

CHAPTER 16

THE DIVINE AND DEMONIAC NATURES

Connection between Chapter 15 and Chapter 16

- ❖ Chapter 15 described the Banyan tree of the material world. The modes of material nature nourish both the upper, auspicious, divine branches of the tree and the lower, demoniac branches
- ❖ Extra roots of the banyan tree were also compared to the activities of the living entities, some auspicious and some inauspicious
- ❖ Chapter 16 explains the divine qualities that elevate one on the tree and leads ultimately to liberation
- ❖ Chapter 16 also explains the demoniac qualities and the mentality which drives one lower on the tree and ultimately to hell

BREAKDOWN OF CHAPTER 16

SECTION I (16.1 – 16.6) — TRANSCENDENTAL AND DEMONIAC QUALITIES

- Krishna first describes the twenty-six divine qualities
- Then He mentions the six demoniac qualities

SECTION II (16.7 – 16.20) — THE DEMONIAC NATURE

- Krishna wants to assure Arjuna that he possesses divine and not demoniac qualities
- Describes the activities, mentality and qualities of those with demoniac tendencies
- Krishna repeatedly casts these mischievous demons into demoniac, abominable species

SECTION III (16.21 – 16.24) — THE CHOICE: ESCAPING TO THE SUPREME DESTINATION

- Three gates leading to soul's degradation and entanglement in demoniac mentality –
 - Lust, Anger and Greed
- Every sane man should give these up, act for purification and attain the supreme destination
- Instead of acting under the control of these, one should act according to sastra

SECTION I (16.1 – 16.6)

TRANSCENDENTAL AND DEMONIAC QUALITIES

Texts 16.1 – 16.3

COMMON THEME: Krishna lists characteristics of saintly persons – Qualities that elevate us on the banyan tree and ultimately lead to liberation

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.1 – 16.3

PLEASE NOTE: Points of these purports which deal with the definitions of the divine qualities are described in a table form below. The remaining points are mentioned here.

- (a) **Main theme of Chapter 16** – Chapter 16 explains the transcendental and demoniac natures and their attendant qualities (Relationship of these qualities with the modes), also there are advantages and disadvantages
- (b) **Connection to Chapter 15** – Extra roots of the banyan tree were also compared to the activities of the living entities, some auspicious and some inauspicious.
- (c) **How these qualities, either demoniac or divine, develop** – By association with particular modes
- (d) **Demoniac qualities**
- Develops from mode of passion and ignorance
 - Activities in the modes of passion and ignorance – No possibility of liberation. Their destiny is as follows:
 - Either one stays as human in material world, or
 - Descends to lower forms like animal species etc.
- (e) **Divine qualities**
- Develops from mode of goodness
 - Importance of activities in the mode of goodness – Such activities are called '*daivi-prakrti*' (transcendental by nature); they are considered auspicious for progress on the path of liberation
- (f) **All these 26 divine qualities are explained as transcendental qualities** – They are meant for making progress in spiritual understanding, so that one can get liberation from the material world
- (g) **Importance of the word 'Abhijatasya'** – Implies "One born of" – (in this verse it refers to one born of transcendental qualities / godly tendencies)
- *Ref. Vedic scriptures* – It is very important to beget a child in godly atmosphere
 - '**Garbhadhana-samskara**' recommended – It implies to 'beget a child' in godly atmosphere
 - To have a child with godly qualities, one should follow the 10 principles for social life of a human being
 - *Ref. Bg. 7.11* – "*I am sex life which is not contrary to religious principles*"
- (h) **Basis of cultivating qualities** – These qualities are cultivated according to the different statuses of social and occupational order
- (i) **One can develop by practice** – 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.
- (j) **Symptom of a divine personality** – Leads a regulated life according to the injunctions of the scriptures
- (k) **Varnasrama-dharma**
- Not meant to divide society according to birth
 - Only basis is educational qualifications – *guna* and *karma*
 - Purpose – To keep society in peace and prosperity
 - The *Sannyasi* is the head or spiritual master of all social statuses and orders, including *brahmanas*
 - *Brahmana* is the spiritual master of other three social orders

