

CHAPTER 18

CONCLUSION — THE PERFECTION OF RENUNCIATION

Connection between Chapter 17 and Chapter 18

- ❖ To emphasize the goal of surrender to Krishna, the essence of previous chapters is taught in the final chapter
- ❖ Krishna begins His summary by reiterating His prescription that Arjuna should renounce the fruit of work, not work itself; Thus Krishna reviews that “dutiful, detached work brings no reaction”

BREAKDOWN OF CHAPTER 18

SECTION I (18.1 – 18.12) — SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 1 – 6: KARMA SECTION

- A true *sannyasi* does not renounce his activities, but is detached from their fruits
- Krishna concludes that renounced order of life (*sannyasa*) and renunciation of the fruits of action (*tyaga*) are the same.
- Work performed in this way is renunciation in the mode of goodness

SECTION II (18.13 – 18.18) — SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 13 – 17: JNANA SECTION

- Krishna cites Vedanta and analyzes activities as comprised of five factors; this is to help us perform activities without becoming bound
- Most prominent of these factors is the Supersoul
- Acting under the Supersoul’s direction, one is unaffected by reactions to his actions

SUMMARY OF THE YOGA LADDER (SECTION III – SECTION VIII)

KARMA

SECTION III (18.19 – 18.40) — THE MODES CONTROL ALL ACTIVITIES

- One’s work according to the five factors mentioned above is dictated by the three modes of material nature
- This includes:
 - One’s knowledge (19-22)
 - One’s performance of action (27-28)
 - One’s determination(33-35)
 - One’s action (23-26)
 - One’s understandings (29-32)
 - One’s happiness (36-39)
- All activities within the universe are thus controlled by the three modes

SAKAMA TO NISKAMA KARMA YOGA

SECTION IV (18.41 – 18.48) — FREEDOM FROM REACTION BY OCCUPATIONAL WORK

- All work is controlled by the modes, yet one can become free from the reactions of work by acting as brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya or sudra in Niskama karma yoga while worshipping the Lord through that work

FROM NISKAMA THROUGH LIBERATION TO DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

SECTION V (18.49 – 18.55) — CONFIDENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: FROM REACTION-FREE WORK THROUGH JNANA-YOGA TO BRAHMAN PLATFORM & PURE DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

- One practicing niskama karma yoga, detached work, attains goodness and the knowledge that he is not his body
- He finally attains the Brahman platform
- By serving Krishna on this platform, with devotion, one reaches the kingdom of God

SECTION VI (18.56 – 18.60) — WORKING IN PURE DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

- One on the platform of devotion should work under the order of Lord, fully depending on Him and being fully conscious of Him
- One will thus be free from the control of the modes of material nature

SECTION VII (18.61 – 18.63) — MORE CONFIDENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: SURRENDER TO SUPERSOUL

- More confidential knowledge than the knowledge that one is spirit soul is knowledge that one should surrender to the Supersoul

SECTION VIII (18.64 – 18.66) — THE MOST CONFIDENTIAL KNOWLEDGE OF ALL: BECOME A PURE DEVOTEE OF KRISHNA

- Always think of Krishna, become Krishna's devotee, worship Krishna, offer all homage unto Krishna and thus come to Krishna.
- Surrender to Krishna, do not fear sinful reactions

SECTION IX (18.67 – 18.71) — PREACHING AND STUDYING THE BHAGAVA-GITA

- One who explains this knowledge of Bhagavad Gita to austere, nonenvious devotees, pure devotional service is guaranteed
- Those who study *Bhagavad-gita*, worship Krishna with their intelligence, and faithful and nonenvious hearers become free from sinful action

SECTION X (18.72 – 18.73) — ARJUNA IS FIRMLY FIXED

- After hearing *Bhagavad-gita*, Arjuna is fixed and determined to act according to Krishna's instructions

SECTION XI (18.74 – 18.78) — SANJAYA'S PREDICTIONS

- Sanjaya ecstatically thinks of the wondrous form of Krishna
- Predicts victory for Arjuna, the supreme archer, and Krishna, the master of all mystics

SECTION I (18.1 – 18.12) SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 1 – 6: KARMA SECTION

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION I

Acting with detachment is true renunciation and brings freedom from reaction

Text 18.1*

THEME: Arjuna asks Krishna to distinguish between *Tyaga* and *Sannyasa* (What is the goal of renunciation and of the renounced order of life? Should one work while remaining detached from the fruit of work (*niskama-karma*) or should one renounce activities to perform *jnana-yoga*?)



PLEASE NOTE: For an exact answer to the question asked by Arjuna in Text 18.1, Please refer to the Common Theme of Text 18.7 – 18.9 and Text 18.12

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.1

- (a) **Main emphasis of every chapter in the *Bhagavad-gita*** – “Devotional service unto Supreme Personality of Godhead is the ultimate goal of life”
- First six chapters conclude in Text 6.47 – “*yoginam api...*” – *Bhakti-yoga* is the best
 - Middle six chapters describe pure devotional service and its nature and activity
 - Last six chapters:
 - Recommend – “Do all acts in conjunction with the Lord” as indicated by “*Om tat sat*” which indicates Vishnu, the Supreme Person (*Bg.* Chapter 17)
 - Establishes – ‘Devotional service is the ultimate purpose of life’ by citing past Acharyas, the *Brahma-sutra* and *Vedanta-sutra*; and thus refutes Impersonalists who claim monopoly on *Vedanta-sutra*
 - Chapter 13 – 17 establishes devotional service on the authority of *Vedanta-sutra* (e.g. Chapter 13 and Chapter 15)
 - Especially *Bg.* 15.5 says *Vedanta-sutra* is meant for understanding devotional service
 - Chapter 18 summarizes the same point, ‘Devotional service as the most confidential knowledge’
- (b) **Purpose of life** (As per Chapter 2 and Chapter 18) – Renunciation and attainment of transcendental position above the three modes
- (c) **Meaning of ‘Hrsikeshha’** – Master of all senses
- One who helps to attain mental serenity
 - Arjuna uses this name because he wants to know everything clearly so that he can be equipoised
- (d) **Meaning of ‘Kesi-nisudana’** – Killer of Kesi demon and now He is expected to kill the doubts which are compared to demons

Texts 18.2

THEME: Krishna begins by citing great philosophers who say:

- ❖ **'Tyaga'** – To renounce the results of all activities
- ❖ **'Sannyasa'** – To renounce the activities that are based on material desire; which implies to renounce fruits and also the work itself

Texts 18.3

THEME: There are different opinions in abandoning activities

- ❖ Some say all fruitive activity is faulty
- ❖ Others maintain that acts of sacrifice, charity and penance should never be abandoned

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 18.2 – 18.3

(a) **Instruction of *Bhagavad-gita* (18.2)**

- Activities for advanced spiritual activities are not to be given up
 - e.g. Sacrifices for purification of one's heart
- But performance of activities for results has to be given up
 - e.g. Sacrifices to attain a good son or elevation to higher planets

(b) **Example of subjects of contention in Vedic literatures**

- e.g. Animal killing in sacrifice is a subject of contention among the sages

Text 18.4

THEME: But Krishna's opinion is that there are three kinds of renunciation based on the three modes

- ❖ Lord's opinion stands above all Vedas. After all, the Vedas are different laws given by God (purport)
- ❖ His words should be taken as final (purport)

Text 18.5*

THEME: Krishna's opinion is presented – "Religious duties as opposed to worldly duties purify the heart"

- ❖ **Sacrifice, Charity and Penance** should never be given up – they purify even the great souls

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.5

(a) **Suggestion to yogis / advanced souls / *sannyasis*** – They must perform acts for advancement of human society

(b) **Example of such purificatory processes** – Marriage ceremony (*Vivaha-yajna*)

- Purpose: To regulate the human mind so that it becomes peaceful for spiritual advancement
- Attitude of sannyasi: Should never discourage one in the lower stages of life e.g. a young man to practice this *yajna*

(c) **Another example is charity** – It is for purification of heart, especially if it is given to suitable persons, it leads to advanced spiritual life

Text 18.6

THEME: Attitude while performing sacrifice, charity and penance:

- ❖ Without attachment or any expectation of result
 - *Example of what should be given up* – All sacrifices meant for material advancement should be given up (purport)
- ❖ Only as a matter of duty for the purpose of purification of one’s existence
 - *Example of what should be encouraged* – Everything that leads to Krishna consciousness must be encouraged (purport)
 - *Ref. SB 1.2.6: “sa vai pumsam...”* – Highest criteria of religion is anything which leads to devotional service

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXTS 18.5 & 18.6

Regardless of his personal level of advancement, the spiritualist always encourage the following of purificatory practices

Texts 18.7 – 18.9

COMMON THEME: Three types of renunciation

- ❖ In Text 18.7, Krishna uses and equates the words *tyaga (parityaga)* and *sannyasa*, which indicates His answer to the question, “Are *sannyasa* and *tyaga* the same or different?” Though some think they are different, Krishna’s opinion is that the renounced order of life and renunciation of the fruits of work are, in fact, exactly the same. Indeed, Srila Prabhupada translates both words here as “renunciation.”



PLEASE NOTE: Purport points for Texts 18.7 – 18.9 are included under the respective text themes. Therefore there are no separate ‘Focus of Learning’ sections for these verse

Text 18.7

THEME: Renunciation in the mode of ignorance

- ❖ Prescribed duties should never be renounced
- ❖ Giving up prescribed duties because of illusion is in the mode of ignorance
- ❖ **Examples** – Cooking and marriage ceremony
 - Activities which promotes one to spiritual activity are recommended e.g. cooking and offering to the Lord; For a sannyasi, cooking for oneself is prohibited, but cooking for Supreme Lord is not prohibited
 - Sannyasi may perform marriage ceremony for his disciple to help him advance in Krishna consciousness

Text 18.8

THEME: Renunciation in the mode of passion

- ❖ Giving up prescribed duties as troublesome or out of fear of bodily discomfort
- ❖ **Examples:**
 - In Krishna consciousness, giving up earning money out of fear that it is fruitive activity is not recommended, one should engage his money in Krishna consciousness
 - Rising early in the morning may be troublesome
- ❖ Result of passionate work is always miserable – One does not elevate in renunciation

Text 18.9

THEME: Renunciation in the mode of goodness

- ❖ Performing prescribed duty because it is ought to be done
- ❖ Renouncing all material associations and all attachment to the fruit
 - **Example:** A man working in Krishna consciousness in a factory, does not associate himself with the work of the factory nor with the workers of the factory – Simply works for Krishna and gives the result to Krishna; thus situated on transcendental platform

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.9 & 18.10:**
Text 18.10 describes the **symptoms of proper renunciation**

Text 18.10

THEME: Defines “Intelligent renouncer”

- ❖ One who is in the mode of goodness
- ❖ Neither hateful of inauspicious work nor attached to auspicious work, which implies:
 - One does not hate anyone or anything that troubles his body
 - Works in proper place at proper time
 - Without fearing the troublesome effects
- ❖ Has no doubts about work

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.10 & 18.11:**
Can’t one just renounce all work, both the auspicious and inauspicious? This is answered in Text 18.11

Text 18.11

THEME: Defines ‘true renunciation’ and declares it impossible to give up all activities completely

- ❖ ‘True renunciation’ – To perform only religious duties, and without attachment to their fruits
 - e.g. Many members of ISKCON work very hard in their office and whatever they earn they give to the society. Such highly elevated souls are actual sannyasis
- ❖ It is impossible for an embodied being to give up all activities
 - Prescribed duties should never be renounced

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.11 & 18.12** This verse answers the question “What about the reaction which comes from the work as prescribed in Texts 18.9 – 18.11”

Text 18.12

THEME: Although various good and bad reactions result from religious duties, one who works without desires for these fruits is not subject to them. He becomes liberated from all the threefold reactions – desirable, undesirable and mixed

- ❖ It explains the result achieved after death, by both attached and the detached
 - Attached – Has to suffer or enjoy the threefold reactions of material existence
 - Detached – Does not have to suffer or enjoy the results of the threefold reactions
- ❖ Krishna conscious person is always liberated
 - Because a person in Krishna consciousness is acting in knowledge of relationship with Krishna
 - Therefore he does not have to suffer or enjoy the results of his acts after death
- ❖ We should note that in this verse Krishna has again used both words, *sannyasa* and *tyaga*, to emphasize that they are synonymous. Thus Krishna has again established that the superior method of becoming free from the reactions to work is *niskama-karma*—renouncing the fruits of work, not the work itself.

SECTION II (18.13 – 18.18) SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 13 – 17: JNANA SECTION

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION II

Because the Supreme Lord is the ultimate cause, therefore one who is acting in Krishna consciousness under the direction of Supersoul within the heart is:

- Naturally not bound by any activity
- Those in complete Krishna consciousness are not ultimately responsible for their actions

Texts 18.13 – 18.14*

COMMON THEME: Five causes of action – To more precisely explain the consciousness of one not bound by fruits of his action, Krishna refers to *Vedanta Sutra*.

- ❖ Krishna describes five factors as the responsible causes for accomplishment of any kind of action (right or wrong)

Material Causes:

1. **'Adhistaan'** – Place of action (Body)
2. **'Karta'** – The doer (That is the consciousness reflected in false ego)
 - ❖ Refers to the soul because he is acting to bring about the results of his activity
 - ❖ *Supporting Ref. For soul as the knower and doer*
 - *Prasna Upanishad*
 - *Vedanta Sutra*
3. **'Karana'** – Senses (Instruments of action)
4. **'Cesta'** – Endeavour (Effort, exerted by life airs to move the body)

Ultimate cause:

5. **'Daivam'** – Super-cause (All our activities depend on the will of the Supersoul)

Text 18.15

THEME: These five co-operatively perform every action, both religious (right) and irreligious (wrong) performed by either body, mind or speech

- ❖ **Right work** – Work done in terms of prescribed scriptural directions
- ❖ **Wrong work** – Work done against principles of scriptural injunctions

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.15 & 18.16:** Krishna categorizes action into three: that performed with the body, mind or words. Action in all three categories can be performed either according to sastric injunctions or against them. In either case, however, it is the Supersoul who ultimately sanctions all action. This is confirmed as follows.

Text 18.16

THEME: Non-intelligent seer defined

- ❖ Does not consider the final doer, the Supreme Lord
- ❖ It is not intelligent to consider oneself as independent doer of one's actions

Text 18.17

THEME: Intelligent seer defined (In contrast with foolish, non-intelligent seer of Text 18.16)

- ❖ One who does not foolishly think himself as the sole cause, does not get enamored by the fruits
- ❖ Not motivated by false ego
- ❖ Intelligence is not entangled

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.17

- (a) **Who is perfect at doing everything and is never in illusion** – One who knows the instruments of work, himself as the worker and the Supreme Lord as the supreme sanctioner is perfect in doing everything
- (b) **'Personal activity' and 'Responsibility'** arise from false ego and godlessness, or a lack of Krishna consciousness
- (c) **Action in Krishna consciousness under Supersoul's direction is non-reactive**
 - *Analogy: e.g. Soldier killing under the command of a superior officer*

Text 18.18*

THEME: Three motivators and three constituents of action

- ❖ Action is motivated by knower knowing the known, in other words activity is motivated by a person (knower) perceiving a desirable object/goal. Being thus inspired, action is carried out by senses with effort (work), exerted by *Karta* (doer)
- ❖ Thus explains
 - Three motivators of action – Knowledge, object of knowledge and the Knower
 - Three Constituents of action – Senses, work and the doer

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.18 – Few concepts explained

- (a) **Inspiration** – Before one acts, there is some impetus which is called inspiration
- (b) **Work** – Any solution arrived at before work is actualized is a subtle form of work. Then work takes the form of action
- (c) **Impetus** – First one has to undergo the psychological process of thinking, feeling and willing and that is called impetus
- (d) **Guru or Sastra** – Inspiration to work is the same if it comes from scripture or from instruction of spiritual master
- (e) **Accumulation of work** – That is the sum total of all constituents of an activity

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.18 & 18.19:** By elaborating on the motives and constituents of action, Krishna, here in Text 18.18, finishes His summary of *jnana*. In pursuing that topic, Krishna will again describe the effects of the three modes of nature (as He did in Chapters Fourteen and Seventeen) in the next series of verses, Texts 18.19–18.40. He begins by confirming that even the motivators of action and the constituents of action are under the dictates of the modes of nature. He first speaks of knowledge (one of the motivators), action (one of the constituents) and the performer of action (another of the constituents)

SECTION III (18.19 – 18.40) THE MODES CONTROL ALL ACTIVITIES

Text 18.19

THEME: Three kinds of knowledge, action and performer are explained henceforth



PLEASE NOTE: Purport points for Texts 18.20 – 18.39 are included under the respective text themes. Therefore there are no separate 'Focus of Learning' sections for these verses

Texts 18.20

THEME: Knowledge in goodness

- ❖ That knowledge by which that undivided spiritual nature is seen in all the living entities, though they are divided into innumerable forms

Texts 18.21

THEME: Knowledge in passion

- ❖ That knowledge by which one sees in every different body there is different type of living entity. *e.g.*
 - The concept that the material body is the living entity and with the destruction of the body, consciousness is also destroyed
 - Cause of different bodies – They say bodies differ from one another because of development of different types of consciousness
 - No separate soul – Body itself is the soul. Consciousness is temporary

Texts 18.22

THEME: Knowledge in ignorance

- ❖ That knowledge by which one is attached to one type of work as all in all, without knowledge of the truth and which is very meager. *e.g.*
 - Knowledge of common man
 - Knowledge limited to body, because not developed through authorities or scriptural injunctions
 - For him God is money and knowledge implies satisfaction of bodily demands
 - No connection with Absolute Truth
 - Like knowledge of ordinary animals

Texts 18.23

THEME: Action in the mode of goodness

- ❖ Action which is:
 - Regulated by *sastra*
 - Performed without attachment, without love or hatred
 - Without fruitive desires
 - In his purport to Text 18.23, Srila Prabhupada closely equates the mode of goodness with Krishna consciousness

Texts 18.24

THEME: Action in the mode of passion

- ❖ Action with great effort by one seeking to gratify his desires
- ❖ Enacted from a sense of false ego

Texts 18.25

THEME: Action in the mode of ignorance

- ❖ Action performed in illusion
- ❖ In disregard of scriptural injunction
- ❖ Without concern for future bondage
- ❖ Without concern for violence or the distress to others

Texts 18.26

THEME: Worker in goodness

- ❖ Performs his duty without association with the modes of material nature and without false ego
- ❖ With great determination and enthusiasm
- ❖ Without wavering in success or failure
- ❖ In his purport to Text 18.26, Srila Prabhupada again equates the mode of goodness with Krishna consciousness

Texts 18.27

THEME: Worker in passion

- ❖ Attached to work and fruits of work, desiring to enjoy those fruits
- ❖ Who is greedy
- ❖ Always envious, impure and moved by joy and sorrow
 - *e.g.* Too much attached to a certain kind of work or result because too much attached for materialism or hearth and home, wife and children
 - Has no desire for higher elevation in life

Texts 18.28

THEME: Worker in ignorance

- ❖ Works against the injunctions of scriptures
- ❖ Materialistic
- ❖ Obstinate
- ❖ Cheating and expert in insulting others
- ❖ Lazy, always morose and procrastinating (Anything which can be done in an hour, they drag on for years)

Text 18.29

THEME: Three kinds of understanding and determination are explained henceforth

- ❖ One who is not Krishna conscious is forced to act by the modes of material nature. And as in our knowledge and work, so also in our understanding and determination

Text 18.30

THEME: Understanding in goodness

- ❖ One knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done
- ❖ What is to be feared and what is not to be feared
- ❖ What is binding and what is liberating
 - Performing actions in terms of scriptural directions is called "*pravrtti*"
 - Not doing such actions leads to entanglement

Text 18.31

THEME: Understanding in passion

- ❖ That which cannot distinguish between religion and irreligion
- ❖ Between action that should be done and action that should not be done

Text 18.32

THEME: Understanding in ignorance

- ❖ Considers irreligion to be religion and religion to be irreligion. *e.g.*
 - Considers a great soul to be a common man and a common man to be a great soul
 - Truth to be untruth and untruth to be truth
- ❖ Under the spell of illusion and darkness
- ❖ Strives always in the wrong direction

Text 18.33

THEME: Determination in goodness

- ❖ Determination which is unbreakable
- ❖ Sustained with steadfastness by yoga practice
- ❖ Controls the activities of the mind, life and senses
 - Significance of the word “*avyabhicarinya*” – It indicates that persons who are engaged in Krishna consciousness are never deviated by any other activity

Text 18.34

THEME: Determination in passion

- ❖ One holds fast to fruitive results in religion, economic development and sense gratification

Text 18.35

THEME: Determination in ignorance

- ❖ One cannot go beyond dreaming
 - Here dreaming means too much sleep and always dreaming of lording over material world
 - **Dreaming is natural:** Dreaming is always present either in goodness, passion and ignorance
- ❖ Cannot go beyond fearfulness, lamentation, moroseness and illusion

Text 18.36

THEME: Happiness in three modes is described in the next 3 verses

- ❖ Conditioned soul is trying to enjoy material happiness again and again
 - *Analogy:* Chewing the chewed
- ❖ How to get relief from such entanglement (repetitive so-called happiness)
 - Only by association of great souls
 - When awakened to real Krishna consciousness

Text 18.37

THEME: Happiness in goodness

- ❖ Like poison in the beginning and nectar in the end
 - Many rules and regulations to control mind and senses may appear bitter like poison
 - Successful transcendental realisation is like nectar
- ❖ Awakens one to self-realisation

Text 18.38

THEME: Happiness in passion

- ❖ Derived from contact of senses with the sense objects
- ❖ Like nectar at first but poison at the end
 - *e.g.* Young woman and young man meet and senses drive one to see, touch and have sexual intercourse (like nectar) – at the end there may be separation, divorce, lamentation etc. (like poison)

Text 18.39

THEME: Happiness in ignorance

- ❖ Blind to self realisation
- ❖ Delusion from beginning to end
- ❖ Arise from sleep, laziness, illusion
 - **Illusion** – No idea how to act and how not to act
- ❖ Difference between passion and ignorance – In the mode of passion there might be some kind of ephemeral happiness in the beginning and at the end distress, but for one in ignorance there is only distress both in the beginning and at the end

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.39 & 18.40:** Krishna next offers a one-verse restatement of the verses He has just spoken, and thus He summarizes the influence of the modes of nature.

Text 18.40*

THEME: No-one, either here or among the demigods, is freed from these three modes

SECTION IV (18.41 – 18.48)
FREEDOM FROM REACTION BY OCCUPATIONAL WORK:
PURIFICATION THROUGH KARMA YOGA

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION IV

All work is controlled by the modes; yet one can become free from the reactions of work by acting as *brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya* or *sudra* in *Niskama-karma-yoga*, while worshipping the Lord via that work

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION III & SECTION IV:** After Section III, one may ask the question that “If all beings within the material world are conditioned by the modes, how does one get out?” In response to such a question, the Lord describes that *Varnasrama* system. In this system, one acts according to his inherited modes of nature, but does so in regulated service to the Lord. As one progresses in dutiful, detached work, he is elevated through the modes, until he is qualified to give up work and exclusively cultivate knowledge

Texts 18.41 – 18.44

COMMON THEME: Qualities of four *varnas* (Thus indicating to utilize your *karmic* propensities in the dutiful service of the Lord)

- ❖ **Brahmanas** (18.42): Nine qualities – Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom and religiousness
- ❖ **Ksatriyas** (18.43): Seven qualities – Heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity and leadership
- ❖ **Vaisyas** (18.44): Three qualities – Farming, cow-protection and business
- ❖ **Sudras** (18.44): One qualities – Labor and service to others

Texts 18.45 – 18.48

COMMON THEME: Purification through *karma-yoga*

Text 18.45

THEME: Anyone can become perfect by following the duties of his work. That is explained in 18.46, which explains how one should perform his duties

Text 18.46*

THEME: One can become perfect by doing all the duties of his respective varna for the “Lord’s pleasure”

- ❖ By worship of the Lord, who is the source of all beings and who is all pervading

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.46

*Srila Prabhupada elaborates in this purport on how one’s work—although within the modes of material nature—can be practically turned into bhakti through *niskama-karma-yoga**

- (a) **Supreme Lord is the beginning of all living entities** – This is supported by the following references:
 - *Bg. 15.7* – Living entities as fragmental parts and parcels
 - *Vedanta-sutra* – “*janmady asya yatah...*”
 - *Bg. Chapter 7* – Lord is all pervading by His external and internal energies
- (b) **Result of knowing the Lord as the source** – This leads to “Worship of him”
 - Worship Supreme Lord with His energies
 - How Vaishnavas worship – Worship Lord especially with His internal energy
 - But what about external energy?
 - His external energy is a perverted reflection of internal energy
 - The external energy is a background, but the Supreme Lord by the expansion as Paramatma is situated everywhere, in all the demigods, human beings, animals etc.
 - **Therefore recommendation given:** Perform your duty to render service unto Him – Senses to be engaged in service of Hrsikesa, the master of the senses
- (c) **Reciprocation of the Lord** (*Ref. Bg. 12.7*) – Supreme Lord Himself takes charge of delivering such a devotee
 - Whatever occupation one may be engaged, if he serves the Lord, he will achieve the highest perfection

Text 18.47

THEME: As one should not take medicine prescribed to someone else, one should stick to his own prescribed duties and not try to take someone else's

- ❖ Better to engage in one's own occupation, even though imperfectly, than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly
- ❖ Result: Duties prescribed according to one's own nature are never affected by sinful reaction

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.47

- (a) **Basis of prescribing occupational duties for different *varnas***
 - Based on different modes of nature
- (b) **Example of abominable natures (due to contamination by modes) of occupational duties**
 - For a *Brahmana* – Has to kill animals in sacrifices
 - For a *Ksatriya* – Has to be violent to kill his enemies or tell lies for diplomacy
 - For a *Vaishya* – However pious he may be, sometimes he has to hide his profit to stay in business or sometimes black-marketing
 - For a *Sudra* – Serving a bad master
- (c) **How to avoid abominable nature of different kinds of work and thus purify all the defects of a particular *varna***
 - No work (Any of the four *varnas*) is abominable, if performed in the service of the Supreme Lord
 - Example of action for the satisfaction of the Lord – Arjuna fighting on the battlefield
 - No fear of degradation in such action
- (d) **Conclusion (Supporting Ref. Bg. 3.9)**
 - Everyone should be engaged according to the particular mode of nature he has acquired
 - Decide to work only to serve the Supreme cause of the Supreme Lord

Text 18.48*

THEME: One must stick to his occupational duty at any cost, even if one's own duty appears difficult or defective

- ❖ *Analogy:* Every endeavor is covered by some fault, just as fire is covered by smoke

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.48

- (a) ***Analogy of fire covered by smoke*** – Smoke does not make fire impure
 - e.g. In winter time when one takes a stone from the fire, sometimes smoke disturbs the eyes but still one makes use of the fire anyway
 - Therefore do not give up the duty due to unpleasant disturbances
 - Be determined to serve the Lord by occupational duty
- (b) **How one, in any *varna*, can become perfect in self-realisation**
 - Results of work are purified when they are connected with devotional service
 - One becomes perfect in seeing the self within and that is self-realization

SECTION V (18.49 – 18.55)
**CONFIDENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: FROM REACTION-FREE WORK THROUGH
JNANA-YOGA TO BRAHMAN PLATFORM & PURE DEVOTIONAL SERVICE
(PURIFICATION THROUGH JNANA-YOGA)**

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION V

The perfection of *jnana-yoga* is to understand the nature of the self and its relationship with Krishna, thus *bhakti* is the culmination of *jnana*

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION IV & SECTION V:** Worshiping the Lord through our work elevates us in knowledge. Krishna will now describe further steps up the yoga ladder.

Text 18.49

THEME: One who is self-controlled and completely unattached, can engage in *Jnana-yoga* and can obtain highest perfect stage of freedom from reaction

- ❖ Thus explains – ‘Who can practice renunciation and attain highest perfect stage of freedom from reaction’ (As per *Jnana-yoga*)

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.49

- (a) **Krishna conscious person is a real renunciant (*sannyasi*)**
 - Real renunciation means to think oneself part and parcel of the Supreme Lord
 - Therefore one has no rights to enjoy the results of his work
 - Results must be enjoyed by the Supreme Lord
- (b) **Krishna conscious mentality gives real satisfaction because**
 - He is actually acting for the Supreme
 - He is not attached to anything material and becomes accustomed to not taking pleasure in anything beyond the transcendental happiness of serving the Lord
 - It automatically gives freedom from all reaction without accepting renounced order
 - *Ref. Bg. 3.17 and Yoga-rudha stage*

Text 18.50

THEME: Lord proclaims to explain, how one can achieve Supreme perfectional stage, *Brahman* (Highest knowledge)

- ❖ Highest perfection of knowledge is attaining Krishna consciousness (*Explained in Texts 18.51 – 18.54*)

LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.50 & 18.51: These verses refer to a *yogi* on the path of *jnana-yoga* who has purified his consciousness through work and has thus already progressed upward from the stage of karma to the stage of *jnana*. Srila Vishvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, in his comment to Text 18.49, explains: “It being the case that all work is covered with fault, the person on the first level of *sannyasa* rejects the faulty aspects of work—namely the mentality of being the doer and the expectation of profit. Thus in due course of time, he perfects his *sadhana*. After having ascended to the level of yoga, he gives up work itself. This is the second stage of *sannyasa*, as described in this verse beginning *asakta-buddhih sarvatra*.”

Thus we can understand that a devotee who has worshiped the Lord by his work will not attain *Brahman* realization in the same way as does the *jnana-yogi*. A devotee, after being purified by detached work, attains freedom from false ego and moves forward to realize and serve the Supreme *Brahman*. The process practiced by an advanced *jnana-yogi* to elevate him further is next described.

Texts 18.51 – 18.53

COMMON THEME: One achieves supreme perfection – ‘Brahma-bhuta’ platform and ‘peacefulness’ by:

1. Controlling the mind with determination
2. Purified by intelligence
3. Giving up sense objects
4. Freedom from attachment and hatred
5. Living in a secluded place
6. Eats little and controls his body, mind and power of speech
7. Freedom from all bad qualities born of material conceptions – False ego, false strength, false pride, lust, anger and acceptance of material things and false proprietorship
8. Always in trance and detached – Thus one achieves Supreme peace
 - *Analogy for peace (Ref. Bg. 2.70)* – Rivers flowing into ocean are compared to incessant flow of desires (purport)

LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.53 & 18.54:
 Krishna next describes the *Brahma-Bhuta* platform

Text 18.54* Brahma-bhuta stage

THEME: Then he can realize Brahman and may finally achieve devotion to Krishna

- ❖ *Brahma-bhuta* stage (Three criteria):
 1. Fully joyful
 2. Never laments or desires
 3. Equally disposed towards every living entity
- ❖ Then attains pure devotional service unto Me

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.54

- (a) **Difference between ultimate realizations**
- Impersonalist – ‘*Brahma-bhuta*’ means becoming one with the Absolute
 - Personalist – ‘*Brahma-bhuta*’ means to become engaged in pure devotional service
- (b) **Pure devotional service includes ‘*Brahma-bhuta*’ stage** (Stage of liberation or oneness with the Absolute)
- Without being one with the Supreme, one cannot render service unto Him
 - In the Absolute conception there is no difference between served and servitor, yet the distinction is there in a higher spiritual sense
- (c) **Pure devotional service fulfils all criteria of ‘*Brahma-bhuta*’ stage**
- Joyful
 - Since God is full, a living-entity in God’s service also becomes full in himself
 - He is just like a river cleansed of all dirty water
 - Has no thought other than Krishna
 - Never laments or desires
 - Does not lament for any material loss or gain because he is full in the service of the Lord
 - No desire for material enjoyment because he knows his own constitution as fragmental part and parcel and an eternal servant of the Lord
 - Equally disposed towards every living entity
 - Does not see someone as higher or lower
 - Higher and lower positions are ephemeral
 - Stone and gold are of equal value
- (d) **Attitude of pure devotee towards other positions**
- Idea of becoming one with the Supreme *Brahman* and annihilating one’s individuality – