kṛṣṇa to be merely a powerful man and nothing more. Actually, He is the original Supreme Personality, as is confirmed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*); He is the Supreme Lord.

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There are many *īśvaras*, controllers, and one appears greater than another. In the ordinary management of affairs in the material world, we find some official or director, and above him there is a secretary, and above him a minister, and above him a president. Each of them is a controller, but one is controlled by another. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is said that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller; there are many controllers undoubtedly, both in the material and spiritual world, but Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller (*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*), and His body is *sac-cid-ānanda*, nonmaterial.

Material bodies cannot perform the wonderful acts described in previous verses. His body is eternal, blissful and full of knowledge. Although He is not a common man, the foolish deride Him and consider Him to be a man. His body is called here *mānuṣīm* because He is acting just like a man, a friend of Arjuna's, a politician involved in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. In so many ways He is acting just like an ordinary man, but actually His body is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha* – eternal bliss and knowledge absolute. This is confirmed in the Vedic language also. *Sac-cid-ānanda-rūpāya kṛṣṇāya*: “I offer my obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, who is the eternal blissful form of knowledge.” (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 1.1) There are other descriptions in the Vedic language also. *Tam ekaṁ govindam*: “You are Govinda, the pleasure of the senses and the cows.” *Sac-cid-ānanda-vigraham*: “And Your form is transcendental, full of knowledge, bliss and eternity.” (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 1.38)

Despite the transcendental qualities of Lord Kṛṣṇa's body, its full bliss and knowledge, there are many so-called scholars and commentators of *Bhagavad-gītā* who deride Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary man. The scholar may be born an extraordinary man due to his previous good work, but this conception of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is due to a poor fund of knowledge. Therefore he is called *mūḍha*, for only foolish persons consider Kṛṣṇa to be an ordinary human being. The foolish consider Kṛṣṇa an ordinary human being because they do not know the confidential activities of the Supreme Lord and His different energies. They do not know that Kṛṣṇa's body is a symbol of complete knowledge and bliss, that He is the proprietor of everything that be and that He can award liberation to anyone. Because they do not know that Kṛṣṇa has so many transcendental qualifications, they deride Him.

Nor do they know that the appearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in this material world is a manifestation of His internal energy. He is the master of the material energy. As has been explained in several places (*mama māyā duratyayā*), He claims that the material energy,

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although very powerful, is under His control, and whoever surrenders unto Him can get out of the control of this material energy. If a soul surrendered to Kṛṣṇa can get out of the influence of material energy, then how can the Supreme Lord, who conducts the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the whole cosmic nature, have a material body like us? So this conception of Kṛṣṇa is complete foolishness. Foolish persons, however, cannot conceive that the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, appearing just like an ordinary man, can be the controller of all the atoms and of the gigantic manifestation of the universal form. The biggest and the minutest are beyond their conception, so they cannot imagine that a form like that of a human being can simultaneously control the infinite and the minute. Actually, although He is controlling the infinite and the finite, He is apart from all this manifestation. It is clearly stated concerning His *yogam aiśvaram*, His inconceivable transcendental energy, that He can control the infinite and the finite simultaneously and that He can remain aloof from them. Although the foolish cannot imagine how Kṛṣṇa, who appears just like a human being, can control the infinite and the finite, those who are pure devotees accept this, for they know that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore they completely surrender unto Him and engage in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service of the Lord.

There are many controversies between the impersonalists and the personalists about the Lord's appearance as a human being. But if we consult *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the authoritative texts for understanding the science of Kṛṣṇa, then we can understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is not an ordinary man, although He appeared on this earth as an ordinary human. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, First Canto, First Chapter, when the sages headed by Śaunaka inquired about the activities of Kṛṣṇa, they said:

kṛtavān kila karmāṇi saha rāmeṇa keśavaḥ

atī-martyāni bhagavān gūḍhaḥ kapaṭa-māṇuṣaḥ

“Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, along with Balarāma, played like a human being, and so masked He performed many superhuman acts.” (*Bhāg.* 1.1.20) The Lord's appearance as a man bewilders the foolish. No human being could perform the wonderful acts that Kṛṣṇa performed while He was present on this earth. When Kṛṣṇa appeared before His father and mother, Vasudeva and Devakī, He appeared with four hands, but after the prayers of the parents He transformed Himself into an ordinary child. As stated in the *Bhāgavatam*(10.3.46), *babhūva prākṛtaḥ śiśuḥ*: He became just like an ordinary child, an

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ordinary human being. Now, here again it is indicated that the Lord's appearance as an ordinary human being is one of the features of His transcendental body. In the Eleventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* also it is stated that Arjuna prayed to see Kṛṣṇa's form of four hands (*tenaiva rūpeṇa catur-bhujena*). After revealing this form, Kṛṣṇa, when petitioned by Arjuna, again assumed His original humanlike form (*mānuṣaṁ rūpam*). These different features of the Supreme Lord are certainly not those of an ordinary human being.

Some of those who deride Kṛṣṇa and who are infected with the Māyāvādī philosophy quote the following verse from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.29.21) to prove that Kṛṣṇa is just an ordinary man. *Ahaṁ sarveṣu bhūteṣu bhūtātmāvasthitaḥ sadā*: "The Supreme is present in every living entity." We should better take note of this particular verse from the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* like Jīva Gosvāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura instead of following the interpretation of unauthorized persons who deride Kṛṣṇa. Jīva Gosvāmī, commenting on this verse, says that Kṛṣṇa, in His plenary expansion as Paramātmā, is situated in the moving and the nonmoving entities as the Supersoul, so any neophyte devotee who simply gives his attention to the *arcā-mūrti*, the form of the Supreme Lord in the temple, and does not respect other living entities is uselessly worshiping the form of the Lord in the temple. There are three kinds of devotees of the Lord, and the neophyte is in the lowest stage. The neophyte devotee gives more attention to the Deity in the temple than to other devotees, so Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura warns that this sort of mentality should be corrected. A devotee should see that because Kṛṣṇa is present in everyone's heart as Paramātmā, every body is the embodiment or the temple of the Supreme Lord; so as one offers respect to the temple of the Lord, he should similarly properly respect each and every body in which the Paramātmā dwells. Everyone should therefore be given proper respect and should not be neglected.

There are also many impersonalists who deride temple worship. They say that since God is everywhere, why should one restrict himself to temple worship? But if God is everywhere, is He not in the temple or in the Deity? Although the personalist and the impersonalist will fight with one another perpetually, a perfect devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness knows that although Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality, He is all-pervading, as confirmed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Although His personal abode is Goloka Vṛndāvana and He is always staying there, by His different manifestations of energy and by His plenary expansion He is present everywhere in all parts of the material and spiritual creation.

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(9.13)

In this verse the description of the *mahātmā* is clearly given. The first sign of the *mahātmā* is that he is already situated in the divine nature. He is not under the control of material nature. And how is this effected? That is explained in the Seventh Chapter: one who surrenders unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, at once becomes freed from the control of material nature. That is the qualification. One can become free from the control of material nature as soon as he surrenders his soul to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the preliminary formula. Being marginal potency, as soon as the living entity is freed from the control of material nature, he is put under the guidance of the spiritual nature. The guidance of the spiritual nature is called *daivī prakṛti*, divine nature. So when one is promoted in that way – by surrendering to the Supreme Personality of Godhead – one attains to the stage of great soul, *mahātmā*.

The *mahātmā* does not divert his attention to anything outside Kṛṣṇa, because he knows perfectly well that Kṛṣṇa is the original Supreme Person, the cause of all causes. There is no doubt about it. Such a *mahātmā*, or great soul, develops through association with other *mahātmās*, pure devotees. Pure devotees are not even attracted by Kṛṣṇa's other features, such as the four-armed Mahā-viṣṇu. They are simply attracted by the two-armed form of Kṛṣṇa. They are not attracted to other features of Kṛṣṇa, nor are they concerned with any form of a demigod or of a human being. They meditate only upon Kṛṣṇa in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are always engaged in the unswerving service of the Lord in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(9.20)

The word *traī-vidyāḥ* refers to the three *Vedas* – *Sāma*, *Yajur* and *Ṛg*. A *brāhmaṇa* who has studied these three *Vedas* is called a *tri-vedī*. Anyone who is very much attached to knowledge derived from these three *Vedas* is respected in society. Unfortunately, there are many great scholars of the *Vedas* who do not know the ultimate purport of studying them. Therefore Kṛṣṇa herein declares Himself to be the ultimate goal for the *tri-vedīs*. Actual *tri-vedīs* take shelter under the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and engage in pure devotional service to satisfy the Lord. Devotional service begins with the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and side by side trying to understand Kṛṣṇa in truth. Unfortunately those who are simply official students of the *Vedas* become more interested in offering sacrifices to the different demigods like Indra and Candra. By such endeavor, the worshipers of different demigods are certainly purified of the

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contamination of the lower qualities of nature and are thereby elevated to the higher planetary systems or heavenly planets known as Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka, etc. Once situated on those higher planetary systems, one can satisfy his senses hundreds of thousands of times better than on this planet.

(9.26)

For the intelligent person, it is essential to be in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, in order to achieve a permanent, blissful abode for eternal happiness. The process of achieving such a marvelous result is very easy and can be attempted even by the poorest of the poor, without any kind of qualification. The only qualification required in this connection is to be a pure devotee of the Lord. It does not matter what one is or where one is situated. The process is so easy that even a leaf or a little water or fruit can be offered to the Supreme Lord in genuine love and the Lord will be pleased to accept it. No one, therefore, can be barred from Kṛṣṇa consciousness, because it is so easy and universal. Who is such a fool that he does not want to be Kṛṣṇa conscious by this simple method and thus attain the highest perfectional life of eternity, bliss and knowledge? Kṛṣṇa wants only loving service and nothing more. Kṛṣṇa accepts even a little flower from His pure devotee. He does not want any kind of offering from a nondevotee. He is not in need of anything from anyone, because He is self-sufficient, and yet He accepts the offering of His devotee in an exchange of love and affection. To develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the highest perfection of life. *Bhakti* is mentioned twice in this verse in order to declare more emphatically that *bhakti*, or devotional service, is the only means to approach Kṛṣṇa. No other condition, such as becoming a *brāhmaṇa*, a learned scholar, a very rich man or a great philosopher, can induce Kṛṣṇa to accept some offering. Without the basic principle of *bhakti*, nothing can induce the Lord to agree to accept anything from anyone. *Bhakti* is never causal. The process is eternal. It is direct action in service to the absolute whole.

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa, having established that He is the only enjoyer, the primeval Lord and the real object of all sacrificial offerings, reveals what types of sacrifices He desires to be offered. If one wishes to engage in devotional service to the Supreme in order to be purified and to reach the goal of life – the transcendental loving service of God – then one should find out what the Lord desires of him. One who loves Kṛṣṇa will give Him whatever He wants, and he avoids offering

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anything which is undesirable or unasked. Thus meat, fish and eggs should not be offered to Kṛṣṇa. If He desired such things as offerings, He would have said so. Instead He clearly requests that a leaf, fruit, flowers and water be given to Him, and He says of this offering, “I will accept it.” Therefore, we should understand that He will not accept meat, fish and eggs. Vegetables, grains, fruits, milk and water are the proper foods for human beings and are prescribed by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. Whatever else we eat cannot be offered to Him, since He will not accept it. Thus we cannot be acting on the level of loving devotion if we offer such foods.

In the Third Chapter, verse 13, Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains that only the remains of sacrifice are purified and fit for consumption by those who are seeking advancement in life and release from the clutches of the material entanglement. Those who do not make an offering of their food, He says in the same verse, are eating only sin. In other words, their every mouthful is simply deepening their involvement in the complexities of material nature. But preparing nice, simple vegetable dishes, offering them before the picture or Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa and bowing down and praying for Him to accept such a humble offering enable one to advance steadily in life, to purify the body, and to create fine brain tissues which will lead to clear thinking. Above all, the offering should be made with an attitude of love. Kṛṣṇa has no need of food, since He already possesses everything that be, yet He will accept the offering of one who desires to please Him in that way. The important element, in preparation, in serving and in offering, is to act with love for Kṛṣṇa.

The impersonalist philosophers, who wish to maintain that the Absolute Truth is without senses, cannot comprehend this verse of *Bhagavad-gītā*. To them, it is either a metaphor or proof of the mundane character of Kṛṣṇa, the speaker of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. But, in actuality, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Godhead, has senses, and it is stated that His senses are interchangeable; in other words, one sense can perform the function of any other. This is what it means to say that Kṛṣṇa is absolute. Lacking senses, He could hardly be considered full in all opulences. In the Seventh Chapter, Kṛṣṇa has explained that He impregnates the living entities into material nature. This is done by His looking upon material nature. And so in this instance, Kṛṣṇa’s hearing the devotee’s words of love in offering foodstuffs is *wholly* identical with His eating and actually tasting. This point should be emphasized: because of His absolute position, His hearing is wholly identical

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with His eating and tasting. Only the devotee, who accepts Kṛṣṇa as He describes Himself, without interpretation, can understand that the Supreme Absolute Truth can eat food and enjoy it. (9.29)

One may question here that if Kṛṣṇa is equal to everyone and no one is His special friend, then why does He take a special interest in the devotees who are always engaged in His transcendental service? But this is not discrimination; it is natural. Any man in this material world may be very charitably disposed, yet he has a special interest in his own children. The Lord claims that every living entity – in whatever form – is His son, and so He provides everyone with a generous supply of the necessities of life. He is just like a cloud which pours rain all over, regardless of whether it falls on rock or land or water. But for His devotees, He gives specific attention. Such devotees are mentioned here: they are always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and therefore they are always transcendently situated in Kṛṣṇa. The very phrase “Kṛṣṇa consciousness” suggests that those who are in such consciousness are living transcendentalists, situated in Him. The Lord says here distinctly, *mayi te*: “They are in Me.” Naturally, as a result, the Lord is also in them. This is reciprocal. This also explains the words *ye yathā mām prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham*: “Whoever surrenders unto Me, proportionately I take care of him.” This transcendental reciprocation exists because both the Lord and the devotee are conscious. When a diamond is set in a golden ring, it looks very nice. The gold is glorified, and at the same time the diamond is glorified. The Lord and the living entity eternally glitter, and when a living entity becomes inclined to the service of the Supreme Lord he looks like gold. The Lord is a diamond, and so this combination is very nice. Living entities in a pure state are called devotees. The Supreme Lord becomes the devotee of His devotees. If a reciprocal relationship is not present between the devotee and the Lord, then there is no personalist philosophy. In the impersonal philosophy there is no reciprocation between the Supreme and the living entity, but in the personalist philosophy there is.

The example is often given that the Lord is like a desire tree, and whatever one wants from this desire tree, the Lord supplies. But here the explanation is more complete. The Lord is here stated to be partial to the devotees. This is the manifestation of the Lord’s special mercy to the devotees. The Lord’s reciprocation should not be considered to be under the law of *karma*. It belongs to the transcendental situation in which the Lord and His devotees function. Devotional

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service to the Lord is not an activity of this material world; it is part of the spiritual world, where eternity, bliss and knowledge predominate.

(9.34)

In this verse it is clearly indicated that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the only means of being delivered from the clutches of this contaminated material world. Sometimes unscrupulous commentators distort the meaning of what is clearly stated here: that all devotional service should be offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Unfortunately, unscrupulous commentators divert the mind of the reader to that which is not at all feasible. Such commentators do not know that there is no difference between Kṛṣṇa's mind and Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is not an ordinary human being; He is Absolute Truth. His body, His mind and He Himself are one and absolute. It is stated in the *Kūrma Purāṇa*, as it is quoted by Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī in his *Anubhāṣya* comments on *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Fifth Chapter, *Ādi-līlā*, verses 41–48), *deha-dehi-vibhedo 'yaṁ neśvare vidyate kvacit*. This means that there is no difference in Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, between Himself and His body. But because the commentators do not know this science of Kṛṣṇa, they hide Kṛṣṇa and divide His personality from His mind or from His body. Although this is sheer ignorance of the science of Kṛṣṇa, some men make profit out of misleading people.

There are some who are demonic; they also think of Kṛṣṇa, but enviously, just like King Kāṁsa, Kṛṣṇa's uncle. He was also thinking of Kṛṣṇa always, but he thought of Kṛṣṇa as his enemy. He was always in anxiety, wondering when Kṛṣṇa would come to kill him. That kind of thinking will not help us. One should be thinking of Kṛṣṇa in devotional love. That is *bhakti*. One should cultivate the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa continuously. What is that favorable cultivation? It is to learn from a bona fide teacher. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and we have several times explained that His body is not material, but is eternal, blissful knowledge. This kind of talk about Kṛṣṇa will help one become a devotee. Understanding Kṛṣṇa otherwise, from the wrong source, will prove fruitless.

One should therefore engage his mind in the eternal form, the primal form of Kṛṣṇa; with conviction in his heart that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme, he should engage himself in worship. There are hundreds of thousands of temples in India for the worship of Kṛṣṇa, and devotional service is practiced there. When such practice is made, one has to offer obeisances to Kṛṣṇa. One should

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lower his head before the Deity and engage his mind, his body, his activities – everything. That will make one fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa without deviation. This will help one transfer to Kṛṣṇaloka. One should not be deviated by unscrupulous commentators. One must engage in the nine different processes of devotional service, beginning with hearing and chanting about Kṛṣṇa. Pure devotional service is the highest achievement of human society.