SUMMARIZED THEME 16A

THE DIVINE QUALITIES		
QUALITY	VARNA OR ASHRAMA Class of society who should especially cultivate the quality	COMMENT
1. Fearlessness (<i>Abhayam</i>)	<i>Sannyasa</i> (First qualification for a <i>sannyasi</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete dependence on Supreme Lord's Mercy • Has to be alone without guarantee of support • Convinced that Paramatma will give all protection to surrendered soul
2. Purification of one's existence (<i>Sattva-samsuddhih</i>)	<i>Sannyasis</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strictly following rules and regulations • Especially forbidden intimate association with women <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ e.g. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu was personally very strict, and ○ e.g. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu punishing Chota Haridas
3. Cultivation of knowledge (<i>Jnana-yoga-vyavasthiti</i>)	<i>Sannyasa</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty of a <i>Sannyasi</i> – Must cultivate and give transcendental knowledge, especially to householders • Humility – Beggars from door to door to awaken Krishna consciousness for others
4. Charity	<i>Grhastha</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given in the mode of goodness – Right time, place and person • Spend 50% of their income to propagate Krishna consciousness • Charity in passion and ignorance is a waste of time
5. Self-control (<i>Dama</i>)	All (<i>Especially Grhasthas</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially sex life should be used only for propagating Krishna conscious children (<i>Ref Bg. 7.11</i>)
6. Sacrifice (<i>Yajna</i>)	<i>Grhasthas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires material resources (<i>Agni-hotra yajna</i>), therefore especially <i>Grhasthas</i> • Sankirtan-yajna is the best <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most inexpensive ○ Anyone can do (no qualification required) ○ Highest benefit
7. Vedic study (<i>Svadyaya</i>)	<i>Brahmacaris</i> (Student life)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation for <i>Brahmacaris</i> is celibacy and engagement of mind in the study of Vedic literatures
8. Austerity (<i>Tapas</i>)	All (<i>Especially Varnaprasthas</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human life (and therefore <i>Vedic Culture</i>) is meant for liberation. For that <i>tapasya</i> is a must • One must retire after household life approximately 50 years of age • Austerity can be of body, mind and tongue • <u>Refutes</u> show-bottle spiritualists who says that there is no need of austerity in life and one can go

		on speculating – Such philosophy attracts many followers
9. Simplicity	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple and straightforward
10. Non-violence (<i>Ahimsa</i>)	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-violence implies ‘not checking progressive life of any living entity’
11. Truthfulness (<i>Satyam</i>)	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not distort the truth for some personal interest, especially Vedic instructions • e.g. Misinterpreted <i>Bhagavad-gita</i> commentaries • Process of understanding <i>Vedas</i> – One must hear from Authority (<i>sruti</i>)
12. Freedom from anger (<i>Akrodha</i>)	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even if there is provocation, one should be tolerant. Anger pollutes the whole body • Anger is product of passion and lust
13. Renunciation	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using things properly i.e. in Krishna’s service
14. Tranquility	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaffected by disturbing emotions; peaceful; equipoised
15. Aversion to faultfinding (<i>Apaisunam</i>)	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To call a thief a thief is okay, but no unnecessary fault-finding or correction
16. Compassion for all living entities	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives spiritual knowledge (Prasadam, Books, Holy Name)
17. Freedom of covetousness	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covetousness: Greedy (Charity and renunciation)
18. Gentleness	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendliness to all living entities
19. Modesty (<i>Hri</i>)	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not perform abominable actions and be very modest
20. Steady determination (<i>Acaapalam</i>)	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not agitated or frustrated in his efforts, regardless of failure • Progress with patience and determination
21. Vigour (<i>Tejas</i>)	<i>Kstariyas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to give protection to those who need it • Not pose non-violent but use violence when needed
22. Forgiveness (<i>Ksama</i>)	All (Especially <i>Ksatriyas</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgive minor offenses of others • When one is able to curb down his enemies, he may under certain conditions show forgiveness
23. Fortitude (<i>Dhrtih</i>)	All (Especially <i>Ksatriyas</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental and emotional strength when facing difficult situations
24. Cleanliness (<i>Saucam</i>)	All (Especially <i>Vaisyas</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal (mind and heart); external (body and in dealings with others) • No black market or underhanded dealings
25. Freedom from envy	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not resentful of another
26. Freedom from the passion for honour (<i>Naati-maanitaa</i>)	All (Especially <i>Sudras</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must respect others • One should not be puffed up with unnecessary prestige and honor, but remain in one’s own status

Text 16.4

THEME: Six demoniac qualities – This verse describes the “Royal road to hell”


FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.4

(a) **Importance of the word “Abhijatasya”**

- These qualities are taken on by them from the beginning of their bodies in the wombs of their mothers
- As they grow they manifest all inauspicious qualities

(a) **Demoniac qualities**

1. **Pride** – Demoniac want to make a show of religion and advancement in spiritual science, but do not follow the principles
2. **Arrogance** – Proud in possessing some education or wealth and thus arrogant
3. **Conceit** – Desire to be worshipped by others (Demand respect, but do not command respect)
4. **Anger** – Over trifles they become angry
5. **Harshness** – Speak harshly
6. **Ignorance**
 - Not knowing what to do and what not to do
 - Do all whimsically according to their own desire
 - Do not recognize any authority

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 16.4 & 16.5:** Krishna next removes Arjuna’s doubt about whether his own participation in the battle as a warrior – and therefore as a killer – will be due to possessing a demoniac temperament

Text 16.5*

THEME: Destiny of divine and demoniac

- ❖ Sainly qualities lead to liberation and demoniac qualities lead to bondage
- ❖ Krishna encourages Arjuna that he is born of saintly qualities and his fighting is not demoniac

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.5

(a) On what basis Krishna considers that Arjuna is born of saintly qualities and his fighting is not demoniac

- Because Arjuna considers the pros and cons
 - e.g. Arjuna considered whether respectable persons like Bhisma and Drona should be killed or not
- To perform the regulative principles of different orders of life is transcendental action
 - For a *ksatriya* shooting arrows at the enemy is considered transcendental and not doing so is demoniac

Text 16.6


THEME: Two kinds of created beings – ‘Divine’ and ‘Demoniac’

- ❖ Both demigods and demons are born of *Prajapati* (purport)
- ❖ The only criteria of differentiation between the two, as mentioned in the purport is:
 - “Obedience to the regulative principles of scriptures”

SECTION II (16.7 – 16.20) THE DEMONIAC NATURE

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION II

- According to one's level of general detachment and selflessness he is an eligible candidate for liberation
- In one sense, the real root of demoniac mentality is the inner choice of the soul to be "for Krishna" or, "against Krishna". All subsequent choices are really a result of this foundational one. Thus the divine and demoniac natures ultimately reflect the soul's inner direction towards Krishna
- Two broad sections of people who fit the general description of the demoniac and does not see Krishna's energies in connection with Him
 - Materialists – See the world as theirs to enjoy, thus disconnected with Him
 - Impersonalists – Ultimately say that material world does not exist, it has no connection to the Absolute

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION I & SECTION II:** After having briefly explained the demoniac nature in Text 16.4, Krishna will now explain it in detail in Texts 16.7 – 16.20. Arjuna will thus see that he himself, as well as his fighting, is free of demoniac tendencies

Text 16.7

THEME: This verse establishes the Demoniac nature

- ❖ Don't know what is to be done and not to be done/Do not follow sastras.
- ❖ Unclean – he neither likes nor follow these rules
- ❖ Improper behavior
- ❖ Untruthful
- ❖ Self-centered

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.7

(a) **Don't know what is to be done and not to be done / Do not follow sastras**

- Acts whimsically and not according to set of scriptural rules and regulations set-up for a civilized society
 - Either do not know scriptural rules and regulations
 - Even if knows, have no inclination to follow
 - Lack of faith
 - in Vedas – No faith in Vedic injunction
 - in Sages – Do not accept any instructions or experiences of great sages – this causes 'miserable social condition' of demoniac people
- Aryans – They are the most advanced civilized people and they adopt the Vedic injunctions as it is

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.7 continued...

- (b) **Unclean** – he neither likes nor follow these rules
 - External cleanliness – Brushing, shaving, bathing etc.
 - Internal cleanliness – Chanting the Hare Krishna maha-mantra
- (c) **Improper behavior**
 - Manu-samhita is the guide for human behavior (Especially Hindus follow it)
 - Improper behavior with others – Anger, harshness
 - Manu-samhita explains the laws of inheritance and other legalities also – examples of proper social behavior.
 - Women should not be give freedom
 - Women are protected in all ages, not as slaves but as children
 - Result of modern woman liberation – Moral condition of women is not very good and marriage is practically an imagination
- (d) **Untruthful**
 - Concoct philosophies for their own purposes


Text 16.8

THEME: Demoniac philosophy is explained here

- ❖ World is unreal with no God in control
- ❖ No cause other than lust and thus this world is produced of sex desire

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.8

- (a) **World is unreal with no God in control**
 - No foundation: Creation is by chance
- (b) **No cause other than lust and thus this world is produced of sex desire**
 - Lust as the cause – Living beings are a combination of matter produced from sex life
 - No existence of soul – All is matter, no difference between matter and spirit
 - Life is a dream – They say life is a dream but they are very expert in enjoying the dream
 - Thus not acquire knowledge but get implicated in the dreamland
 - No Superior controller – Do not believe that material nature is under control of Supreme Lord (Ref. Bg. 9.10 “*mayadhyaksena prakatih...*”)
 - No standard understanding of scriptures – They say that one interpretation of scripture is as good as other

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 16.8 & 16.9:** The next ten verses (Texts 16.9 – 16.18) explain the abominable activity performed by those possessing this philosophy and mentality

Text 16.9

THEME: Demoniatic attitude and engagements are explained here

- ❖ Attitude – The demoniac are lost to themselves (illusioned) and have no intelligence
- ❖ Engagement – Engaged in unbeneficial, horrible works meant to destroy the world

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.9

- (a) **Illusioned, no intelligence** – because they think to be advancing but engaged in the work that is destructive
- (b) **Ugra-karma: Painful, horrible, destructive acts**
 - Trying to enjoy sense gratification, they engage in materialistic inventions with the only result of violence and cruelty to other living beings
 - Two examples: Animal killing and nuclear weapons

Text 16.10

THEME: Demoniatic mentality is explained here

- ❖ They take shelter of insatiable lust
- ❖ They are absorbed in the conceit of pride and false prestige
- ❖ Always sworn to unclean work and attracted by impermanent

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.10

- (a) **Insatiable lust** – They go on increasing their insatiable desires for material enjoyment
- (b) **Illusioned**
 - They have no knowledge and cannot tell that they are heading the wrong way
 - They are always full of anxieties because of accepting non-permanent things
- (c) **Attracted by impermanent**
 - Create own God, own hymns
 - Engage in ‘*Asuchi-vratah*’: Unclean vows, primarily two things sex enjoyment and accumulation of material wealth
 - ‘*Asuchi*’ (Unclean habits) – Engaged in wine, women, gambling and meat-eating
- (d) **Absorbed in conceit of pride and false prestige** – This is practically seen as follows:
 - They create some principles of religion which are not approved by Vedic injunctions
 - By artificial means the world creates a false honor for them
 - Although gliding towards hell, they considered themselves very advanced

Texts 16.11 – 16.12

THEME: Demoniatic attitude and engagements are further described

- ❖ Attitude – Sense gratification is the “prime necessity of human civilization”
 - Immeasurable anxieties
 - Network of thousands of desires and absorbed in lust and anger
- ❖ Engagements – Secure money by illegal means for sense-gratification

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 16.11 – 16.12

(a) **The goal of life is sense gratification**

- Do not believe in life after death and signs of *karma*
- Plans of life are never finished e.g. a dying man requesting the physician to prolong his life for 4 years
- Performs all kinds of sinful activities unaware of the Supersoul sitting as the witness

(b) **Secure money by illegal means for sense-gratification**

- Feels free to do anything because of ignorance and faithlessness in Vedic scriptures
- Unaware of the Supersoul as the witness

⚡ **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 16.12 & 16.13:** Texts 16.13 – 16.15 describe their thoughts after they acquire money by “illegal means”

Texts 16.13 – 16.15

THEME: Demoniac mentality is further described

- ❖ “I am the controller and the enjoyer”
 - Indicates false ego which connects spirit to matter
- ❖ I am perfect and powerful
 - Everything is being done by my potency
 - Everything will increase
- ❖ My enemies are defeated and I am happy

⚡ **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 16.15 & 16.16:** The demoniac think that all has been accomplished by their endeavor. But Text 16.16 explains their actual achievement

Text 16.16

THEME: Results of demoniac work are explained here

- ❖ Perplexed by various anxieties
- ❖ Network of illusions
- ❖ Too strong attachment to sense enjoyment
- ❖ Falldown to hell

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.16

(a) **Network of illusion** – Bound up by network of hundreds and thousands of desires and illusions (16.16)

- *Analogy:* A network of illusion (moha-jala) is compared to fish in a net; no way to come out

(b) **Examples of ‘Mohajaal’ (Network of illusion)**

- No limits for the desire to enjoy
- Always planning to increase the stock of wealth
- Thinks that all his advancement is due to current endeavor and not because of law of Karma
- Anyone who comes into his competition is his enemy
- Manufacture one’s own process of yajna e.g. Ravana building Staircase or modern scientist trying to go to higher planets by mechanical arrangements

Text 16.17

THEME: Demoniac hypocritical nature and preachings are described here

- ❖ Being self-complacent and impudent, they are deluded by wealth and false prestige
- ❖ They proudly perform sacrifices in name only, without following any rules or regulations
- ❖ Their hypocritical religious observances cannot save them

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.17

- (a) **Perform religious rituals in name only**
 - Without accepting any rules or regulations
- (b) **Avidhi-purvakam** – Disregards the rules and regulations of scriptures and are always impudent
 - Impudence is due to the illusion caused by wealth and false prestige
 - Takes *sannyasa* dress without following the restrictions
 - Some take the dress of preachers and become known as religious reformers or incarnations of God
- (c) **Disbelieve in God** – some of the demoniac preachings are:
 - Preach that whatever path one creates is one's one path – there is no standard path
 - Others concoct their own God
 - Some preach that God is dead
 - Others say: "You are all God"


Text 16.18

THEME: Demoniac hypocritical nature and preachings are further described here – They (demons) are envious of God, saintly persons and scriptures

- ❖ They are bewildered by false ego, strength, pride, lust and anger
- ❖ They become envious of the Supreme personality of Godhead, who is situated in their own bodies and in the bodies of others
- ❖ They blaspheme against real religion and are envious of God, saintly persons and scriptures

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.18

- (a) **What causes envy:**
 - Material Assets – So called prestige and accumulation of wealth and strength
 - Lack of knowledge – Does not know that present life is a preparation for next life
- (b) **Result of envy:**
 - Envious of his own self as well as of others
 - Commits violence on others bodies and his own self
 - Envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and blaspheme against real religion
 - Puts forward false arguments against the existence of God and denies the scriptural authority
 - Thinks himself independent and powerful in every action – One thinks that no-one can equal him in strength, power and wealth
 - If anyone tries to check his sensual activities, he makes plan to cut him down by his own power

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 16.18 & 16.19:** The next two texts describe Krishna’s reciprocation with the demoniac

Text 16.19

THEME: Fate of demoniac – They are perpetually cast into various demoniac wombs in the ocean of material existence

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.19

- (a) **PRACTICAL APPLICATION: Nothing is accidental** – This verse clearly indicates that placing of a particular soul in a particular body is the prerogative of the Supreme Will
- Demoniac may not agree to accept the supremacy of the Lord, but his next birth anyways depends upon the decision of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*Ref. SB Canto 3 quoted*)
 - Lack of knowledge – Does not know that all is arranged by superior power, nothing is accidental
- (b) **Fate of Demoniac**
- Perpetually cast into various demoniac species
 - Example of demoniac species of life – Many kind of hunters in the jungle
 - They continue to be envious, the lowest of mankind

Text 16.20*

THEME: Fate of demoniac – They glide down to hell

- ❖ Attaining repeated birth among demoniac species, such persons can never approach Me
- ❖ Gradually they sink down to the most abominable type of existence

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.20

- (a) **“Never attain Me” – explained as follows:**
- Life after life they are put into demoniac wombs, go down and down, at last achieve bodies like cats, dogs and hogs (*Ref. Vedas states similar fact*)
 - What is the hope for them – Practically no chance of receiving God’s mercy at any stage of life
- (b) **What is the hope for them because God is supposed to be all Merciful:**
- Reference for Lord as All Merciful – *Ref. Vedanta Sutra*: Supreme Lord has no hatred for anyone
 - Another feature of His mercy – The placing of asuras in the lowest status of life is simply another feature of His mercy
 - Different aspects of Lord’s mercy
 - Sometimes the asuras are killed by the Lord – they get liberated
 - *E.g. Ravana, Kamsa, etc.*
 - Part of Lord’s mercy is how He reciprocates with consciousness of living entity. If a living entity desires to be in a position where he can have total forgetfulness of Krishna, while Lording over the material energy, Krishna gives that position to Him


**SUMMARISED THEME 16B
DEMONIAC NATURE**

- A) **Demoniac qualities** (16.4)
1. Pride 2. Anger 3. Arrogance 4. Conceit 5. Harshness 6. Ignorance
- B) **Demoniac nature** (16.7)
- They do not know what is to be done and what is not to be done
 - They do not follow *sastra*
 - Unclean and proper behaviour
 - Not truthful and self-centered
- C) **Demoniac philosophy** (16.8)
- World is unreal with no God in control
 - No cause other than lust and thus this world is produced of sex desire
- D) **Demoniac attitude and engagements** (16.9 & 16.11 – 16.12)
- Attitude
 - The demoniac are lost to themselves (illusioned) and have no intelligence
 - Sense gratification is the “prime necessity of human civilization”
 - Engagements
 - Engaged in unbeneficial, horrible works meant to destroy the world
 - Secure money by illegal means for sense-gratification
- E) **Demoniac mentality** (16.10 & 16.13 – 16.15)
- They take shelter of insatiable lust
 - They are absorbed in the conceit of pride and false prestige
 - Always sworn to unclean work and attracted by impermanent
 - “I am the controller and the enjoyer”
 - “I am perfect and powerful”
 - “My enemies are defeated and I am happy”
 - “I am the Lord of everything that I survey”
- F) **Result of demoniac work** (16.16)
- Perplexed by various anxieties
 - Network of illusions
 - Too strong attachment to sense enjoyment
 - Falldown to hell
- G) **Demoniac preachings** (16.17 – 16.18)
- They are envious of God, saintly persons and scriptures
 - They proudly perform sacrifices in name only, without following any rules or regulations
 - Preach that whatever path one creates is one’s own path – there is no standard path
 - Others concoct their own God
 - Some preach that God is dead
 - Others say: “You are all yourselves God”
- H) **Fate of demoniac** (16.19 – 16.20)
- They are perpetually cast into various demoniac wombs in the ocean of material existence
 - Attaining repeated birth among demoniac species, such persons can never approach Me
 - Gradually they sink down to the most abominable type of existence
 - They glide down to hell

SECTION III (16.21 – 16.24)
THE CHOICE: ESCAPING TO THE SUPREME DESTINATION
Getting free from demoniac qualities

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION III


To achieve release from the state of conditioned life, one must follow the dictation of scriptures and not the dictation of lower material modes

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION II & SECTION III:** According to Srila Baladeva Vidyabhushana, Arjuna now asks Krishna: “People hearing this are going to want to give up these qualities. What can they do to accomplish this?” Krishna answers this question, and in this way presents us with our own choice either adopt demonic life and become degraded or reject it and obtain the supreme destination.

Texts 16.21* – 16.22
Three gates to hell


COMMON THEME: How does one become demoniac and get cast into hellish life (as mentioned in Texts 16.19 – 16.20)

- ❖ **There are 3 gates to hell** – Lust, anger and greed
- ❖ Why one should give up these 3 gates:
 - Because they lead to degradation of the soul
 - By controlling these qualities one escapes demoniac life and attains happiness
- ❖ Actions of one who escapes the 3 gates: He performs acts conducive to self-realization and attains supreme destination (16.22)

 **PLEASE NOTE:** Text 16.21 mentions the ‘three gates to hell’ and Text 16.4 mentions the ‘royal road to hell’

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 16.21 – 16.22

- (a) **These verses describe the beginning of demoniac life** – All these demoniac qualities begin with lust, anger and greed (3 gates to hell)
- (b) **Extreme danger from these gates**
 - They can kill the self to such an extent that there will be no possibility from this material entanglement
 - Thus they lead to degradation of soul
- (c) **Basis of whole method and prescription of Vedic literature**
 - The entire method is based on giving up lust and anger
 - The more one gives up, the more his existence becomes pure
 - Then he can follow all the rules and regulations and gradually rise to spiritual realization
 - Thus one can rise to the platform of Krishna Consciousness
- (d) **How this Vedic system is practically instituted** – In the form of *Varnasrama* duties, which help in gradual elevation to the highest platform of spiritual realization and liberation

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 16.22 & 16.23:** Krishna will describe how one can avoid being controlled by these tendencies – ‘through acting on injunctions of sastras’ – rather than one’s conditioned impulses

Texts 16.23 – 16.24

COMMON THEME: These two verses establish the importance of sastric injunctions

- ❖ **Need to follow sastras** (16.24) – To control and regulate these demoniac qualities one must follow scriptural injunctions
 - For the purpose of gradual elevation
- ❖ **Result of not following sastras** (16.23) – If one disregards scriptural injunction and acts according to his own whims, there is neither perfection nor happiness nor supreme destination

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.23

- (a) **What does *sastra-viddhi* refer to** – It refers to ‘direction of sastras’ as follows:
 - Injunctions prescribed for different castes and orders for gradual spiritual elevation
 - Everyone is expected to follow these
- (b) **Purpose of scriptural rules** – Rules are meant for gradual elevation to higher perfectional stage of devotional service
 - Apply the knowledge – One may theoretically know all these things, but if one does not apply them then he is known as the lowest of mankind
 - Know the *tattva* of the Lord – Even if one follows the rules and regulations but does not come to the understanding of Supreme Lord then all his knowledge is spoiled
 - Serve the Lord – Even if he accepts the existence of God, if he does not engage himself in the service of the Lord, his attempts are spoiled
- (c) **Meaning of ‘*Kama-kartah*’** – defines “acting whimsically”
 - One who knowingly violates the rule, acts in lust
- (d) **Destination of “whimsical acts”**
 - Condemned by the Supreme Lord
 - Cannot have the perfection which is meant for the human life
 - Importance of rules in Human Life – Rules and regulations are meant to purify one’s existence and attain the real stage of happiness

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 16.24

- (a) **Highest perfection of Vedic knowledge** – knowing Krishna (*Ref. 15.15*) and engaging in devotional service
- (b) **Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on how to achieve the highest perfection very easily**
- Simply chant Hare Krishna and engage in Devotional service
 - Eat the remnants of the Lord
- (c) **What status one achieves by the above process of devotional service**
- One is understood to have studied all Vedic literature and has come to the conclusion perfectly
- (d) **How to purify those not engaged in devotional service**
- Decide their prescribed duties according to Vedic injunctions – Do's and Don't
 - How to follow scriptures – follow without arguments and alterations
- (e) **Standard of Vedic Scriptures which make them unquestionable**
- Free from four defects of conditioned soul
 - Therefore rules are accepted without alteration by all great saints, acaryas, great souls
- (f) **Aversion to the principles of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the greatest offense of human life**
- Cause of all falldowns in human society
 - Cause of Maya giving us miseries
- (g) **Principles of scriptures are a must to achieve perfectional stage**
- Both Impersonalists and personalists lead lives according to Vedic principles
 - Who is fortunate – one who actually understands the purport of the sastras
- (h) **Some of defects of human society which cause demoniac life**
- Those in passion and ignorance deride the scriptures, holy man and proper understanding of Supreme Personality of Godhead
 - In spite of hearing the glories of devotional service, they are not attracted, but they manufacture their own way of elevation
- (i) **How to elevate and why to elevate**
- One has to rise at least to the mode of goodness before the path to understanding the Supreme Lord can be opened
 - One can elevate to a higher stage by the guidance of proper and bona-fide spiritual master

❧ END OF CHAPTER 16 ❧

CHAPTER 16 Appendix

Selected Texts extracted from "Surrender unto Me"

Text 16.5

Even one with a demoniac nature can change his qualities in favorable association, because one's qualities develop according to one's association. By associating with those overwhelmed by lust, anger and greed, we become lusty, angry and greedy. Then again, we can develop perfect qualities by associating with the perfect: guru, sādhu and śāstra.

In Melbourne, during his 1975 visit, Śrīla Prabhupāda was asked, "How can I become sincere?"

His answer: "How can you become a drunkard? If you want to become a drunkard, you associate with drunkards. If you want to become sincere, associate with these devotees. They are sincere."

16.7: Even if a demon propounds a philosophy, its value is compared to the preaching of the vulture and the jackal. Once, a boy died, and his relatives, lamenting with great emotion, gathered around the body in preparation for the funeral ceremony. Suddenly a jackal appeared, and with sweet words, began to glorify the affection which those present felt for the boy. He also began to speak of the boy's wonderful qualities and then requested those present to spend the precious hours until sunset (before which anybody should be cremated) bathed in sweet remembrances of the boy. They could return in the morning to burn the body, he said.

Meanwhile, a vulture, after eyeing the situation from above, swooped down. He immediately began philosophically refuting the jackal's words. The vulture explained that the soul, the actual loved one within the body, had already departed, and that lamenting for a dead body was simply sentimental and foolish. The vulture then recommended that all present should become philosophically fixed in the difference between body and soul, and should leave without further lamentation. In this way the vulture, who would feast on the body if the relatives left, spoke to defeat the jackal's argument. The jackal, being a creature of the night, planned to devour the body in the dark.

Regardless of the specific words spoken, the vulture, the jackal and the demoniac speak philosophy only to achieve their selfish ends.

Text 16.20

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments:

Arjuna may ask, "But, after many lifetimes, they should eventually receive Your mercy, by which they will be freed from their demoniac births."

Lord Kṛṣṇa answers: "These foolish persons take birth in demoniac forms of life birth after birth. Failing to achieve Me, they descend to lower forms of life, even taking birth as dogs."

In the phrase "failing to achieve Me," the word eva, "certainly," indicates: "There is no possibility of My mercy falling upon them. It is even difficult for them to achieve a good form of life that would be a prerequisite to obtaining Me."

The following question can then be raised: "But the Supreme Lord automatically has His every desire fulfilled. He can make even the unqualified qualified."

The answer is: "Yes, He could, if He had such a desire. But actually He does not have even the seed of that desire. Thus the author of the Vedānta-sūtra has described the Lord's partiality in the sūtra, vaiṣaṃyā-

nairghṇyena: the Supreme seems to be unfair because of His partiality to some and His enmity toward others.”

Text 16.21

Kṛṣṇa orders every sane person to give up lust, anger and greed. Those qualities are so vicious that even one possessing a divine nature should fear them. For a man, a woman personifies kāma, lust, because she is able to gratify all his sense desires. When kāma is unsatisfied, krodha, anger, is born. Anger is very difficult to control.

Krodha appears only when our desires are checked, but what if we are able to satisfy our desires without hindrance? Do we then become peaceful? No. We are filled with lobha, greed. Greed gives birth to moha, illusion, and loss of discrimination. Next comes mada, the intoxication of pride. The mixture of these five, envy, matsara, is able to manifest fully. Thus all these demoniac qualities are rooted in lust.