The Seventh and Eighth chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā* have explained pure devotional service to the Lord that is free from speculative knowledge, mystic *yoga* and fruitive activities. Those who are not purely sanctified may be attracted by different features of the Lord like the impersonal *brahma-jyotir* and localized Paramātmā, but a pure devotee directly takes to the service of the Supreme Lord.

There is a beautiful poem about Kṛṣṇa in which it is clearly stated that any person who is engaged in the worship of demigods is most unintelligent and cannot achieve at any time the supreme award of Kṛṣṇa. The devotee, in the beginning, may sometimes fall from the standard, but still he should be considered superior to all other philosophers and *yogīs*. One who always engages in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should be understood to be a perfectly saintly person. His accidental nondevotional activities will diminish, and he will soon be situated without any doubt in complete perfection. The pure devotee has no actual chance to fall down, because the Supreme Godhead personally takes care of His pure devotees. Therefore, the intelligent person should take directly to the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and happily live in this material world. He will eventually receive the supreme award of Kṛṣṇa.

Exercise

1. Topics regarding Krishna should be discussed amongst (BG 9.1)

a. Devotees b. Scholars c. Jnanis d. Austere

2. How many components are there in pure devotional service? (BG 9.1)

a. 9 b. 7 c. 11 d. 5

3. What is the meaning of the word anasūyave? (BG 9.1)

a. Nonenvious b. Lazy c. Lusty d. Angry

4. What are the authoritative texts for understanding the science of Krishna? (BG 9.11)

a. Bhagavad-gētā& Çrémad-Bhāgavatam b. Origin of species c. Time magazine d. Tantras

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5. What is the nature of Lord's body? (BG 9.11)

a. Cit- ananda b. Sat - Ananda c. Sat-cit d. All of the above

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(d)

Chapter Ten: The Opulence of the Absolute

(10.4-5)

The different qualities of living entities, be they good or bad, are all created by Kṛṣṇa, and they are described here.

Intelligence refers to the power to analyze things in their proper perspective, and knowledge refers to understanding what is spirit and what is matter. Ordinary knowledge obtained by a university education pertains only to matter, and it is not accepted here as knowledge. Knowledge means knowing the distinction between spirit and matter. In modern education there is no knowledge about spirit; they are simply taking care of the material elements and bodily needs. Therefore academic knowledge is not complete.

Asammoha, freedom from doubt and delusion, can be achieved when one is not hesitant and when he understands the transcendental philosophy. Slowly but surely he becomes free from bewilderment. Nothing should be accepted blindly; everything should be accepted with care and with caution. *Kṣamā*, tolerance and forgiveness, should be practiced; one should be tolerant and excuse the minor offenses of others. *Satyam*, truthfulness, means that facts should be presented as they are, for the benefit of others. Facts should not be misrepresented. According to social conventions, it is said that one can speak the truth only when it is palatable to others. But that is not truthfulness. The truth should be spoken in a straightforward way, so that others will understand actually what the facts are. If a man is a thief and if people are warned that he is a thief, that is truth. Although sometimes the truth is unpalatable, one should not refrain from

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speaking it. Truthfulness demands that the facts be presented as they are for the benefit of others. That is the definition of truth.

Control of the senses means that the senses should not be used for unnecessary personal enjoyment. There is no prohibition against meeting the proper needs of the senses, but unnecessary sense enjoyment is detrimental for spiritual advancement. Therefore the senses should be restrained from unnecessary use. Similarly, one should restrain the mind from unnecessary thoughts; that is called *śama*. One should not spend one's time pondering over earning money. That is a misuse of the thinking power. The mind should be used to understand the prime necessity of human beings, and that should be presented authoritatively. The power of thought should be developed in association with persons who are authorities in the scriptures, saintly persons and spiritual masters and those whose thinking is highly developed. *Sukham*, pleasure or happiness, should always be in that which is favorable for the cultivation of the spiritual knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And similarly, that which is painful or which causes distress is that which is unfavorable for the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Anything favorable for the development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness should be accepted, and anything unfavorable should be rejected.

Bhava, birth, should be understood to refer to the body. As far as the soul is concerned, there is neither birth nor death; that we have discussed in the beginning of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Birth and death apply to one's embodiment in the material world. Fear is due to worrying about the future. A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has no fear because by his activities he is sure to go back to the spiritual sky, back home, back to Godhead. Therefore his future is very bright. Others, however, do not know what their future holds; they have no knowledge of what the next life holds. So they are therefore in constant anxiety. If we want to get free from anxiety, then the best course is to understand Kṛṣṇa and be situated always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In that way we will be free from all fear. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.37) it is stated, *bhayam dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syāt*: fear is caused by our absorption in the illusory energy. But those who are free from the illusory energy, those who are confident that they are not the material body, that they are spiritual parts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and who are therefore engaged in the transcendental service of the Supreme Godhead, have nothing to fear. Their future is very bright. This fear is a condition of persons who are not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Abhayam*, fearlessness, is possible only for one in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

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Ahimsā, nonviolence, means that one should not do anything which will put others into misery or confusion. Material activities that are promised by so many politicians, sociologists, philanthropists, etc., do not produce very good results because the politicians and philanthropists have no transcendental vision; they do not know what is actually beneficial for human society. *Ahimsā* means that people should be trained in such a way that the full utilization of the human body can be achieved. The human body is meant for spiritual realization, so any movement or any commissions which do not further that end commit violence on the human body. That which furthers the future spiritual happiness of the people in general is called nonviolence.

Samatā, equanimity, refers to freedom from attachment and aversion. To be very much attached or to be very much detached is not the best. This material world should be accepted without attachment or aversion. That which is favorable for prosecuting Kṛṣṇa consciousness should be accepted; that which is unfavorable should be rejected. That is called *samatā*, equanimity. A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has nothing to reject and nothing to accept save in terms of its usefulness in the prosecution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Tuṣṭi, satisfaction, means that one should not be eager to gather more and more material goods by unnecessary activity. One should be satisfied with whatever is obtained by the grace of the Supreme Lord; that is called satisfaction. *Tapas* means austerity or penance. There are many rules and regulations in the *Vedas* which apply here, like rising early in the morning and taking a bath. Sometimes it is very troublesome to rise early in the morning, but whatever voluntary trouble one may suffer in this way is called penance. Similarly, there are prescriptions for fasting on certain days of the month. One may not be inclined to practice such fasting, but because of his determination to make advancement in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he should accept such bodily troubles when they are recommended. However, one should not fast unnecessarily or against Vedic injunctions. One should not fast for some political purpose; that is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* as fasting in ignorance, and anything done in ignorance or passion does not lead to spiritual advancement. Everything done in the mode of goodness does advance one, however, and fasting done in terms of the Vedic injunctions enriches one in spiritual knowledge. As far as charity is concerned, one should give fifty percent of his earnings to some good cause. And what is a good cause? It is that which is conducted in terms of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is not only a good cause, but the best cause. Because Kṛṣṇa is good, His cause is also good. Thus

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charity should be given to a person who is engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. According to the Vedic literature, it is enjoined that charity should be given to the *brāhmaṇas*. This practice is still followed, although not very nicely in terms of the Vedic injunction. But still the injunction is that charity should be given to the *brāhmaṇas*. Why? Because they are engaged in higher cultivation of spiritual knowledge. A *brāhmaṇa* is supposed to devote his whole life to understanding Brahman. *Brahma jñānātīti brāhmaṇaḥ*: one who knows Brahman is called a *brāhmaṇa*. Thus charity is offered to the *brāhmaṇas* because they are always engaged in higher spiritual service and have no time to earn their livelihood. In the Vedic literature, charity is also to be awarded to one in the renounced order of life, the *sannyāsī*. The *sannyāsīs* beg from door to door, not for money but for missionary purposes. The system is that they go from door to door to awaken the householders from the slumber of ignorance. Because the householders are engaged in family affairs and have forgotten their actual purpose in life – awakening their Kṛṣṇa consciousness – it is the business of the *sannyāsīs* to go as beggars to the householders and encourage them to be Kṛṣṇa conscious. As it is said in the *Vedas*, one should awake and achieve what is due him in this human form of life. This knowledge and method is distributed by the *sannyāsīs*; hence charity is to be given to the renouncer of life, to the *brāhmaṇas*, and similar good causes, not to any whimsical cause.

Yaśas, fame, should be according to Lord Caitanya, who said that a man is famous when he is known as a great devotee. That is real fame. If one has become a great man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and it is known, then he is truly famous. One who does not have such fame is infamous.

All these qualities are manifest throughout the universe in human society and in the society of the demigods. There are many forms of humanity on other planets, and these qualities are there. Now, for one who wants to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Kṛṣṇa creates all these qualities, but the person develops them himself from within. One who engages in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord develops all the good qualities, as arranged by the Supreme Lord.

Of whatever we find, good or bad, the origin is Kṛṣṇa. Nothing can manifest itself in this material world which is not in Kṛṣṇa. That is knowledge; although we know that things are differently situated, we should realize that everything flows from Kṛṣṇa.

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(10.8)

A learned scholar who has studied the *Vedas* perfectly and has information from authorities like Lord Caitanya and who knows how to apply these teachings can understand that Kṛṣṇa is the origin of everything in both the material and spiritual worlds, and because he knows this perfectly he becomes firmly fixed in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord. He can never be deviated by any amount of nonsensical commentaries or by fools. All Vedic literature agrees that Kṛṣṇa is the source of Brahmā, Śiva and all other demigods. In the *Atharva Veda* (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 1.24) it is said, *yo brahmāṇaṁ vidadhāti pūrvam yo vai vedāṁś ca gāpayati sma kṛṣṇaḥ*: “It was Kṛṣṇa who in the beginning instructed Brahmā in Vedic knowledge and who disseminated Vedic knowledge in the past.” Then again the *Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* (1) says, *atha puruṣo ha vai nārāyaṇo ’kāmayata prajāḥ srjeyeti*: “Then the Supreme Personality Nārāyaṇa desired to create living entities.” The *Upaniṣad* continues, *nārāyaṇād brahmā jāyate, nārāyaṇād prajāpatiḥ prajāyate, nārāyaṇād indro jāyate, nārāyaṇād aṣṭau vasavo jāyante, nārāyaṇād ekādaśa rudrā jāyante, nārāyaṇād dvādaśādityāḥ*: “From Nārāyaṇa, Brahmā is born, and from Nārāyaṇa the patriarchs are also born. From Nārāyaṇa, Indra is born, from Nārāyaṇa the eight Vasus are born, from Nārāyaṇa the eleven Rudras are born, from Nārāyaṇa the twelve Ādityas are born.” This Nārāyaṇa is an expansion of Kṛṣṇa.

It is said in the same *Vedas*, *brahmaṇyo devakī-putraḥ*: “The son of Devakī, Kṛṣṇa, is the Supreme Personality.” (*Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* 4) Then it is said, *eko vai nārāyaṇa āsīn na brahmā neśāno nāpo nāgni-somau neme dyāv-āpṛthivī na nakṣatrāṇi na sūryaḥ*: “In the beginning of the creation there was only the Supreme Personality Nārāyaṇa. There was no Brahmā, no Śiva, no water, no fire, no moon, no heaven and earth, no stars in the sky, no sun.” (*Mahā Upaniṣad* 1.2) In the *Mahā Upaniṣad* it is also said that Lord Śiva was born from the forehead of the Supreme Lord. Thus the *Vedas* say that it is the Supreme Lord, the creator of Brahmā and Śiva, who is to be worshiped.

In the *Mokṣa-dharma* section of the *Mahābhārata*, Kṛṣṇa also says,
prajāpatiṁ ca rudraṁ cāpy aham eva sṛjāmi vai
tau hi mām na vijānīto mama māyā-vimohitau

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“The patriarchs, Śiva and others are created by Me, though they do not know that they are created by Me because they are deluded by My illusory energy.” In the *Varāha Purāṇa* it is also said,

nārāyaṇaḥ paro devas tasmāj jātaś caturmukhaḥ

tasmād rudro 'bhavad devaḥ sa ca sarva-jñatām gataḥ

“Nārāyaṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and from Him Brahmā was born, from whom Śiva was born.”

Lord Kṛṣṇa is the source of all generations, and He is called the most efficient cause of everything. He says, “Because everything is born of Me, I am the original source of all. Everything is under Me; no one is above Me.” There is no supreme controller other than Kṛṣṇa. One who understands Kṛṣṇa in such a way from a bona fide spiritual master, with references from Vedic literature, engages all his energy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and becomes a truly learned man. In comparison to him, all others, who do not know Kṛṣṇa properly, are but fools. Only a fool would consider Kṛṣṇa to be an ordinary man. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person should not be bewildered by fools; he should avoid all unauthorized commentaries and interpretations on *Bhagavad-gītā* and proceed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness with determination and firmness.

(10.10)

In this verse the word *buddhi-yogam* is very significant. We may remember that in the Second Chapter the Lord, instructing Arjuna, said that He had spoken to him of many things and that He would instruct him in the way of *buddhi-yoga*. Now *buddhi-yoga* is explained. *Buddhi-yoga* itself is action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; that is the highest intelligence. *Buddhi* means intelligence, and *yoga* means mystic activities or mystic elevation. When one tries to go back home, back to Godhead, and takes fully to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in devotional service, his action is called *buddhi-yoga*. In other words, *buddhi-yoga* is the process by which one gets out of the entanglement of this material world. The ultimate goal of progress is Kṛṣṇa. People do not know this; therefore the association of devotees and a bona fide spiritual master are important. One should know that the goal is Kṛṣṇa, and when the goal is assigned, then the path is slowly but progressively traversed, and the ultimate goal is achieved.

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When a person knows the goal of life but is addicted to the fruits of activities, he is acting in *karma-yoga*. When he knows that the goal is Kṛṣṇa but he takes pleasure in mental speculations to understand Kṛṣṇa, he is acting in *injñāna-yoga*. And when he knows the goal and seeks Kṛṣṇa completely in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service, he is acting in *bhakti-yoga*, or *buddhi-yoga*, which is the complete *yoga*. This complete *yoga* is the highest perfectional stage of life.

A person may have a bona fide spiritual master and may be attached to a spiritual organization, but if he is still not intelligent enough to make progress, then Kṛṣṇa from within gives him instructions so that he may ultimately come to Him without difficulty. The qualification is that a person always engage himself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and with love and devotion render all kinds of services. He should perform some sort of work for Kṛṣṇa, and that work should be with love. If a devotee is not intelligent enough to make progress on the path of self-realization but is sincere and devoted to the activities of devotional service, the Lord gives him a chance to make progress and ultimately attain to Him.

(10.21)

There are twelve Ādityas, of which Kṛṣṇa is the principal. Among all the luminaries shining in the sky, the sun is the chief, and in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* the sun is accepted as the glowing eye of the Supreme Lord. There are fifty varieties of wind blowing in space, and of these winds the controlling deity, Marīci, represents Kṛṣṇa.

Among the stars, the moon is the most prominent at night, and thus the moon represents Kṛṣṇa. It appears from this verse that the moon is one of the stars; therefore the stars that twinkle in the sky also reflect the light of the sun. The theory that there are many suns within the universe is not accepted by Vedic literature. The sun is one, and as by the reflection of the sun the moon illuminates, so also do the stars. Since *Bhagavad-gītā* indicates herein that the moon is one of the stars, the twinkling stars are not suns but are similar to the moon.

(10.25)

Brahmā, the first living creature within the universe, created several sons for the propagation of various kinds of species. Among these sons, Bhṛgu is the most powerful sage. Of all the transcendental vibrations, *om* (*om-kāra*) represents Kṛṣṇa. Of all sacrifices, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare is

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the purest representation of Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes animal sacrifices are recommended, but in the sacrifice of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, there is no question of violence. It is the simplest and the purest. Whatever is sublime in the worlds is a representation of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore the Himālayas, the greatest mountains in the world, also represent Him. The mountain named Meru was mentioned in a previous verse, but Meru is sometimes movable, whereas the Himālayas are never movable. Thus the Himālayas are greater than Meru.

(10.28)

The thunderbolt, indeed a mighty weapon, represents Kṛṣṇa's power. In Kṛṣṇaloka in the spiritual sky there are cows which can be milked at any time, and they give as much milk as one likes. Of course such cows do not exist in this material world, but there is mention of them in Kṛṣṇaloka. The Lord keeps many such cows, which are called *surabhi*. It is stated that the Lord is engaged in herding the *surabhi* cows. Kandarpa is the sex desire for presenting good sons; therefore Kandarpa is the representative of Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes sex is engaged in only for sense gratification; such sex does not represent Kṛṣṇa. But sex for the generation of good children is called Kandarpa and represents Kṛṣṇa.

(10.30)

Diti and Aditi are two sisters. The sons of Aditi are called Ādityas, and the sons of Diti are called Daityas. All the Ādityas are devotees of the Lord, and all the Daityas are atheistic. Although Prahāda was born in the family of the Daityas, he was a great devotee from his childhood. Because of his devotional service and godly nature, he is considered to be a representative of Kṛṣṇa.

There are many subduing principles, but time wears down all things in the material universe and so represents Kṛṣṇa. Of the many animals, the lion is the most powerful and ferocious, and of the million varieties of birds, Garuḍa, the bearer of Lord Viṣṇu, is the greatest.

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Exercise

1. What is the meaning of truthfulness? (BG 10.4-5)

- a. Facts should be presented as they are, for the benefit of others
- b. No duplicity
- c. Not to speak lie
- d. Straight talk

2. How should one accept things? (BG 10.4-5)

- a. With care and caution
- b. With faith
- c. Blindly
- d. None of the above

3. When can one be free of doubt and delusion? (BG 10.4-5)

- a. Unhesitatingly understands the transcendental philosophy
- b. Clear intelligence
- c. Being educated
- d. Meditation

4. How should one develop power of thought? (BG 10.4-5)

- a. In association of people who are authorities in scriptures
- b. In association of thinkers
- c. By analyzing on one's own
- d. Any of the above

5. A man is famous when he is known as a _____. That is real fame. (BG 10.4-5)

- a. Successful person
- b. Charitable person
- c. Great devotee
- d. Wealthy person

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(c)

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Chapter Eleven: The Universal Form

(11.8)

A pure devotee does not like to see Kṛṣṇa in any form except His form with two hands; a devotee must see His universal form by His grace, not with the mind but with spiritual eyes. To see the universal form of Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna is told not to change his mind but his vision. The universal form of Kṛṣṇa is not very important; that will be clear in subsequent verses. Yet because Arjuna wanted to see it, the Lord gives him the particular vision required to see that universal form.

Devotees who are correctly situated in a transcendental relationship with Kṛṣṇa are attracted by loving features, not by a godless display of opulences. The playmates of Kṛṣṇa, the friends of Kṛṣṇa and the parents of Kṛṣṇa never want Kṛṣṇa to show His opulences. They are so immersed in pure love that they do not even know that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In their loving exchange they forget that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that the boys who play with Kṛṣṇa are all highly pious souls, and after many, many births they are able to play with Kṛṣṇa. Such boys do not know that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They take Him as a personal friend. Therefore Śukadeva Gosvāmī recites this verse:

*itthaṁ satām brahma-sukhānubhūtyā dāsyam gatānām para-daivatena
māyāśritānām nara-dārakeṇa sākāṁ vijahruḥ kṛta-puṇya-puñjāḥ*

“Here is the Supreme Person, who is considered the impersonal Brahman by great sages, the Supreme Personality of Godhead by devotees, and a product of material nature by ordinary men. Now these boys, who have performed many, many pious activities in their past lives, are playing with that Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.12.11)

The fact is that the devotee is not concerned with seeing the *viśva-rūpa*, the universal form, but Arjuna wanted to see it to substantiate Kṛṣṇa’s statements so that in the future people could understand that Kṛṣṇa not only theoretically or philosophically presented Himself as the Supreme but actually presented Himself as such to Arjuna. Arjuna must confirm this because Arjuna is the beginning of the *paramparā* system. Those who are actually interested in understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and who follow in the footsteps of Arjuna should understand that Kṛṣṇa not only theoretically presented Himself as the Supreme, but actually revealed Himself as the Supreme.

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The Lord gave Arjuna the necessary power to see His universal form because He knew that Arjuna did not particularly want to see it, as we have already explained.

(11.14)

Once the divine vision is revealed, the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna changes immediately. Before, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna had a relationship based on friendship, but here, after the revelation, Arjuna is offering obeisances with great respect, and with folded hands he is praying to Kṛṣṇa. He is praising the universal form. Thus Arjuna's relationship becomes one of wonder rather than friendship. Great devotees see Kṛṣṇa as the reservoir of all relationships. In the scriptures there are twelve basic kinds of relationships mentioned, and all of them are present in Kṛṣṇa. It is said that He is the ocean of all the relationships exchanged between two living entities, between the gods, or between the Supreme Lord and His devotees.

Here Arjuna was inspired by the relationship of wonder, and in that wonder, although he was by nature very sober, calm and quiet, he became ecstatic, his hair stood up, and he began to offer his obeisances unto the Supreme Lord with folded hands. He was not, of course, afraid. He was affected by the wonders of the Supreme Lord. The immediate context is wonder; his natural loving friendship was overwhelmed by wonder, and thus he reacted in this way.

(11.19)

There is no limit to the extent of the six opulences of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Here and in many other places there is repetition, but according to the scriptures, repetition of the glories of Kṛṣṇa is not a literary weakness. It is said that at a time of bewilderment or wonder or of great ecstasy, statements are repeated over and over. That is not a flaw.

(11.44)

Kṛṣṇa's devotees relate to Kṛṣṇa in various relationships; one might treat Kṛṣṇa as a son, or one might treat Kṛṣṇa as a husband, as a friend, or as a master. Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are related in friendship. As the father tolerates, or the husband or a master tolerates, so Kṛṣṇa tolerates.

(11.54)

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Kṛṣṇa can be understood only by the process of undivided devotional service. He explicitly explains this in this verse so that unauthorized commentators, who try to understand *Bhagavad-gītā* by the speculative process, will know that they are simply wasting their time. No one can understand Kṛṣṇa or how He came from parents in a four-handed form and at once changed Himself into a two-handed form. These things are very difficult to understand by study of the *Vedas* or by philosophical speculation. Therefore it is clearly stated here that no one can see Him or enter into understanding of these matters. Those who, however, are very experienced students of Vedic literature can learn about Him from the Vedic literature in so many ways. There are so many rules and regulations, and if one at all wants to understand Kṛṣṇa, he must follow the regulative principles described in the authoritative literature. One can perform penance in accordance with those principles. For example, to undergo serious penances one may observe fasting on Janmāṣṭamī, the day on which Kṛṣṇa appeared, and on the two days of Ekādaśī (the eleventh day after the new moon and the eleventh day after the full moon). As far as charity is concerned, it is plain that charity should be given to the devotees of Kṛṣṇa who are engaged in His devotional service to spread the Kṛṣṇa philosophy, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, throughout the world. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a benediction to humanity. Lord Caitanya was appreciated by Rūpa Gosvāmī as the most munificent man of charity because love of Kṛṣṇa, which is very difficult to achieve, was distributed freely by Him. So if one gives some amount of his money to persons involved in distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that charity, given to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is the greatest charity in the world. And if one worships as prescribed in the temple (in the temples in India there is always some statue, usually of Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa), that is a chance to progress by offering worship and respect to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For the beginners in devotional service to the Lord, temple worship is essential, and this is confirmed in the Vedic literature (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23):

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanah*

One who has unflinching devotion for the Supreme Lord and is directed by the spiritual master, in whom he has similar unflinching faith, can see the Supreme Personality of Godhead by revelation. One cannot understand Kṛṣṇa by mental speculation. For one who does not take personal training under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, it is impossible to even begin

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to understand Kṛṣṇa. The word *tu* is specifically used here to indicate that no other process can be used, can be recommended, or can be successful in understanding Kṛṣṇa.

The personal forms of Kṛṣṇa, the two-handed form and the four-handed, are described as *su-durdarśam*, very difficult to see. They are completely different from the temporary universal form shown to Arjuna. The four-handed form of Nārāyaṇa and the two-handed form of Kṛṣṇa are eternal and transcendental, whereas the universal form exhibited to Arjuna is temporary. The words *tvad anyena na dr̥ṣṭa-pūrvam* (verse 47) state that before Arjuna, no one had seen that universal form. Also, they suggest that amongst the devotees there was no necessity of showing it. That form was exhibited by Kṛṣṇa at the request of Arjuna so that in the future, when one represents himself as an incarnation of God, people can ask to see his universal form.

The word *na*, used repeatedly in the previous verse, indicates that one should not be very much proud of such credentials as an academic education in Vedic literature. One must take to the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa. Only then can one attempt to write commentaries on *Bhagavad-gītā*. Kṛṣṇa changes from the universal form to the four-handed form of Nārāyaṇa and then to His own natural form of two hands. This indicates that the four-handed forms and other forms mentioned in Vedic literature are all emanations of the original two-handed Kṛṣṇa. He is the origin of all emanations. Kṛṣṇa is distinct even from these forms, what to speak of the impersonal conception. As far as the four-handed forms of Kṛṣṇa are concerned, it is stated clearly that even the most identical four-handed form of Kṛṣṇa (which is known as Mahā-viṣṇu, who is lying on the cosmic ocean and from whose breathing so many innumerable universes are passing out and entering) is also an expansion of the Supreme Lord. As stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.48),
yasyaika-niśvasita-kālam athāvalambya jīvanti loma-vila-jā jagad-aṇḍa-nāthāḥ
viṣṇur mahān sa iha yasya kalā-viśeṣo govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi

“The Mahā-viṣṇu, into whom all the innumerable universes enter and from whom they come forth again simply by His breathing process, is a plenary expansion of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore I worship Govinda, Kṛṣṇa, the cause of all causes.” Therefore one should conclusively worship the personal form of Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead who has eternal bliss and knowledge. He is the source of all forms of Viṣṇu, He is the source of all forms of incarnation, and He is the original Supreme Personality, as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

In the Vedic literature (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 1.1) the following statement appears:

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sac-cid-ānanda-rūpāya kṛṣṇāyākliṣṭa-kāriṇe
namo vedānta-vedyāya gurave buddhi-sākṣiṇe

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto Kṛṣṇa, who has a transcendental form of bliss, eternity and knowledge. I offer my respect to Him, because understanding Him means understanding the *Vedas*, and He is therefore the supreme spiritual master.” Then it is said, *kṛṣṇo vai paramam daivatam*: “Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 1.3) *Eko vaṣī sarva-gaḥ kṛṣṇa īḍyaḥ*: “That one Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He is worshipable.” *Eko 'pi san bahudhā yo 'vabhāti*: “Kṛṣṇa is one, but He is manifested in unlimited forms and expanded incarnations.” (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 1.21)

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.1) says,

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

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Kṛṣṇa, who has a body of eternity, knowledge and bliss. He has no beginning, for He is the beginning of everything. He is the cause of all causes.”

Elsewhere it is said, *yatrāvatīrṇam kṛṣṇākhyam param brahma narākṛti*: “The Supreme Absolute Truth is a person, His name is Kṛṣṇa, and He sometimes descends on this earth.” Similarly, in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find a description of all kinds of incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and in this list the name of Kṛṣṇa also appears. But then it is said that this Kṛṣṇa is not an incarnation of God but is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself (*ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*).

Similarly, in *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says, *mattaḥ parataram nānyat*: “There is nothing superior to My form as the Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa.” He also says elsewhere in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *aham ādir hi devānām*: “I am the origin of all the demigods.” And after understanding *Bhagavad-gītā* from Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna also confirms this in the following words: *param brahma param dhāma pavitraṁ paramaṁ bhavān*, “I now fully understand that You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, and that You are the refuge of everything.” Therefore the universal form which Kṛṣṇa showed to Arjuna is not the original form of God. The original is the Kṛṣṇa form. The universal form, with its thousands and thousands of heads and hands, is manifest just to draw the attention of those who have no love for God. It is not God’s original form.

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The universal form is not attractive for pure devotees, who are in love with the Lord in different transcendental relationships. The Supreme Godhead exchanges transcendental love in His original form of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore to Arjuna, who was so intimately related with Kṛṣṇa in friendship, this form of the universal manifestation was not pleasing; rather, it was fearful. Arjuna, who was a constant companion of Kṛṣṇa's, must have had transcendental eyes; he was not an ordinary man. Therefore he was not captivated by the universal form. This form may seem wonderful to persons who are involved in elevating themselves by fruitive activities, but to persons who are engaged in devotional service the two-handed form of Kṛṣṇa is the most dear.

(11.55)

Anyone who wants to approach the supreme of all the Personalities of Godhead, on the Kṛṣṇaloka planet in the spiritual sky, and be intimately connected with the Supreme Personality, Kṛṣṇa, must take this formula, as stated by the Supreme Himself. Therefore, this verse is considered to be the essence of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is a book directed to the conditioned souls, who are engaged in the material world with the purpose of lording it over nature and who do not know of the real, spiritual life. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is meant to show how one can understand his spiritual existence and his eternal relationship with the supreme spiritual personality and to teach one how to go back home, back to Godhead. Now here is the verse which clearly explains the process by which one can attain success in his spiritual activity: devotional service.

As far as work is concerned, one should transfer his energy entirely to Kṛṣṇa conscious activities. As stated in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.255),

anāsaktasya viṣayān yathārham upayūñjataḥ

nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate

No work should be done by any man except in relationship to Kṛṣṇa. This is called *kṛṣṇa-karma*. One may be engaged in various activities, but one should not be attached to the result of his work; the result should be done only for Him. For example, one may be engaged in business, but to transform that activity into Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one has to do business for Kṛṣṇa. If Kṛṣṇa is the proprietor of the business, then Kṛṣṇa should enjoy the profit of the business. If a businessman is in possession of thousands and thousands of dollars, and if he has to offer all this

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to Kṛṣṇa, he can do it. This is work for Kṛṣṇa. Instead of constructing a big building for his sense gratification, he can construct a nice temple for Kṛṣṇa, and he can install the Deity of Kṛṣṇa and arrange for the Deity's service, as is outlined in the authorized books of devotional service. This is all *kṛṣṇa-karma*. One should not be attached to the result of his work, but the result should be offered to Kṛṣṇa, and one should accept *asprasādam* the remnants of offerings to Kṛṣṇa. If one constructs a very big building for Kṛṣṇa and installs the Deity of Kṛṣṇa, one is not prohibited from living there, but it is understood that the proprietor of the building is Kṛṣṇa. That is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If, however, one is not able to construct a temple for Kṛṣṇa, one can engage himself in cleansing the temple of Kṛṣṇa; that is also *kṛṣṇa-karma*. One can cultivate a garden. Anyone who has land – in India, at least, any poor man has a certain amount of land – can utilize that for Kṛṣṇa by growing flowers to offer Him. One can sow *tulasī* plants, because *tulasī* leaves are very important and Kṛṣṇa has recommended this in *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam*. Kṛṣṇa desires that one offer Him either a leaf, or a flower, or fruit, or a little water – and by such an offering He is satisfied. This leaf especially refers to the *tulasī*. So one can sow *tulasī* and pour water on the plant. Thus, even the poorest man can engage in the service of Kṛṣṇa. These are some of the examples of how one can engage in working for Kṛṣṇa.

The word *mat-paramaḥ* refers to one who considers the association of Kṛṣṇa in His supreme abode to be the highest perfection of life. Such a person does not wish to be elevated to the higher planets such as the moon or sun or heavenly planets, or even the highest planet of this universe, Brahmaloka. He has no attraction for that. He is only attracted to being transferred to the spiritual sky. And even in the spiritual sky he is not satisfied with merging into the glowing *brahma-jyotir* effulgence, for he wants to enter the highest spiritual planet, namely Kṛṣṇaloka, Goloka Vṛndāvana. He has full knowledge of that planet, and therefore he is not interested in any other. As indicated by the word *mad-bhaktah*, he fully engages in devotional service, specifically in the nine processes of devotional engagement: hearing, chanting, remembering, worshiping, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering prayers, carrying out the orders of the Lord, making friends with Him, and surrendering everything to Him. One can engage in all nine devotional processes, or eight, or seven, or at least in one, and that will surely make one perfect.

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The term *saṅga-varjitaḥ* is very significant. One should disassociate himself from persons who are against Kṛṣṇa. Not only are the atheistic persons against Kṛṣṇa, but so also are those who are attracted to fruitive activities and mental speculation. Therefore the pure form of devotional service is described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.11) as follows:

anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam

ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir uttamā

In this verse Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī clearly states that if anyone wants to execute unalloyed devotional service, he must be freed from all kinds of material contamination. He must be freed from the association of persons who are addicted to fruitive activities and mental speculation. When, freed from such unwanted association and from the contamination of material desires, one favorably cultivates knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, that is called pure devotional service. *Ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam* (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11.676). One should think of Kṛṣṇa and act for Kṛṣṇa favorably, not unfavorably. Kāṁsa was an enemy of Kṛṣṇa's. From the very beginning of Kṛṣṇa's birth, Kāṁsa planned in so many ways to kill Him, and because he was always unsuccessful, he was always thinking of Kṛṣṇa. Thus while working, while eating and while sleeping, he was always Kṛṣṇa conscious in every respect, but that Kṛṣṇa consciousness was not favorable, and therefore in spite of his always thinking of Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours a day, he was considered a demon, and Kṛṣṇa at last killed him. Of course anyone who is killed by Kṛṣṇa attains salvation immediately, but that is not the aim of the pure devotee. The pure devotee does not even want salvation. He does not want to be transferred even to the highest planet, Goloka Vṛndāvana. His only objective is to serve Kṛṣṇa wherever he may be.

A devotee of Kṛṣṇa is friendly to everyone. Therefore it is said here that he has no enemy (*nirvairah*). How is this? A devotee situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness knows that only devotional service to Kṛṣṇa can relieve a person from all the problems of life. He has personal experience of this, and therefore he wants to introduce this system, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, into human society. There are many examples in history of devotees of the Lord who risked their lives for the spreading of God consciousness. The favorite example is Lord Jesus Christ. He was crucified by the nondevotees, but he sacrificed his life for spreading God consciousness. Of course, it would be superficial to understand that he was killed. Similarly, in India also there are many examples, such as Ṭhākura Haridāsa and Prahlāda Mahārāja. Why such risk? Because they wanted to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and it is difficult. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person knows that if a man is

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suffering it is due to his forgetfulness of his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the highest benefit one can render to human society is relieving one's neighbor from all material problems. In such a way, a pure devotee is engaged in the service of the Lord. Now, we can imagine how merciful Kṛṣṇa is to those engaged in His service, risking everything for Him. Therefore it is certain that such persons must reach the supreme planet after leaving the body.

In summary, the universal form of Kṛṣṇa, which is a temporary manifestation, and the form of time which devours everything, and even the form of Viṣṇu, four-handed, have all been exhibited by Kṛṣṇa. Thus Kṛṣṇa is the origin of all these manifestations. It is not that Kṛṣṇa is a manifestation of the original *viśva-rūpa*, or Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa is the origin of all forms. There are hundreds and thousands of Viṣṇus, but for a devotee no form of Kṛṣṇa is important but the original form, two-handed Śyāmasundara. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated that those who are attached to the Śyāmasundara form of Kṛṣṇa in love and devotion can see Him always within the heart and cannot see anything else. One should understand, therefore, that the purport of this Eleventh Chapter is that the form of Kṛṣṇa is essential and supreme.

Exercise

1.What were the eyes of the Supreme Lord? (BG 11.19)

- a. Stars b. Sun & Moon c. Fire d. Oceans

2.What was coming out of the mouth of the Universal form? (BG 11.19)

- a. Blazing fire b. Strong winds c. War cries d. Torrents of rain

3.What did Krishna give Arjuna for seeing this universal form? (BG 11.8)

- a. Divine eyes b. Extraordinary power
c. Special chariot d. Took him to special place

4.To see universal form one doesn't have to change his mind but his (BG 11.8)

- a. Vision b. heart c. intelligence d. consciousness

5. After seeing the Universal form what was the relationship between Krishna & Arjuna (BG11.14)

- a. One of wonder rather than friendship b. Intimacy c. Fear d. Indifference

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Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(b)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)

Chapter Twelve: Devotional Service

(12.1)

Kṛṣṇa has now explained about the personal, the impersonal and the universal and has described all kinds of devotees and *yogīs*. Generally, the transcendentalists can be divided into two classes. One is the impersonalist, and the other is the personalist. The personalist devotee engages himself with all energy in the service of the Supreme Lord. The impersonalist also engages himself, not directly in the service of Kṛṣṇa but in meditation on the impersonal Brahman, the unmanifested.

We find in this chapter that of the different processes for realization of the Absolute Truth, *bhakti-yoga*, devotional service, is the highest. If one at all desires to have the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then he must take to devotional service.

Those who worship the Supreme Lord directly by devotional service are called personalists. Those who engage themselves in meditation on the impersonal Brahman are called impersonalists. Arjuna is here questioning which position is better. There are different ways to realize the Absolute Truth, but Kṛṣṇa indicates in this chapter that *bhakti-yoga*, or devotional service to Him, is the highest of all. It is the most direct, and it is the easiest means for association with the Godhead.

In the Second Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Supreme Lord explained that a living entity is not the material body; he is a spiritual spark. And the Absolute Truth is the spiritual whole. In the Seventh Chapter He spoke of the living entity as being part and parcel of the supreme whole and recommended that he transfer his attention fully to the whole. Then again in the Eighth Chapter it was said that anyone who thinks of Kṛṣṇa at the time of quitting his body is at once transferred to the spiritual sky, to the abode of Kṛṣṇa. And at the end of the Sixth Chapter the Lord clearly said that of all *yogīs*, one who always thinks of Kṛṣṇa within himself is considered the most

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perfect. So in practically every chapter the conclusion has been that one should be attached to the personal form of Kṛṣṇa, for that is the highest spiritual realization.

Nevertheless, there are those who are not attached to the personal form of Kṛṣṇa. They are so firmly detached that even in the preparation of commentaries to *Bhagavad-gītā* they want to distract other people from Kṛṣṇa and transfer all devotion to the impersonal *brahma-jyotir*. They prefer to meditate on the impersonal form of the Absolute Truth, which is beyond the reach of the senses and is not manifest.

And so, factually, there are two classes of transcendentalists. Now Arjuna is trying to settle the question of which process is easier and which of the classes is most perfect. In other words, he is clarifying his own position because he is attached to the personal form of Kṛṣṇa. He is not attached to the impersonal Brahman. He wants to know whether his position is secure. The impersonal manifestation, either in this material world or in the spiritual world of the Supreme Lord, is a problem for meditation. Actually, one cannot perfectly conceive of the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth. Therefore Arjuna wants to say, “What is the use of such a waste of time?” Arjuna experienced in the Eleventh Chapter that to be attached to the personal form of Kṛṣṇa is best because he could thus understand all other forms at the same time and there was no disturbance to his love for Kṛṣṇa. This important question asked of Kṛṣṇa by Arjuna will clarify the distinction between the impersonal and personal conceptions of the Absolute Truth.

(12.2)

In answer to Arjuna’s question, Kṛṣṇa clearly says that he who concentrates upon His personal form and who worships Him with faith and devotion is to be considered most perfect in *yoga*. For one in such Kṛṣṇa consciousness there are no material activities, because everything is done for Kṛṣṇa. A pure devotee is constantly engaged. Sometimes he chants, sometimes he hears or reads books about Kṛṣṇa, or sometimes he cooks *prasādam* or goes to the marketplace to purchase something for Kṛṣṇa, or sometimes he washes the temple or the dishes – whatever he does, he does not let a single moment pass without devoting his activities to Kṛṣṇa. Such action is in full *samādhī*.

(12.5)

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The group of transcendentalists who follow the path of the inconceivable, unmanifested, impersonal feature of the Supreme Lord are called *jñāna-yogīs*, and persons who are in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, engaged in devotional service to the Lord, are called *bhakti-yogīs*. Now, here the difference between *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga* is definitely expressed. The process of *jñāna-yoga*, although ultimately bringing one to the same goal, is very troublesome, whereas the path of *bhakti-yoga*, the process of being in direct service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is easier and is natural for the embodied soul. The individual soul is embodied since time immemorial. It is very difficult for him to simply theoretically understand that he is not the body. Therefore, the *bhakti-yogī* accepts the Deity of Kṛṣṇa as worshipable because there is some bodily conception fixed in the mind, which can thus be applied. Of course, worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form within the temple is not idol worship. There is evidence in the Vedic literature that worship may be *saguṇa* or *nirguṇa* – of the Supreme possessing or not possessing attributes. Worship of the Deity in the temple is *saguṇa* worship, for the Lord is represented by material qualities. But the form of the Lord, though represented by material qualities such as stone, wood or oil paint, is not actually material. That is the absolute nature of the Supreme Lord.

A crude example may be given here. We may find some mailboxes on the street, and if we post our letters in those boxes, they will naturally go to their destination without difficulty. But any old box, or an imitation which we may find somewhere but which is not authorized by the post office, will not do the work. Similarly, God has an authorized representation in the Deity form, which is called *arcā-vigraha*. This *arcā-vigraha* is an incarnation of the Supreme Lord. God will accept service through that form. The Lord is omnipotent, all-powerful; therefore, by His incarnation as *arcā-vigraha* He can accept the services of the devotee, just to make it convenient for the man in conditioned life.

So for a devotee there is no difficulty in approaching the Supreme immediately and directly, but for those who are following the impersonal way to spiritual realization the path is difficult. They have to understand the unmanifested representation of the Supreme through such Vedic literatures as the *Upaniṣads*, and they have to learn the language, understand the nonperceptual feelings, and realize all these processes. This is not very easy for a common man. A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, engaged in devotional service, simply by the guidance of the bona fide spiritual master, simply by offering regulative obeisances unto the Deity, simply by hearing the

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glories of the Lord, and simply by eating the remnants of foodstuffs offered to the Lord, realizes the Supreme Personality of Godhead very easily. There is no doubt that the impersonalists are unnecessarily taking a troublesome path with the risk of not realizing the Absolute Truth at the ultimate end. But the personalist, without any risk, trouble or difficulty, approaches the Supreme Personality directly. A similar passage appears in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It is stated there that if one ultimately has to surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead (this surrendering process is called *bhakti*), but instead takes the trouble to understand what is Brahman and what is not Brahman and spends his whole life in that way, the result is simply troublesome. Therefore it is advised here that one should not take up this troublesome path of self-realization, because there is uncertainty in the ultimate result.

A living entity is eternally an individual soul, and if he wants to merge into the spiritual whole, he may accomplish the realization of the eternal and knowledgeable aspects of his original nature, but the blissful portion is not realized. By the grace of some devotee, such a transcendentalist, highly learned in the process of *jñāna-yoga*, may come to the point of *bhakti-yoga*, or devotional service. At that time, long practice in impersonalism also becomes a source of trouble, because he cannot give up the idea. Therefore an embodied soul is always in difficulty with the unmanifest, both at the time of practice and at the time of realization. Every living soul is partially independent, and one should know for certain that this unmanifested realization is against the nature of his spiritual, blissful self. One should not take up this process. For every individual living entity the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which entails full engagement in devotional service, is the best way. If one wants to ignore this devotional service, there is the danger of turning to atheism. Thus the process of centering attention on the unmanifested, the inconceivable, which is beyond the approach of the senses, as already expressed in this verse, should never be encouraged at any time, especially in this age. It is not advised by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

(12.6-7)

It is explicitly stated here that the devotees are very fortunate to be delivered very soon from material existence by the Lord. In pure devotional service one comes to the realization that God is great and that the individual soul is subordinate to Him. His duty is to render service to the Lord – and if he does not, then he will render service to *māyā*.

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As stated before, the Supreme Lord can be appreciated only by devotional service. Therefore, one should be fully devoted. One should fix his mind fully on Kṛṣṇa in order to achieve Him. One should work only for Kṛṣṇa. It does not matter in what kind of work one engages, but that work should be done only for Kṛṣṇa. That is the standard of devotional service. The devotee does not desire any achievement other than pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His life's mission is to please Kṛṣṇa, and he can sacrifice everything for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction, just as Arjuna did in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. The process is very simple: one can devote himself in his occupation and engage at the same time in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Such transcendental chanting attracts the devotee to the Personality of Godhead.

The Supreme Lord herein promises that without delay He will deliver a pure devotee thus engaged from the ocean of material existence. Those who are advanced in *yoga* practice can willfully transfer the soul to whatever planet they like by the *yoga* process, and others take the opportunity in various ways, but as far as the devotee is concerned, it is clearly stated here that the Lord Himself takes him. The devotee does not need to wait to become very experienced in order to transfer himself to the spiritual sky.

In the *Varāha Purāṇa* this verse appears:

*nayāmi paramaṁ sthānam arcir-ādi-gatiṁ vinā
garuḍa-skandham āropya yatheccham anivāritaḥ*

The purport of this verse is that a devotee does not need to practice *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* in order to transfer his soul to the spiritual planets. The responsibility is taken by the Supreme Lord Himself. He clearly states here that He Himself becomes the deliverer. A child is completely cared for by his parents, and thus his position is secure. Similarly, a devotee does not need to endeavor to transfer himself by *yoga* practice to other planets. Rather, the Supreme Lord, by His great mercy, comes at once, riding on His bird carrier Garuḍa, and at once delivers the devotee from material existence. Although a man who has fallen in the ocean may struggle very hard and may be very expert in swimming, he cannot save himself. But if someone comes and picks him up from the water, then he is easily rescued. Similarly, the Lord picks up the devotee from this material existence. One simply has to practice the easy process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and fully

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engage himself in devotional service. Any intelligent man should always prefer the process of devotional service to all other paths. In the *Nārāyaṇīya* this is confirmed as follows:

yā vai sādhana-sampattiḥ puruṣārtha-catuṣṭaye

tayā vinā tad āpnoti naro nārāyaṇāśrayaḥ

The purport of this verse is that one should not engage in the different processes of fruitive activity or cultivate knowledge by the mental speculative process. One who is devoted to the Supreme Personality can attain all the benefits derived from other yogic processes, speculation, rituals, sacrifices, charities, etc. That is the specific benediction of devotional service.

Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – a devotee of the Lord can approach the supreme destination easily and happily, but this destination cannot be approached by any other process of religion.

The conclusion of *Bhagavad-gītā* is stated in the Eighteenth Chapter:

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja

aham tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ

One should give up all other processes of self-realization and simply execute devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That will enable one to reach the highest perfection of life. There is no need for one to consider the sinful actions of his past life, because the Supreme Lord fully takes charge of him. Therefore one should not futilely try to deliver himself in spiritual realization. Let everyone take shelter of the supreme omnipotent Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. That is the highest perfection of life.

(12.13-14)

Coming again to the point of pure devotional service, the Lord is describing the transcendental qualifications of a pure devotee in these two verses. A pure devotee is never disturbed in any circumstances. Nor is he envious of anyone. Nor does a devotee become his enemy's enemy; he thinks, "This person is acting as my enemy due to my own past misdeeds. So it is better to suffer than to protest." In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.8) it is stated: *tat te 'nukampām su-samīkṣamāṇo bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtām vipākam*. Whenever a devotee is in distress or has fallen

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into difficulty, he thinks that it is the Lord's mercy upon him. He thinks, "Thanks to my past misdeeds I should suffer far, far greater than I am suffering now. So it is by the mercy of the Supreme Lord that I am not getting all the punishment I am due. I am just getting a little, by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead." Therefore he is always calm, quiet and patient, despite many distressful conditions. A devotee is also always kind to everyone, even to his enemy. *Nirmama* means that a devotee does not attach much importance to the pains and trouble pertaining to the body because he knows perfectly well that he is not the material body. He does not identify with the body; therefore he is freed from the conception of false ego and is equipoised in happiness and distress. He is tolerant, and he is satisfied with whatever comes by the grace of the Supreme Lord. He does not endeavor much to achieve something with great difficulty; therefore he is always joyful. He is a completely perfect mystic because he is fixed in the instructions received from the spiritual master, and because his senses are controlled he is determined. He is not swayed by false arguments, because no one can lead him from the fixed determination of devotional service. He is fully conscious that Kṛṣṇa is the eternal Lord, so no one can disturb him. All these qualifications enable him to fix his mind and intelligence entirely on the Supreme Lord. Such a standard of devotional service is undoubtedly very rare, but a devotee becomes situated in that stage by following the regulative principles of devotional service. Furthermore, the Lord says that such a devotee is very dear to Him, for the Lord is always pleased with all his activities in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(12.19)

A devotee is always free from all bad association. Sometimes one is praised and sometimes one is defamed; that is the nature of human society. But a devotee is always transcendental to artificial fame and infamy, distress or happiness. He is very patient. He does not speak of anything but the topics about Kṛṣṇa; therefore he is called silent. Silent does not mean that one should not speak; silent means that one should not speak nonsense. One should speak only of essentials, and the most essential speech for the devotee is to speak for the sake of the Supreme Lord. A devotee is happy in all conditions; sometimes he may get very palatable foodstuffs, sometimes not, but he is satisfied. Nor does he care for any residential facility. He may sometimes live underneath a tree, and he may sometimes live in a very palatial building; he is

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attracted to neither. He is called fixed because he is fixed in his determination and knowledge. We may find some repetition in the descriptions of the qualifications of a devotee, but this is just to emphasize the fact that a devotee must acquire all these qualifications. Without good qualifications, one cannot be a pure devotee. *Harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇāḥ*: one who is not a devotee has no good qualification. One who wants to be recognized as a devotee should develop the good qualifications. Of course he does not extraneously endeavor to acquire these qualifications, but engagement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service automatically helps him develop them.

(12.20)

In this chapter, from verse 2 through the end – from *mayy āveśya mano ye mām* (“fixing the mind on Me”) through *tu dharmāmṛtam idam* (“this religion of eternal engagement”) – the Supreme Lord has explained the processes of transcendental service for approaching Him. Such processes are very dear to the Lord, and He accepts a person engaged in them. The question of who is better – one who is engaged in the path of impersonal Brahman or one who is engaged in the personal service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead – was raised by Arjuna, and the Lord replied to him so explicitly that there is no doubt that devotional service to the Personality of Godhead is the best of all processes of spiritual realization. In other words, in this chapter it is decided that through good association one develops attachment for pure devotional service and thereby accepts a bona fide spiritual master and from him begins to hear and chant and observe the regulative principles of devotional service with faith, attachment and devotion and thus becomes engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord. This path is recommended in this chapter; therefore there is no doubt that devotional service is the only absolute path for self-realization, for the attainment of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The impersonal conception of the Supreme Absolute Truth, as described in this chapter, is recommended only up to the time one surrenders himself for self-realization. In other words, as long as one does not have the chance to associate with a pure devotee, the impersonal conception may be beneficial. In the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth one works without fruitive result, meditates and cultivates knowledge to understand spirit and matter. This is necessary as long as one is not in the association of a pure devotee. Fortunately, if one develops directly a desire to engage in

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Kṛṣṇa consciousness in pure devotional service, he does not need to undergo step-by-step improvements in spiritual realization. Devotional service, as described in the middle six chapters of *Bhagavad-gītā*, is more congenial. One need not bother about materials to keep body and soul together, because by the grace of the Lord everything is carried out automatically.

Exercise

1. Arjuna realized that it is best to be attached to personal form of Krishna because (BG 12.1)

- a. Then he can understand all other forms at the same time
- b. There was no disturbance to his love for Krishna
- c. Both of these d. None of the above

2. Will it matter for a devotee if he lives under a tree or in a palace? (BG 12.19)

- a. No, because he is attracted to neither b. Yes, he will not live in palace
- b. Yes, because living under a tree is difficult d. Yes, because a devotee always lives alone

3. What is the meaning of aniketaṁ? (BG 12.19)

- a. Having no residence b. Having no pride c. Without selfishness d. Who conquered anger

4. What does one do in the impersonal conception of absolute truth? (BG 12.20)

- a. One works without fruitive result b. Meditates
- c. Cultivates knowledge to understand spirit and matter d. All of the above

5. A jnana yogi even after merging into Brahmajyoti will not have _____ (BG 12.5)

- a. Bliss b. Eternity c. Knowledge d. None of the above

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(c)	(a)	(a)	(d)	(a)

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Chapter Thirteen: Nature, the Enjoyer and Consciousness

(13.1-2)

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

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

(13.6-7)

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

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

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

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

(13.8)

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

As for the knowledge outlined here, the items may be analyzed as follows. Humility means that one should not be anxious to have the satisfaction of being honored by others. The material conception of life makes us very eager to receive honor from others, but from the point of view of a man in perfect knowledge – who knows that he is not this body – anything, honor or dishonor, pertaining to this body is useless. One should not be hankering after this material

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deception. People are very anxious to be famous for their religion, and consequently sometimes it is found that without understanding the principles of religion one enters into some group which is not actually following religious principles and then wants to advertise himself as a religious mentor. As for actual advancement in spiritual science, one should have a test to see how far he is progressing. He can judge by these items.

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

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

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

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

Steadiness means that one should be very determined to make progress in spiritual life. Without such determination, one cannot make tangible progress. And self-control means that one should not accept anything which is detrimental to the path of spiritual progress. One should become accustomed to this and reject anything which is against the path of spiritual progress. This is real renunciation. The senses are so strong that they are always anxious to have sense gratification. One should not cater to these demands, which are not necessary. The senses should only be gratified to keep the body fit so that one can discharge his duty in advancing in spiritual life. The most important and uncontrollable sense is the tongue. If one can control the tongue, then there is every possibility of controlling the other senses. The function of the tongue is to taste and to vibrate. Therefore, by systematic regulation, the tongue should always be engaged in tasting the remnants of foodstuffs offered to Kṛṣṇa and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. As far as the eyes are concerned, they should not be allowed to see anything but the beautiful form of Kṛṣṇa. That will control the eyes. Similarly, the ears should be engaged in hearing about Kṛṣṇa and the nose in smelling the flowers offered to Kṛṣṇa. This is the process of devotional service, and it is understood here that *Bhagavad-gītā* is simply expounding the science of devotional service. Devotional service is the main and sole objective. Unintelligent commentators on the *Bhagavad-gītā* try to divert the mind of the reader to other subjects, but there is no other subject in *Bhagavad-gītā* than devotional service.

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11) this is explained. *Vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam*. “Those who are actually knowers of the Absolute Truth know that the Self is realized in three different phases, as Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān.” Bhagavān is the last word in the realization of the Absolute Truth; therefore one should reach up to that platform of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus engage in the devotional service of the Lord. That is the perfection of knowledge.

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

(13.13)

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

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

(13.14)

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

(13.17)

The Lord is situated in everyone's heart as the Supersoul. Does this mean that He has become divided? No. Actually, He is one. The example is given of the sun: The sun, at the meridian, is situated in its place. But if one goes for five thousand miles in all directions and asks, "Where is the sun?" everyone will say that it is shining on his head. In the Vedic literature this example is given to show that although He is undivided, He is situated as if divided. Also it is said in Vedic literature that one Viṣṇu is present everywhere by His omnipotence, just as the sun appears in many places to many persons. And the Supreme Lord, although the maintainer of every living entity, devours everything at the time of annihilation. This was confirmed in the Eleventh Chapter when the Lord said that He had come to devour all the warriors assembled at Kurukṣetra. He also mentioned that in the form of time He devours also. He is the annihilator, the killer of all. When there is creation, He develops all from their original state, and at the time of annihilation He devours them. The Vedic hymns confirm the fact that He is the origin of all

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living entities and the rest of all. After creation, everything rests in His omnipotence, and after annihilation everything again returns to rest in Him. These are the confirmations of Vedic hymns. *Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti yat prayanty abhisam viśanti tad brahma tad vijijñāśasva (Taittirīya Upaniṣad 3.1).*

(13.20)

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

Both material nature and the living entity are eternal. That is to say that they existed before the creation. The material manifestation is from the energy of the Supreme Lord, and so also are the living entities, but the living entities are of the superior energy. Both the living entities and material nature existed before this cosmos was manifested. Material nature was absorbed in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahā-viṣṇu, and when it was required, it was manifested by the agency of the *mahat-tattva*. Similarly, the living entities are also in Him, and because they are conditioned, they are averse to serving the Supreme Lord. Thus they are not allowed to enter into the spiritual sky. But with the coming forth of material nature these living entities are again given a chance to act in the material world and prepare themselves to enter into the spiritual world. That is the mystery of this material creation. Actually the living entity is originally the spiritual part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, but due to his rebellious nature, he is conditioned within material nature. It really does not matter how these living entities or superior entities of the Supreme Lord have come in contact with material nature. The Supreme Personality of Godhead knows, however, how and why this actually took place. In the scriptures the Lord says that those attracted by this material nature are undergoing a hard struggle for existence. But we should know it with certainty from the descriptions of these few verses that all transformations and influences of material nature by the three modes are also productions of material nature. All transformations and variety in respect to living entities are due to the body. As far as spirit is concerned, living entities are all the same.

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Exercise

1. Which of the following is true? (BG 13.13)

- a. The living entities are same as supersoul
- b. The living entities are eternally in the service of the lord
- c. living entity is master of three modes of material nature
- d. none of the above

2. Who among these is knowable (BG 13.13)

- a. Supersoul b. soul c. both d. none of the above

3. Who is all pervading among these (BG 13.14)

- a. Supreme soul b. individual soul c. both d. none

4. According to Brahma-saàhitā Lord _____.(BG 13.14)

- a. is always engaged in pastimes in His transcendental planet
- b. is all pervading c. Both are correct d. Lord is all pervading so he is not present in His transcendental planet

5. The living entity is _____. (BG 13.20)

- a. Energy manifestation of supreme Lord b. Personal expansion of supreme Lord
- c. Both d. None of the above

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(b)	(c)	(a)	(c)	(a)

Chapter Fourteen: The Three Modes of Material Nature

(14.4)

In this verse it is clearly explained that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the original father of all living entities. The living entities are combinations of the material nature and the spiritual nature. Such living entities are seen not only on this planet but on every planet, even on the highest, where Brahmā is situated. Everywhere there are living entities; within the earth there are living entities, even within water and within fire. All these appearances are due to the mother, material nature, and Kṛṣṇa's seed-giving process. The purport is that the material world is impregnated with living entities, who come out in various forms at the time of creation according to their past deeds.

(14.7)

The mode of passion is characterized by the attraction between man and woman. Woman has attraction for man, and man has attraction for woman. This is called the mode of passion. And when the mode of passion is increased, one develops the hankering for material enjoyment. He wants to enjoy sense gratification. For sense gratification, a man in the mode of passion wants some honor in society, or in the nation, and he wants to have a happy family, with nice children, wife and house. These are the products of the mode of passion. As long as one is hankering after these things, he has to work very hard. Therefore it is clearly stated here that he becomes associated with the fruits of his activities and thus becomes bound by such activities. In order to please his wife, children and society and to keep up his prestige, one has to work. Therefore, the whole material world is more or less in the mode of passion. Modern civilization is considered to be advanced in the standard of the mode of passion. Formerly, the advanced condition was considered to be in the mode of goodness. If there is no liberation for those in the mode of goodness, what to speak of those who are entangled in the mode of passion?

(14.9)

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A person in the mode of goodness is satisfied by his work or intellectual pursuit, just as a philosopher, scientist or educator may be engaged in a particular field of knowledge and may be satisfied in that way. A man in the mode of passion may be engaged in fruitive activity; he owns as much as he can and spends for good causes. Sometimes he tries to open hospitals, give to charity institutions, etc. These are signs of one in the mode of passion. And the mode of ignorance covers knowledge. In the mode of ignorance, whatever one does is good neither for him nor for anyone.

(14.15)

Some people have the impression that when the soul reaches the platform of human life it never goes down again. This is incorrect. According to this verse, if one develops the mode of ignorance, after his death he is degraded to an animal form of life. From there one has to again elevate himself, by an evolutionary process, to come again to the human form of life. Therefore, those who are actually serious about human life should take to the mode of goodness and in good association transcend the modes and become situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the aim of human life. Otherwise, there is no guarantee that the human being will again attain to the human status.

(14.16)

The result of pious activities in the mode of goodness is pure. Therefore the sages, who are free from all illusion, are situated in happiness. But activities in the mode of passion are simply miserable. Any activity for material happiness is bound to be defeated. If, for example, one wants to have a skyscraper, so much human misery has to be undergone before a big skyscraper can be built. The financier has to take much trouble to earn a mass of wealth, and those who are slaving to construct the building have to render physical toil. The miseries are there. Thus *Bhagavad-gītā* says that in any activity performed under the spell of the mode of passion, there is definitely great misery. There may be a little so-called mental happiness – “I have this house or this money” – but this is not actual happiness.

As far as the mode of ignorance is concerned, the performer is without knowledge, and therefore all his activities result in present misery, and afterwards he will go on toward animal life. Animal

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life is always miserable, although, under the spell of the illusory energy, *māyā*, the animals do not understand this. Slaughtering poor animals is also due to the mode of ignorance. The animal killers do not know that in the future the animal will have a body suitable to kill them. That is the law of nature. In human society, if one kills a man he has to be hanged. That is the law of the state. Because of ignorance, people do not perceive that there is a complete state controlled by the Supreme Lord. Every living creature is a son of the Supreme Lord, and He does not tolerate even an ant's being killed. One has to pay for it. So indulgence in animal killing for the taste of the tongue is the grossest kind of ignorance. A human being has no need to kill animals, because God has supplied so many nice things. If one indulges in meat-eating anyway, it is to be understood that he is acting in ignorance and is making his future very dark. Of all kinds of animal killing, the killing of cows is most vicious because the cow gives us all kinds of pleasure by supplying milk. Cow slaughter is an act of the grossest type of ignorance. In the Vedic literature (*Rg Veda* 9.46.4) the words *gobhiḥ prīṇita-matsaram* indicate that one who, being fully satisfied by milk, is desirous of killing the cow is in the grossest ignorance. There is also a prayer in the Vedic literature that states:

namo brahmaṇya-devāya go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya ca

jagad-dhitāya kṛṣṇāya govindāya namo namaḥ

“My Lord, You are the well-wisher of the cows and the *brāhmaṇas*, and You are the well-wisher of the entire human society and world.” (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 1.19.65) The purport is that special mention is given in that prayer for the protection of the cows and the *brāhmaṇas*. *Brāhmaṇas* are the symbol of spiritual education, and cows are the symbol of the most valuable food; these two living creatures, the *brāhmaṇas* and the cows, must be given all protection – that is real advancement of civilization. In modern human society, spiritual knowledge is neglected, and cow killing is encouraged. It is to be understood, then, that human society is advancing in the wrong direction and is clearing the path to its own condemnation. A civilization which guides the citizens to become animals in their next lives is certainly not a human civilization. The present human civilization is, of course, grossly misled by the modes of passion and ignorance. It is a very dangerous age, and all nations should take care to provide the easiest process, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to save humanity from the greatest danger.

(14.17)

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Since the present civilization is not very congenial to the living entities, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is recommended. Through Kṛṣṇa consciousness, society will develop the mode of goodness. When the mode of goodness is developed, people will see things as they are. In the mode of ignorance, people are just like animals and cannot see things clearly. In the mode of ignorance, for example, they do not see that by killing one animal they are taking the chance of being killed by the same animal in the next life. Because people have no education in actual knowledge, they become irresponsible. To stop this irresponsibility, education for developing the mode of goodness of the people in general must be there. When they are actually educated in the mode of goodness, they will become sober, in full knowledge of things as they are. Then people will be happy and prosperous. Even if the majority of the people aren't happy and prosperous, if a certain percentage of the population develops Kṛṣṇa consciousness and becomes situated in the mode of goodness, then there is the possibility for peace and prosperity all over the world. Otherwise, if the world is devoted to the modes of passion and ignorance, there can be no peace or prosperity. In the mode of passion, people become greedy, and their hankering for sense enjoyment has no limit. One can see that even if one has enough money and adequate arrangements for sense gratification, there is neither happiness nor peace of mind. That is not possible, because one is situated in the mode of passion. If one wants happiness at all, his money will not help him; he has to elevate himself to the mode of goodness by practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When one is engaged in the mode of passion, not only is he mentally unhappy, but his profession and occupation are also very troublesome. He has to devise so many plans and schemes to acquire enough money to maintain his status quo. This is all miserable. In the mode of ignorance, people become mad. Being distressed by their circumstances, they take shelter of intoxication, and thus they sink further into ignorance. Their future in life is very dark.

(14.18)

In this verse the results of actions in the three modes of nature are more explicitly set forth. There is an upper planetary system, consisting of the heavenly planets, where everyone is highly elevated. According to the degree of development of the mode of goodness, the living entity can be transferred to various planets in this system. The highest planet is Satyaloka, or Brahmaloka, where the prime person of this universe, Lord Brahmā, resides. We have seen already that we

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can hardly calculate the wondrous condition of life in Brahmaloṅka, but the highest condition of life, the mode of goodness, can bring us to this.

The mode of passion is mixed. It is in the middle, between the modes of goodness and ignorance. A person is not always pure, but even if he should be purely in the mode of passion, he will simply remain on this earth as a king or a rich man. But because there are mixtures, one can also go down. People on this earth, in the mode of passion or ignorance, cannot forcibly approach the higher planets by machine. In the mode of passion, there is also the chance of becoming mad in the next life.

The lowest quality, the mode of ignorance, is described here as abominable. The result of developing ignorance is very, very risky. It is the lowest quality in material nature. Beneath the human level there are eight million species of life – birds, beasts, reptiles, trees, etc. – and according to the development of the mode of ignorance, people are brought down to these abominable conditions. The word *tāmasāḥ* is very significant here. *Tāmasāḥ* indicates those who stay continuously in the mode of ignorance without rising to a higher mode. Their future is very dark.

There is an opportunity for men in the modes of ignorance and passion to be elevated to the mode of goodness, and that system is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But one who does not take advantage of this opportunity will certainly continue in the lower modes.

(14.20)

How one can stay in the transcendental position, even in this body, in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is explained in this verse. The Sanskrit word *dehī* means “embodied.” Although one is within this material body, by his advancement in spiritual knowledge he can be free from the influence of the modes of nature. He can enjoy the happiness of spiritual life even in this body because, after leaving this body, he is certainly going to the spiritual sky. But even in this body he can enjoy spiritual happiness. In other words, devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the sign of liberation from material entanglement, and this will be explained in the Eighteenth Chapter. When one is freed from the influence of the modes of material nature, he enters into devotional

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service. In other words, devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the sign of liberation from material entanglement, and this will be explained in the Eighteenth Chapter.

Exercise

1. Who is the seed giving father of all species of life? (BG 14.4)

a. Supreme Lord b. Material Nature c. Brahma d. All the above

2. What develops from the mode of goodness (BG 14.17)

a. real knowledge b. greed c. wealth d. illusion

3. Those in mode of passion will go to _____. (BG 14.18)

a. earthly planets b. heavenly planets c. hellish planets d. spiritual world

4. Those who continuously stay in mode of ignorance are called (BG 14.18)

a. Tāmasāu b. Rajasah c. Both d. None

5. Living entity is conditioned by _____ in mode of goodness (BG 14.9)

a. Happiness b. knowledge c. strength d. satisfaction

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)	(a)

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Chapter Fifteen: The Yoga of the Supreme Person

(15.6)

The spiritual world, the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa – which is known as Kṛṣṇaloka, Goloka Vṛndāvana – is described here. In the spiritual sky there is no need of sunshine, moonshine, fire or electricity, because all the planets are self-luminous. We have only one planet in this universe, the sun, which is self-luminous, but all the planets in the spiritual sky are self-luminous. The shining effulgence of all those planets (called Vaikuṇṭhas) constitutes the shining sky known as the *brahma-jyotir*. Actually, the effulgence is emanating from the planet of Kṛṣṇa, Goloka Vṛndāvana. Part of that shining effulgence is covered by the *mahat-tattva*, the material world. Other than this, the major portion of that shining sky is full of spiritual planets, which are called Vaikuṇṭhas, chief of which is Goloka Vṛndāvana.

As long as a living entity is in this dark material world, he is in conditional life, but as soon as he reaches the spiritual sky by cutting through the false, perverted tree of this material world, he becomes liberated. Then there is no chance of his coming back here. In his conditional life, the living entity considers himself to be the lord of this material world, but in his liberated state he enters into the spiritual kingdom and becomes an associate of the Supreme Lord. There he enjoys eternal bliss, eternal life, and full knowledge.

One should be captivated by this information. He should desire to transfer himself to that eternal world and extricate himself from this false reflection of reality. For one who is too much attached to this material world, it is very difficult to cut that attachment, but if he takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness there is a chance of gradually becoming detached. One has to associate himself with devotees, those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One should search out a society dedicated to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and learn how to discharge devotional service. In this way he can cut off his attachment to the material world. One cannot become detached from the attraction of the material world simply by dressing himself in saffron cloth. He must become attached to the devotional service of the Lord. Therefore one should take it very seriously that devotional service as described in the Twelfth Chapter is the only way to get out of this false representation of the real tree. In Chapter Fourteen the contamination of all kinds of processes by material nature is described. Only devotional service is described as purely transcendental.

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The words *paramam mama* are very important here. Actually every nook and corner is the property of the Supreme Lord, but the spiritual world is *paramam*, full of six opulences. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.2.15) also confirms that in the spiritual world there is no need of sunshine, moonshine or stars (*na tatra sūryo bhāti na candra-tāṛakam*), for the whole spiritual sky is illuminated by the internal potency of the Supreme Lord. That supreme abode can be achieved only by surrender and by no other means.

(15.7)

In this verse the identity of the living being is clearly given. The living entity is the fragmental part and parcel of the Supreme Lord – eternally. It is not that he assumes individuality in his conditional life and in his liberated state becomes one with the Supreme Lord. He is eternally fragmented. It is clearly said, *sanātanaḥ*. According to the Vedic version, the Supreme Lord manifests and expands Himself in innumerable expansions, of which the primary expansions are called *viṣṇu-tattva* and the secondary expansions are called the living entities. In other words, the *viṣṇu-tattva* is the personal expansion, and the living entities are the separated expansions. By His personal expansion, He is manifested in various forms like Lord Rāma, Nṛsiṃha-deva, Viṣṇumūrti and all the predominating Deities in the Vaikuṇṭha planets. The separated expansions, the living entities, are eternally servitors. The personal expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the individual identities of the Godhead, are always present. Similarly, the separated expansions of living entities have their identities. As fragmental parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord, the living entities also have fragmental portions of His qualities, of which independence is one. Every living entity, as an individual soul, has his personal individuality and a minute form of independence. By misuse of that independence one becomes a conditioned soul, and by proper use of independence he is always liberated. In either case, he is qualitatively eternal, as the Supreme Lord is. In his liberated state he is freed from this material condition, and he is under the engagement of transcendental service unto the Lord; in his conditioned life he is dominated by the material modes of nature, and he forgets the transcendental loving service of the Lord. As a result, he has to struggle very hard to maintain his existence in the material world. The living entities, not only human beings and the cats and dogs, but even the greater controllers of the material world – Brahmā, Lord Śiva and even Viṣṇu – are all parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord. They are all eternal, not temporary manifestations. The

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word *karṣati* (“struggling” or “grappling hard”) is very significant. The conditioned soul is bound up, as though shackled by iron chains. He is bound up by the false ego, and the mind is the chief agent which is driving him in this material existence. When the mind is in the mode of goodness, his activities are good; when the mind is in the mode of passion, his activities are troublesome; and when the mind is in the mode of ignorance, he travels in the lower species of life. It is clear, however, in this verse, that the conditioned soul is covered by the material body, with the mind and the senses, and when he is liberated this material covering perishes, but his spiritual body manifests itself in its individual capacity. The following information is there in the *Mādhyaṇdīnāyana-śruti*: *sa vā eṣa brahma-niṣṭha idaṁ śarīraṁ martyaṁ atisṛjya brahmābhisampadya brahmaṇā paśyati brahmaṇā śṛṇoti brahmaṇaivedaṁ sarvaṁ anubhavati*. It is stated here that when a living entity gives up this material embodiment and enters into the spiritual world, he revives his spiritual body, and in his spiritual body he can see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face. He can hear and speak to Him face to face, and he can understand the Supreme Personality as He is. From *smṛti* also it is understood, *vasanti yatra puruṣāḥ sarve vaikunṭha-mūrtayaḥ*: in the spiritual planets everyone lives in bodies featured like the Supreme Personality of Godhead’s. As far as bodily construction is concerned, there is no difference between the part-and-parcel living entities and the expansions of *viṣṇu-mūrti*. In other words, at liberation the living entity gets a spiritual body by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The words *mamaivāṁśaḥ* (“fragmental parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord”) are also very significant. The fragmental portion of the Supreme Lord is not like some material broken part. We have already understood in the Second Chapter that the spirit cannot be cut into pieces. This fragment is not materially conceived. It is not like matter, which can be cut into pieces and joined together again. That conception is not applicable here, because the Sanskrit word *sanātana* (“eternal”) is used. The fragmental portion is eternal. It is also stated in the beginning of the Second Chapter that in each and every individual body the fragmental portion of the Supreme Lord is present (*dehino ’smin yathā dehe*). That fragmental portion, when liberated from the bodily entanglement, revives its original spiritual body in the spiritual sky in a spiritual planet and enjoys association with the Supreme Lord. It is, however, understood here that the living entity, being the fragmental part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, is qualitatively one with the Lord, just as the parts and parcels of gold are also gold.

(15.12)

The unintelligent cannot understand how things are taking place. But one can begin to be established in knowledge by understanding what the Lord explains here. Everyone sees the sun, moon, fire and electricity. One should simply try to understand that the splendor of the sun, the splendor of the moon, and the splendor of electricity or fire are coming from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In such a conception of life, the beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, lies a great deal of advancement for the conditioned soul in this material world. The living entities are essentially the parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord, and He is giving herewith the hint how they can come back to Godhead, back to home.

From this verse we can understand that the sun is illuminating the whole solar system. There are different universes and solar systems, and there are different suns, moons and planets also, but in each universe there is only one sun. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.21), the moon is one of the stars (*nakṣatrāṇāṁ ahaṁ śaśī*). Sunlight is due to the spiritual effulgence in the spiritual sky of the Supreme Lord. With the rise of the sun, the activities of human beings are set up. They set fire to prepare their foodstuff, they set fire to start the factories, etc. So many things are done with the help of fire. Therefore sunrise, fire and moonlight are so pleasing to the living entities. Without their help no living entity can live. So if one can understand that the light and splendor of the sun, moon and fire are emanating from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, then one's Kṛṣṇa consciousness will begin. By the moonshine, all the vegetables are nourished. The moonshine is so pleasing that people can easily understand that they are living by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Without His mercy there cannot be sun, without His mercy there cannot be moon, and without His mercy there cannot be fire, and without the help of sun, moon and fire, no one can live. These are some thoughts to provoke Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the conditioned soul.

(15.13)

It is understood that all the planets are floating in the air only by the energy of the Lord. The Lord enters into every atom, every planet and every living being. That is discussed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. It is said there that one plenary portion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Paramātmā, enters into the planets, the universe, the living entity, and even into the

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atom. So due to His entrance, everything is appropriately manifested. When the spirit soul is there, a living man can float on the water, but when the living spark is out of the body and the body is dead, the body sinks. Of course when it is decomposed it floats just like straw and other things, but as soon as the man is dead, he at once sinks in the water. Similarly, all these planets are floating in space, and this is due to the entrance of the supreme energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His energy is sustaining each planet, just like a handful of dust. If someone holds a handful of dust, there is no possibility of the dust's falling, but if one throws it in the air it will fall down. Similarly, these planets, which are floating in the air, are actually held in the fist of the universal form of the Supreme Lord. By His strength and energy, all moving and nonmoving things stay in their place. It is said in the Vedic hymns that because of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the sun is shining and the planets are steadily moving. Were it not for Him, all the planets would scatter, like dust in air, and perish. Similarly, it is due to the Supreme Personality of Godhead that the moon nourishes all vegetables. Due to the moon's influence, the vegetables become delicious. Without the moonshine, the vegetables can neither grow nor taste succulent. Human society is working, living comfortably and enjoying food due to the supply from the Supreme Lord. Otherwise, mankind could not survive. The word *rasātmakaḥ* is very significant. Everything becomes palatable by the agency of the Supreme Lord through the influence of the moon.

(15.16)

As already explained, the Lord in His incarnation as Vyāsadeva compiled the *Vedānta-sūtra*. Here the Lord is giving, in summary, the contents of the *Vedānta-sūtra*. He says that the living entities, who are innumerable, can be divided into two classes – the fallible and the infallible. The living entities are eternally separated parts and parcels of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When they are in contact with the material world they are called *jīva-bhūta*, and the Sanskrit words given here, *kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni*, mean that they are fallible. Those who are in oneness with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, however, are called infallible. Oneness does not mean that they have no individuality, but that there is no disunity. They are all agreeable to the purpose of the creation. Of course, in the spiritual world there is no such thing as creation, but since the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as stated in the *Vedānta-sūtra*, is the source of all emanations, that conception is explained.

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According to the statement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, there are two classes of living entities. The *Vedas* give evidence of this, so there is no doubt about it. The living entities who are struggling in this world with the mind and five senses have their material bodies, which are changing. As long as a living entity is conditioned, his body changes due to contact with matter; matter is changing, so the living entity appears to be changing. But in the spiritual world the body is not made of matter; therefore there is no change. In the material world the living entity undergoes six changes – birth, growth, duration, reproduction, then dwindling and vanishing. These are the changes of the material body. But in the spiritual world the body does not change; there is no old age, there is no birth, there is no death. There all exists in oneness. *Kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni*: any living entity who has come in contact with matter, beginning from the first created being, Brahmā, down to a small ant, is changing its body; therefore they are all fallible. In the spiritual world, however, they are always liberated in oneness.

(15.19)

There are many philosophical speculations about the constitutional position of the living entities and the Supreme Absolute Truth. Now in this verse the Supreme Personality of Godhead clearly explains that anyone who knows Lord Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme Person is actually the knower of everything. The imperfect knower goes on simply speculating about the Absolute Truth, but the perfect knower, without wasting his valuable time, engages directly in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the devotional service of the Supreme Lord. Throughout the whole of *Bhagavad-gītā*, this fact is being stressed at every step. And still there are so many stubborn commentators on *Bhagavad-gītā* who consider the Supreme Absolute Truth and the living entities to be one and the same.

Vedic knowledge is called *śruti*, learning by aural reception. One should actually receive the Vedic message from authorities like Kṛṣṇa and His representatives. Here Kṛṣṇa distinguishes everything very nicely, and one should hear from this source. Simply to hear like the hogs is not sufficient; one must be able to understand from the authorities. It is not that one should simply speculate academically. One should submissively hear from *Bhagavad-gītā* that these living entities are always subordinate to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Anyone who is able to understand this, according to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, knows the purpose of the *Vedas*; no one else knows the purpose of the *Vedas*.

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The word *bhajati* is very significant. In many places the word *bhajati* is expressed in relationship with the service of the Supreme Lord. If a person is engaged in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in the devotional service of the Lord, it is to be understood that he has understood all the Vedic knowledge. In the Vaiṣṇava *paramparā* it is said that if one is engaged in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa, then there is no need for any other spiritual process for understanding the Supreme Absolute Truth. He has already come to the point, because he is engaged in the devotional service of the Lord. He has ended all preliminary processes of understanding. But if anyone, after speculating for hundreds of thousands of lives, does not come to the point that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that one has to surrender there, all his speculation for so many years and lives is a useless waste of time.

(15.20)

The Lord clearly explains here that this is the substance of all revealed scriptures. And one should understand this as it is given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus one will become intelligent and perfect in transcendental knowledge. In other words, by understanding this philosophy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and engaging in His transcendental service, everyone can become freed from all contaminations of the modes of material nature. Devotional service is a process of spiritual understanding. Wherever devotional service exists, the material contamination cannot coexist. Devotional service to the Lord and the Lord Himself are one and the same because they are spiritual; devotional service takes place within the internal energy of the Supreme Lord. The Lord is said to be the sun, and ignorance is called darkness. Where the sun is present, there is no question of darkness. Therefore, whenever devotional service is present under the proper guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, there is no question of ignorance.

Everyone must take to this consciousness of Kṛṣṇa and engage in devotional service to become intelligent and purified. Unless one comes to this position of understanding Kṛṣṇa and engages in devotional service, however intelligent he may be in the estimation of some common man, he is not perfectly intelligent.

The word *anagha*, by which Arjuna is addressed, is significant. *Anagha*, “O sinless one,” means that unless one is free from all sinful reactions it is very difficult to understand Kṛṣṇa. One has to

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become free from all contamination, all sinful activities; then he can understand. But devotional service is so pure and potent that once one is engaged in devotional service he automatically comes to the stage of sinlessness.

While one is performing devotional service in the association of pure devotees in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there are certain things which require to be vanquished altogether. The most important thing one has to surmount is weakness of the heart. The first falldown is caused by the desire to lord it over material nature. Thus one gives up the transcendental loving service of the Supreme Lord. The second weakness of the heart is that as one increases the propensity to lord it over material nature, he becomes attached to matter and the possession of matter. The problems of material existence are due to these weaknesses of the heart. In this chapter the first five verses describe the process of freeing oneself from these weaknesses of heart, and the rest of the chapter, from the sixth verse through the end, discusses *puruṣottama-yoga*.

Exercise

1.What does the word 'karshati' mean? (BG 15.7)

a. Bewildered b. fallen c. Confused d. Struggling hard

2.Problems of material existence are due to _____. (BG 15.20)

a. Lusty desires b. Envious attitude c. Rebellious mentality d. Weakness of heart

3.By whose energy do the planets stay on their orbits? (BG 15.13)

a. Sun's b. Krishna's c. Moon's d. Brahma's

4.Which scripture mentions that Paramatma enters the planets, universe, living entity and every atom? (BG 15.13)

a. Garga samhita b. Srimad Bhagavatam c. Isopanishad d. Brahma samhita

5. What are the planets floating in the air compared to? (BG 15.13)

a. Bag of mustard seeds b. bunch of papers c. heap of dry leaves d. handful of dust

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(d)	(d)	(b)	(d)	(d)

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Chapter Sixteen: The Divine and Demoniac Natures

(16.1-3)

In the beginning of the Fifteenth Chapter, the banyan tree of this material world was explained. The extra roots coming out of it were compared to the activities of the living entities, some auspicious, some inauspicious. In the Ninth Chapter, also, the *devas*, or godly, and the *asuras*, the ungodly, or demons, were explained. Now, according to Vedic rites, activities in the mode of goodness are considered auspicious for progress on the path of liberation, and such activities are known as *daivī prakṛti*, transcendental by nature. Those who are situated in the transcendental nature make progress on the path of liberation. For those who are acting in the modes of passion and ignorance, on the other hand, there is no possibility of liberation. Either they will have to remain in this material world as human beings, or they will descend among the species of animals or even lower life forms. In this Sixteenth Chapter the Lord explains both the transcendental nature and its attendant qualities and the demoniac nature and its qualities. He also explains the advantages and disadvantages of these qualities.

The word *abhijātaśya* in reference to one born of transcendental qualities or godly tendencies is very significant. To beget a child in a godly atmosphere is known in the Vedic scriptures as Garbhādhāna-saṁskāra. If the parents want a child in the godly qualities they should follow the ten principles recommended for the social life of the human being. In *Bhagavad-gītā* we have studied also before that sex life for begetting a good child is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Sex life is not condemned, provided the process is used in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness at least should not beget children like cats and dogs but should beget them so that they may become Kṛṣṇa conscious after birth. That should be the advantage of children born of a father and mother absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The social institution known as *varṇāśrama-dharma* – the institution dividing society into four divisions of social life and four occupational divisions or castes – is not meant to divide human society according to birth. Such divisions are in terms of educational qualifications. They are to keep the society in a state of peace and prosperity. The qualities mentioned herein are explained as transcendental qualities meant for making a person progress in spiritual understanding so that he can get liberated from the material world.

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In the *varṇāśrama* institution the *sannyāsī*, or the person in the renounced order of life, is considered to be the head or the spiritual master of all the social statuses and orders. A *brāhmaṇa* is considered to be the spiritual master of the three other sections of a society, namely, the *kṣatriyas*, the *vaiśyas* and the *śūdras*, but a *sannyāsī*, who is on the top of the institution, is considered to be the spiritual master of the *brāhmaṇas* also. For a *sannyāsī*, the first qualification should be fearlessness. Because a *sannyāsī* has to be alone without any support or guarantee of support, he has simply to depend on the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one thinks, “After I leave my connections, who will protect me?” he should not accept the renounced order of life. One must be fully convinced that Kṛṣṇa or the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His localized aspect as Paramātmā is always within, that He is seeing everything, and He always knows what one intends to do. One must thus have firm conviction that Kṛṣṇa as Paramātmā will take care of a soul surrendered to Him. “I shall never be alone,” one should think. “Even if I live in the darkest regions of a forest I shall be accompanied by Kṛṣṇa, and He will give me all protection.” That conviction is called *abhayaṁ*, fearlessness. This state of mind is necessary for a person in the renounced order of life.

Then he has to purify his existence. There are so many rules and regulations to be followed in the renounced order of life. Most important of all, a *sannyāsī* is strictly forbidden to have any intimate relationship with a woman. He is even forbidden to talk with a woman in a secluded place. Lord Caitanya was an ideal *sannyāsī*, and when He was at Purī His feminine devotees could not even come near to offer their respects. They were advised to bow down from a distant place. This is not a sign of hatred for women as a class, but it is a stricture imposed on the *sannyāsī* not to have close connections with women. One has to follow the rules and regulations of a particular status of life in order to purify his existence. For a *sannyāsī*, intimate relations with women and possession of wealth for sense gratification are strictly forbidden. The ideal *sannyāsī* was Lord Caitanya Himself, and we can learn from His life that He was very strict in regards to women. Although He is considered to be the most liberal incarnation of Godhead, accepting the most fallen conditioned souls, He strictly followed the rules and regulations of the *sannyāsa* order of life in connection with association with women. One of His personal associates, namely Choṭa Haridāsa, was associated with Lord Caitanya along with His other confidential personal associates, but somehow or other this Choṭa Haridāsa looked lustily on a young woman, and Lord Caitanya was so strict that He at once rejected him from the society of

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His personal associates. Lord Caitanya said, “For a *sannyāsī* or anyone who is aspiring to get out of the clutches of material nature and trying to elevate himself to the spiritual nature and go back home, back to Godhead, for him, looking toward material possessions and women for sense gratification – not even enjoying them, but just looking toward them with such a propensity – is so condemned that he had better commit suicide before experiencing such illicit desires.” So these are the processes for purification.

The next item is *jñāna-yoga-vyavasthiti*: being engaged in the cultivation of knowledge. *Sannyāsī* life is meant for distributing knowledge to the householders and others who have forgotten their real life of spiritual advancement. A *sannyāsī* is supposed to beg from door to door for his livelihood, but this does not mean that he is a beggar. Humility is also one of the qualifications of a transcendently situated person, and out of sheer humility the *sannyāsī* goes from door to door, not exactly for the purpose of begging, but to see the householders and awaken them to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the duty of a *sannyāsī*. If he is actually advanced and so ordered by his spiritual master, he should preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness with logic and understanding, and if one is not so advanced he should not accept the renounced order of life. But even if one has accepted the renounced order of life without sufficient knowledge, he should engage himself fully in hearing from a bona fide spiritual master to cultivate knowledge. A *sannyāsī*, or one in the renounced order of life, must be situated in fearlessness, *sattva-saṁśuddhi* (purity) and *jñāna-yoga* (knowledge).

The next item is charity. Charity is meant for the householders. The householders should earn a livelihood by an honorable means and spend fifty percent of their income to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Thus a householder should give in charity to institutional societies that are engaged in that way. Charity should be given to the right receiver. There are different kinds of charity, as will be explained later on – charity in the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. Charity in the mode of goodness is recommended by the scriptures, but charity in the modes of passion and ignorance is not recommended, because it is simply a waste of money. Charity should be given only to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. That is charity in the mode of goodness.

Then as far as *dama* (self-control) is concerned, it is not only meant for other orders of religious society, but is especially meant for the householder. Although he has a wife, a householder

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should not use his senses for sex life unnecessarily. There are restrictions for the householders even in sex life, which should only be engaged in for the propagation of children. If he does not require children, he should not enjoy sex life with his wife. Modern society enjoys sex life with contraceptive methods or more abominable methods to avoid the responsibility of children. This is not in the transcendental quality, but is demoniac. If anyone, even if he is a householder, wants to make progress in spiritual life, he must control his sex life and should not beget a child without the purpose of serving Kṛṣṇa. If he is able to beget children who will be in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can produce hundreds of children, but without this capacity one should not indulge only for sense pleasure.

Sacrifice is another item to be performed by the householders, because sacrifices require a large amount of money. Those in other orders of life, namely *brahmacarya*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*, have no money; they live by begging. So performance of different types of sacrifice is meant for the householders. They should perform *agni-hotra* sacrifices as enjoined in the Vedic literature, but such sacrifices at the present moment are very expensive, and it is not possible for any householder to perform them. The best sacrifice recommended in this age is called *sankīrtana-yajña*. This *sankīrtana-yajña*, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, is the best and most inexpensive sacrifice; everyone can adopt it and derive benefit. So these three items, namely charity, sense control and performance of sacrifice, are meant for the householder.

Then *svādhyāya*, Vedic study, is meant for *brahmacarya*, or student life. *Brahmacārīs* should have no connection with women; they should live a life of celibacy and engage the mind in the study of Vedic literature for cultivation of spiritual knowledge. This is called *svādhyāya*.

Tapas, or austerity, is especially meant for the retired life. One should not remain a householder throughout his whole life; he must always remember that there are four divisions of life – *brahmacarya*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*. So after *gṛhastha*, householder life, one should retire. If one lives for a hundred years, he should spend twenty-five years in student life, twenty-five in householder life, twenty-five in retired life and twenty-five in the renounced order of life. These are the regulations of the Vedic religious discipline. A man retired from household life must practice austerities of the body, mind and tongue. That is *tapasya*. The entire *varṇāśrama-dharma* society is meant for *tapasya*. Without *tapasya*, or austerity, no human being can get liberation. The theory that there is no need of austerity in life, that one can go on

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speculating and everything will be nice, is recommended neither in the Vedic literature nor in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Such theories are manufactured by show-bottle spiritualists who are trying to gather more followers. If there are restrictions, rules and regulations, people will not become attracted. Therefore those who want followers in the name of religion, just to have a show only, don't restrict the lives of their students, nor their own lives. But that method is not approved by the *Vedas*.

As far as the brahminical quality of simplicity is concerned, not only should a particular order of life follow this principle, but every member, be he in the *brahmacārī āśrama*, *grhastha āśrama*, *vānaprastha āśrama* or *sannyāsa āśrama*. One should be very simple and straightforward.

Ahimsā means not arresting the progressive life of any living entity. One should not think that since the spirit spark is never killed even after the killing of the body there is no harm in killing animals for sense gratification. People are now addicted to eating animals, in spite of having an ample supply of grains, fruits and milk. There is no necessity for animal killing. This injunction is for everyone. When there is no alternative, one may kill an animal, but it should be offered in sacrifice. At any rate, when there is an ample food supply for humanity, persons who are desiring to make advancement in spiritual realization should not commit violence to animals. Real *ahimsā* means not checking anyone's progressive life. The animals are also making progress in their evolutionary life by transmigrating from one category of animal life to another. If a particular animal is killed, then his progress is checked. If an animal is staying in a particular body for so many days or so many years and is untimely killed, then he has to come back again in that form of life to complete the remaining days in order to be promoted to another species of life. So their progress should not be checked simply to satisfy one's palate. This is called *ahimsā*. *Satyam*. This word means that one should not distort the truth for some personal interest. In Vedic literature there are some difficult passages, but the meaning or the purpose should be learned from a bona fide spiritual master. That is the process for understanding the *Vedas*. *Śruti* means that one should hear from the authority. One should not construe some interpretation for his personal interest. There are so many commentaries on *Bhagavad-gītā* that misinterpret the original text. The real import of the word should be presented, and that should be learned from a bona fide spiritual master.

Akrodha means to check anger. Even if there is provocation one should be tolerant, for once one becomes angry his whole body becomes polluted. Anger is a product of the mode of passion and

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lust, so one who is transcendently situated should check himself from anger. *Apaiśunam* means that one should not find fault with others or correct them unnecessarily. Of course to call a thief a thief is not faultfinding, but to call an honest person a thief is very much offensive for one who is making advancement in spiritual life. *Hrī* means that one should be very modest and must not perform some act which is abominable. *Acāpalam*, determination, means that one should not be agitated or frustrated in some attempt. There may be failure in some attempt, but one should not be sorry for that; he should make progress with patience and determination.

The word *tejas* used here is meant for the *kṣatriyas*. The *kṣatriyas* should always be very strong to be able to give protection to the weak. They should not pose themselves as nonviolent. If violence is required, they must exhibit it. But a person who is able to curb down his enemy may under certain conditions show forgiveness. He may excuse minor offenses.

Śaucam means cleanliness, not only in mind and body but in one's dealings also. It is especially meant for the mercantile people, who should not deal in the black market. *Nāti-mānitā*, not expecting honor, applies to the *śūdras*, the worker class, which are considered, according to Vedic injunctions, to be the lowest of the four classes. They should not be puffed up with unnecessary prestige or honor and should remain in their own status. It is the duty of the *śūdras* to offer respect to the higher class for the upkeep of the social order.

All these twenty-six qualifications mentioned are transcendental qualities. They should be cultivated according to the different statuses of social and occupational order. The purport is that even though material conditions are miserable, if these qualities are developed by practice, by all classes of men, then gradually it is possible to rise to the highest platform of transcendental realization.

(16.5)

Lord Kṛṣṇa encouraged Arjuna by telling him that he was not born with demoniac qualities. His involvement in the fight was not demoniac, because he was considering the pros and cons. He was considering whether respectable persons such as Bhīṣma and Droṇa should be killed or not, so he was not acting under the influence of anger, false prestige or harshness. Therefore he was not of the quality of the demons. For a *kṣatriya*, a military man, shooting arrows at the enemy is considered transcendental, and refraining from such a duty is demoniac. Therefore there was no

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cause for Arjuna to lament. Anyone who performs the regulative principles of the different orders of life is transcendently situated.

(16.7)

In every civilized human society there is some set of scriptural rules and regulations which is followed from the beginning. Especially among the Āryans, those who adopt the Vedic civilization and who are known as the most advanced civilized peoples, those who do not follow the scriptural injunctions are supposed to be demons. Therefore it is stated here that the demons do not know the scriptural rules, nor do they have any inclination to follow them. Most of them do not know them, and even if some of them know, they have not the tendency to follow them. They have no faith, nor are they willing to act in terms of the Vedic injunctions. The demons are not clean, either externally or internally. One should always be careful to keep his body clean by bathing, brushing teeth, shaving, changing clothes, etc. As far as internal cleanliness is concerned, one should always remember the holy names of God and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. The demons neither like nor follow all these rules for external and internal cleanliness.

As for behavior, there are many rules and regulations guiding human behavior, such as the *Manu-saṁhitā*, which is the law of the human race. Even up to today, those who are Hindu follow the *Manu-saṁhitā*. Laws of inheritance and other legalities are derived from this book. Now, in the *Manu-saṁhitā* it is clearly stated that a woman should not be given freedom. That does not mean that women are to be kept as slaves, but they are like children. Children are not given freedom, but that does not mean that they are kept as slaves. The demons have now neglected such injunctions, and they think that women should be given as much freedom as men. However, this has not improved the social condition of the world. Actually, a woman should be given protection at every stage of life. She should be given protection by the father in her younger days, by the husband in her youth, and by the grownup sons in her old age. This is proper social behavior according to the *Manu-saṁhitā*. But modern education has artificially devised a puffed-up concept of womanly life, and therefore marriage is practically now an imagination in human society. The social condition of women is thus not very good now, although those who are married are in a better condition than those who are proclaiming their so-

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called freedom. The demons, therefore, do not accept any instruction which is good for society, and because they do not follow the experience of great sages and the rules and regulations laid down by the sages, the social condition of the demoniac people is very miserable.

(16.18)

A demoniac person, being always against God's supremacy, does not like to believe in the scriptures. He is envious of both the scriptures and the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is caused by his so-called prestige and his accumulation of wealth and strength. He does not know that the present life is a preparation for the next life. Not knowing this, he is actually envious of his own self, as well as of others. He commits violence on other bodies and on his own. He does not care for the supreme control of the Personality of Godhead, because he has no knowledge. Being envious of the scriptures and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he puts forward false arguments against the existence of God and denies the scriptural authority. He thinks himself independent and powerful in every action. He thinks that since no one can equal him in strength, power or wealth, he can act in any way and no one can stop him. If he has an enemy who might check the advancement of his sensual activities, he makes plans to cut him down by his own power.

Exercise

1. What are the type of austerities Vanaprasthas have to perform (BG 16.1 -3)

a. Body b. Body, Mind and Tongue c. Mind and Tongue d. Soul

2. What does "Acapalam" mean? (BG 16.1-3)

a. Sense Control b. Determination c. Non Envious d. Simple

3. Without Tapasya no one can get (BG 16.1 -3)

a. Peace b. Liberation c. Happiness d. Fearlessness

4. Vedic Literature should be learnt from (BG 16.1 -3)

a. On his own b. Bonafide Spiritual Master c. With help of friend d. No need to study

5. Saucam is meant for (BG 16.1 -3)

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a. Vaisyas b. Ksatriyas c. Brahmanas d. Sudras

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(a)

Chapter Seventeen: The Divisions of Faith

(17.1)

In the Fourth Chapter, thirty-ninth verse, it is said that a person faithful to a particular type of worship gradually becomes elevated to the stage of knowledge and attains the highest perfectional stage of peace and prosperity. In the Sixteenth Chapter, it is concluded that one who does not follow the principles laid down in the scriptures is called an *asura*, demon, and one who follows the scriptural injunctions faithfully is called a *deva*, or demigod. Now, if one, with faith, follows some rules which are not mentioned in the scriptural injunctions, what is his position? This doubt of Arjuna's is to be cleared by Kṛṣṇa. Are those who create some sort of God by selecting a human being and placing their faith in him worshiping in goodness, passion or ignorance? Do such persons attain the perfectional stage of life? Is it possible for them to be situated in real knowledge and elevate themselves to the highest perfectional stage? Do those who do not follow the rules and regulations of the scriptures but who have faith in something and worship gods and demigods and men attain success in their effort? Arjuna is putting these questions to Kṛṣṇa.

(17.3)

Everyone has a particular type of faith, regardless of what he is. But his faith is considered good, passionate or ignorant according to the nature he has acquired. Thus, according to his particular type of faith, one associates with certain persons. Now the real fact is that every living being, as is stated in the Fifteenth Chapter, is originally a fragmental part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. Therefore one is originally transcendental to all the modes of material nature. But when one forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and comes into contact with

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the material nature in conditional life, he generates his own position by association with the different varieties of material nature. The resultant artificial faith and existence are only material. Although one may be conducted by some impression, or some conception of life, originally he is *nirguṇa*, or transcendental. Therefore one has to become cleansed of the material contamination that he has acquired, in order to regain his relationship with the Supreme Lord. That is the only path back without fear: Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then that path is guaranteed for his elevation to the perfectional stage. If one does not take to this path of self-realization, then he is surely to be conducted by the influence of the modes of nature.

The word *śraddhā*, or “faith,” is very significant in this verse. *Śraddhā*, or faith, originally comes out of the mode of goodness. One’s faith may be in a demigod or some created God or some mental concoction. One’s strong faith is supposed to be productive of works of material goodness. But in material conditional life, no works are completely purified. They are mixed. They are not in pure goodness. Pure goodness is transcendental; in purified goodness one can understand the real nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As long as one’s faith is not completely in purified goodness, the faith is subject to contamination by any of the modes of material nature. The contaminated modes of material nature expand to the heart. Therefore according to the position of the heart in contact with a particular mode of material nature, one’s faith is established. It should be understood that if one’s heart is in the mode of goodness his faith is also in the mode of goodness. If his heart is in the mode of passion, his faith is also in the mode of passion. And if his heart is in the mode of darkness, illusion, his faith is also thus contaminated. Thus we find different types of faith in this world, and there are different types of religions due to different types of faith. The real principle of religious faith is situated in the mode of pure goodness, but because the heart is tainted we find different types of religious principles. Thus according to different types of faith, there are different kinds of worship.

(17.4)

In this verse the Supreme Personality of Godhead describes different kinds of worshipers according to their external activities. According to scriptural injunction, only the Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshipable, but those who are not very conversant with, or faithful to, the scriptural injunctions worship different objects, according to their specific situations in the modes of material nature. Those who are situated in goodness generally worship the demigods.

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The demigods include Brahmā, Śiva and others such as Indra, Candra and the sun-god. There are various demigods. Those in goodness worship a particular demigod for a particular purpose. Similarly, those who are in the mode of passion worship the demons. We recall that during the Second World War a man in Calcutta worshiped Hitler because thanks to that war he had amassed a large amount of wealth by dealing in the black market. Similarly, those in the modes of passion and ignorance generally select a powerful man to be God. They think that anyone can be worshiped as God and that the same results will be obtained.

Now, it is clearly described here that those who are in the mode of passion worship and create such gods, and those who are in the mode of ignorance, in darkness, worship dead spirits. Sometimes people worship at the tomb of some dead man. Sexual service is also considered to be in the mode of darkness. Similarly, in remote villages in India there are worshipers of ghosts. We have seen that in India the lower-class people sometimes go to the forest, and if they have knowledge that a ghost lives in a tree, they worship that tree and offer sacrifices. These different kinds of worship are not actually God worship. God worship is for persons who are transcendently situated in pure goodness. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.3.23) it is said, *sattvaṁ viśuddhaṁ vasudeva-śabditam*: “When a man is situated in pure goodness, he worships Vāsudeva.” The purport is that those who are completely purified of the material modes of nature and who are transcendently situated can worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The impersonalists are supposed to be situated in the mode of goodness, and they worship five kinds of demigods. They worship the impersonal Viṣṇu form in the material world, which is known as philosophized Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is the expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the impersonalists, because they do not ultimately believe in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, imagine that the Viṣṇu form is just another aspect of the impersonal Brahman; similarly, they imagine that Lord Brahmā is the impersonal form in the material mode of passion. Thus they sometimes describe five kinds of gods that are worshipable, but because they think that the actual truth is impersonal Brahman, they dispose of all worshipable objects at the ultimate end. In conclusion, the different qualities of the material modes of nature can be purified through association with persons who are of transcendental nature.

(17.7)

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In terms of different situations in the modes of material nature, there are differences in the manner of eating and performing sacrifices, austerities and charities. They are not all conducted on the same level. Those who can understand analytically what kind of performances are in what modes of material nature are actually wise; those who consider all kinds of sacrifice or food or charity to be the same cannot discriminate, and they are foolish. There are missionary workers who advocate that one can do whatever he likes and attain perfection. But these foolish guides are not acting according to the direction of the scripture. They are manufacturing ways and misleading the people in general.

Exercise

1 .What are the type of austerities Vanaprasthas have to perform (BG 16.1 -3)

a. Body b. Body, Mind and Tongue c. Mind and Tongue d. Soul

2 Impersonalist worships how many type of Demigods? (BG 17.4)

a. 7 b. 5 c. 3 d. 4

3. What does "Sraddha" mean? (BG 17.3)

a. Respect b. Faith c. Humility d. Peace

4. How many types of Faith are there? (BG 17.3)

a. 4 b. 3 c. 1 d. 6

5. What does "Nirguna" mean? (BG 17.3)

a. No Qualities b. Transcendental c. Selfless d. Peaceful

Answer

1	2	3	4	5
(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)

Chapter Eighteen: Conclusion – The Perfection of Renunciation

(18.1)

Actually the *Bhagavad-gītā* is finished in seventeen chapters. The Eighteenth Chapter is a supplementary summarization of the topics discussed before. In every chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa stresses that devotional service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the ultimate goal of life. This same point is summarized in the Eighteenth Chapter as the most confidential path of knowledge. In the first six chapters, stress was given to devotional service: *yoginām api sarveṣāṃ ...* “Of all *yogīs* or transcendentalists, one who always thinks of Me within himself is best.” In the next six chapters, pure devotional service and its nature and activity were discussed. In the third six chapters, knowledge, renunciation, the activities of material nature and transcendental nature, and devotional service were described. It was concluded that all acts should be performed in conjunction with the Supreme Lord, represented by the words *om tat sat*, which indicate Viṣṇu, the Supreme Person. The third part of *Bhagavad-gītā* has shown that devotional service, and nothing else, is the ultimate purpose of life. This has been established by citing past *ācāryas* and the *Brahma-sūtra*, the *Vedānta-sūtra*. Certain impersonalists consider themselves to have a monopoly on the knowledge of *Vedānta-sūtra*, but actually the *Vedānta-sūtra* is meant for understanding devotional service, for the Lord Himself is the composer of the *Vedānta-sūtra*, and He is its knower. That is described in the Fifteenth Chapter. In every scripture, every *Veda*, devotional service is the objective. That is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

As in the Second Chapter a synopsis of the whole subject matter was described, in the Eighteenth Chapter also the summary of all instruction is given. The purpose of life is indicated to be renunciation and attainment of the transcendental position above the three material modes of nature. Arjuna wants to clarify the two distinct subject matters of *Bhagavad-gītā*, namely renunciation (*tyāga*) and the renounced order of life (*sannyāsa*). Thus he is asking the meaning of these two words.

Two words used in this verse to address the Supreme Lord – Hṛṣīkeśa and Keśi-niṣūdana – are significant. Hṛṣīkeśa is Kṛṣṇa, the master of all senses, who can always help us attain mental serenity. Arjuna requests Him to summarize everything in such a way that he can remain

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equipoised. Yet he has some doubts, and doubts are always compared to demons. He therefore addresses Kṛṣṇa as Keśi-niṣūdāna. Keśī was a most formidable demon who was killed by the Lord; now Arjuna is expecting Kṛṣṇa to kill the demon of doubt.

(18.2)

The performance of activities for results has to be given up. This is the instruction of *Bhagavad-gītā*. But activities leading to advanced spiritual knowledge are not to be given up. This will be made clear in the next verses. In the Vedic literature there are many prescriptions of methods for performing sacrifice for some particular purpose. There are certain sacrifices to perform to attain a good son or to attain elevation to the higher planets, but sacrifices prompted by desires should be stopped. However, sacrifice for the purification of one's heart or for advancement in the spiritual science should not be given up.

(18.14)

The word *adhiṣṭhānam* refers to the body. The soul within the body is acting to bring about the results of activity and is therefore known as *kartā*, “the doer.” That the soul is the knower and the doer is stated in the *śruti*. *Eṣa hi draṣṭā sraṣṭā* (*Praśna Upaniṣad* 4.9). It is also confirmed in the *Vedānta-sūtra* by the verses *jñō 'ta eva* (2.3.18) and *kartā śāstrārthavattvāt* (2.3.33). The instruments of action are the senses, and by the senses the soul acts in various ways. For each and every action there is a different endeavor. But all one's activities depend on the will of the Supersoul, who is seated within the heart as a friend. The Supreme Lord is the supercause. Under these circumstances, he who is acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the direction of the Supersoul situated within the heart is naturally not bound by any activity. Those in complete Kṛṣṇa consciousness are not ultimately responsible for their actions. Everything is dependent on the supreme will, the Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

(18.37)

In the pursuit of self-realization, one has to follow many rules and regulations to control the mind and the senses and to concentrate the mind on the self. All these procedures are very

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difficult, bitter like poison, but if one is successful in following the regulations and comes to the transcendental position, he begins to drink real nectar, and he enjoys life.

(18.38)

A young man and a young woman meet, and the senses drive the young man to see her, to touch her and to have sexual intercourse. In the beginning this may be very pleasing to the senses, but at the end, or after some time, it becomes just like poison. They are separated or there is divorce, there is lamentation, there is sorrow, etc. Such happiness is always in the mode of passion. Happiness derived from a combination of the senses and the sense objects is always a cause of distress and should be avoided by all means.

(18.39)

One who takes pleasure in laziness and in sleep is certainly in the mode of darkness, ignorance, and one who has no idea how to act and how not to act is also in the mode of ignorance. For the person in the mode of ignorance, everything is illusion. There is no happiness either in the beginning or at the end. For the person in the mode of passion there might be some kind of ephemeral happiness in the beginning and at the end distress, but for the person in the mode of ignorance there is only distress both in the beginning and at the end.

(18.54)

To the impersonalist, achieving the *brahma-bhūta* stage, becoming one with the Absolute, is the last word. But for the personalist, or pure devotee, one has to go still further, to become engaged in pure devotional service. This means that one who is engaged in pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord is already in a state of liberation, called *brahma-bhūta*, oneness with the Absolute. Without being one with the Supreme, the Absolute, one cannot render service unto Him. In the absolute conception, there is no difference between the served and the servitor; yet the distinction is there, in a higher spiritual sense.

In the material concept of life, when one works for sense gratification, there is misery, but in the absolute world, when one is engaged in pure devotional service, there is no misery. The devotee in Kṛṣṇa consciousness has nothing for which to lament or desire. Since God is full, a living

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entity who is engaged in God's service, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, becomes also full in himself. He is just like a river cleansed of all dirty water. Because a pure devotee has no thought other than Kṛṣṇa, he is naturally always joyful. He does not lament for any material loss or aspire for gain, because he is full in the service of the Lord. He has no desire for material enjoyment, because he knows that every living entity is a fragmental part and parcel of the Supreme Lord and therefore eternally a servant. He does not see, in the material world, someone as higher and someone as lower; higher and lower positions are ephemeral, and a devotee has nothing to do with ephemeral appearances or disappearances. For him stone and gold are of equal value. This is the *brahma-bhūta* stage, and this stage is attained very easily by the pure devotee. In that stage of existence, the idea of becoming one with the Supreme Brahman and annihilating one's individuality becomes hellish, the idea of attaining the heavenly kingdom becomes phantasmagoria, and the senses are like serpents whose poison teeth are broken. As there is no fear of a serpent with broken teeth, there is no fear from the senses when they are automatically controlled. The world is miserable for the materially infected person, but for a devotee the entire world is as good as Vaikuṇṭha, or the spiritual sky. The highest personality in this material universe is no more significant than an ant for a devotee. Such a stage can be achieved by the mercy of Lord Caitanya, who preached pure devotional service in this age.

(18.61)

Arjuna was not the supreme knower, and his decision to fight or not to fight was confined to his limited discretion. Lord Kṛṣṇa instructed that the individual is not all in all. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, or He Himself, Kṛṣṇa, as the localized Supersoul, sits in the heart directing the living being. After changing bodies, the living entity forgets his past deeds, but the Supersoul, as the knower of the past, present and future, remains the witness of all his activities. Therefore all the activities of living entities are directed by this Supersoul. The living entity gets what he deserves and is carried by the material body, which is created in the material energy under the direction of the Supersoul. As soon as a living entity is placed in a particular type of body, he has to work under the spell of that bodily situation. A person seated in a high-speed motorcar goes faster than one seated in a slower car, though the living entities, the drivers, may be the same. Similarly, by the order of the Supreme Soul, material nature fashions a particular type of body to a particular type of living entity so that he may work according to his past

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desires. The living entity is not independent. One should not think himself independent of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The individual is always under the Lord's control. Therefore one's duty is to surrender, and that is the injunction of the next verse.

(18.66)

The Lord has described various kinds of knowledge and processes of religion – knowledge of the Supreme Brahman, knowledge of the Supersoul, knowledge of the different types of orders and statuses of social life, knowledge of the renounced order of life, knowledge of nonattachment, sense and mind control, meditation, etc. He has described in so many ways different types of religion. Now, in summarizing *Bhagavad-gītā*, the Lord says that Arjuna should give up all the processes that have been explained to him; he should simply surrender to Kṛṣṇa. That surrender will save him from all kinds of sinful reactions, for the Lord personally promises to protect him.

In the Seventh Chapter it was said that only one who has become free from all sinful reactions can take to the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus one may think that unless he is free from all sinful reactions he cannot take to the surrendering process. To such doubts it is here said that even if one is not free from all sinful reactions, simply by the process of surrendering to Śrī Kṛṣṇa he is automatically freed. There is no need of strenuous effort to free oneself from sinful reactions. One should unhesitatingly accept Kṛṣṇa as the supreme savior of all living entities. With faith and love, one should surrender unto Him.

The process of surrender to Kṛṣṇa is described in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.676):

ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam

rakṣiṣyātīti viśvāso goptrtve varaṇam tathā

ātma-nikṣepa-kārpaṇye ṣaḍ-vidhā śaraṇāgatih

According to the devotional process, one should simply accept such religious principles that will lead ultimately to the devotional service of the Lord. One may perform a particular occupational duty according to his position in the social order, but if by executing his duty one does not come to the point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all his activities are in vain. Anything that does not lead to the perfectional stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness should be avoided. One should be confident that in all circumstances Kṛṣṇa will protect him from all difficulties. There is no need of thinking how one should keep the body and soul together. Kṛṣṇa will see to that. One should always think

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himself helpless and should consider Kṛṣṇa the only basis for his progress in life. As soon as one seriously engages himself in devotional service to the Lord in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, at once he becomes freed from all contamination of material nature. There are different processes of religion and purificatory processes by cultivation of knowledge, meditation in the mystic *yoga* system, etc., but one who surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa does not have to execute so many methods. That simple surrender unto Kṛṣṇa will save him from unnecessarily wasting time. One can thus make all progress at once and be freed from all sinful reactions.

One should be attracted by the beautiful vision of Kṛṣṇa. His name is Kṛṣṇa because He is all-attractive. One who becomes attracted by the beautiful, all-powerful, omnipotent vision of Kṛṣṇa is fortunate. There are different kinds of transcendentalists – some of them are attached to the impersonal Brahman vision, some of them are attracted by the Supersoul feature, etc., but one who is attracted to the personal feature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and, above all, one who is attracted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead as Kṛṣṇa Himself, is the most perfect transcendentalist. In other words, devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, in full consciousness, is the most confidential part of knowledge, and this is the essence of the whole *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Karma-yogīs*, empiric philosophers, mystics and devotees are all called transcendentalists, but one who is a pure devotee is the best of all. The particular words used here, *mā śucaḥ*, “Don’t fear, don’t hesitate, don’t worry,” are very significant. One may be perplexed as to how one can give up all kinds of religious forms and simply surrender unto Kṛṣṇa, but such worry is useless.

(18.78)

The *Bhagavad-gītā* began with an inquiry of Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s. He was hopeful of the victory of his sons, assisted by great warriors like Bhīṣma, Droṇa and Karṇa. He was hopeful that the victory would be on his side. But after describing the scene on the battlefield, Sañjaya told the King, “You are thinking of victory, but my opinion is that where Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are present, there will be all good fortune.” He directly confirmed that Dhṛtarāṣṭra could not expect victory for his side. Victory was certain for the side of Arjuna because Kṛṣṇa was there. Kṛṣṇa’s acceptance of the post of charioteer for Arjuna was an exhibition of another opulence. Kṛṣṇa is full of all opulences, and renunciation is one of them. There are many instances of such renunciation, for Kṛṣṇa is also the master of renunciation.

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The fight was actually between Duryodhana and Yudhiṣṭhira. Arjuna was fighting on behalf of his elder brother, Yudhiṣṭhira. Because Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were on the side of Yudhiṣṭhira, Yudhiṣṭhira's victory was certain. The battle was to decide who would rule the world, and Sañjaya predicted that the power would be transferred to Yudhiṣṭhira. It is also predicted here that Yudhiṣṭhira, after gaining victory in this battle, would flourish more and more because not only was he righteous and pious but he was also a strict moralist. He never spoke a lie during his life.

There are many less intelligent persons who take *Bhagavad-gītā* to be a discussion of topics between two friends on a battlefield. But such a book cannot be scripture. Some may protest that Kṛṣṇa incited Arjuna to fight, which is immoral, but the reality of the situation is clearly stated: *Bhagavad-gītā* is the supreme instruction in morality. The supreme instruction of morality is stated in the Ninth Chapter, in the thirty-fourth verse: *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktaḥ*. One must become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and the essence of all religion is to surrender unto Kṛṣṇa (*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*). The instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā* constitute the supreme process of religion and of morality. All other processes may be purifying and may lead to this process, but the last instruction of the *Gītā* is the last word in all morality and religion: surrender unto Kṛṣṇa. This is the verdict of the Eighteenth Chapter.

From *Bhagavad-gītā* we can understand that to realize oneself by philosophical speculation and by meditation is one process, but to fully surrender unto Kṛṣṇa is the highest perfection. This is the essence of the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The path of regulative principles according to the orders of social life and according to the different courses of religion may be a confidential path of knowledge. But although the rituals of religion are confidential, meditation and cultivation of knowledge are still more confidential. And surrender unto Kṛṣṇa in devotional service in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the most confidential instruction. That is the essence of the Eighteenth Chapter.

Another feature of *Bhagavad-gītā* is that the actual truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. The Absolute Truth is realized in three features – impersonal Brahman, localized Paramātmā, and ultimately the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Perfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth means perfect knowledge of Kṛṣṇa. If one understands Kṛṣṇa, then all the departments of knowledge are part and parcel of that understanding. Kṛṣṇa is transcendental, for

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He is always situated in His eternal internal potency. The living entities are manifested of His energy and are divided into two classes, eternally conditioned and eternally liberated. Such living entities are innumerable, and they are considered fundamental parts of Kṛṣṇa. Material energy is manifested into twenty-four divisions. The creation is effected by eternal time, and it is created and dissolved by external energy. This manifestation of the cosmic world repeatedly becomes visible and invisible.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* five principal subject matters have been discussed: the Supreme Personality of Godhead, material nature, the living entities, eternal time and all kinds of activities. All is dependent on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. All conceptions of the Absolute Truth – impersonal Brahman, localized Paramātmā and any other transcendental conception – exist within the category of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although superficially the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the living entity, material nature and time appear to be different, nothing is different from the Supreme. But the Supreme is always different from everything. Lord Caitanya's philosophy is that of "inconceivable oneness and difference." This system of philosophy constitutes perfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth.

The living entity in his original position is pure spirit. He is just like an atomic particle of the Supreme Spirit. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa may be compared to the sun, and the living entities to sunshine. Because the living entities are the marginal energy of Kṛṣṇa, they have a tendency to be in contact either with the material energy or with the spiritual energy. In other words, the living entity is situated between the two energies of the Lord, and because he belongs to the superior energy of the Lord, he has a particle of independence. By proper use of that independence he comes under the direct order of Kṛṣṇa. Thus he attains his normal condition in the pleasure-giving potency.

Exercise

1. In the beginning of 18th chapter Arjuna asked question about (BG 18.1)

- a. Purpose of Self Realization b. Purpose of Renunciation
- c. Purpose of Human Life d. Purpose of speaking Bhagavad Gita

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2. Second Chapter of BG is (BG 18.1)

a. Summary b. Synopsis c. Extra Chapter d. Best and topmost chapter

3. What does "Adhishtanam" refer to (BG 18.14)

a. King b. Body c. leader d. Master

4. Whom does "Kartä " refer to? (BG 18.14)

a. Work b. Soul c. King d. Body

5. In all the actions who is the supercause? (BG 18.14)

a. Soul b. Supreme Lord c. Mind d. Senses 103.

1	2	3	4	5
(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)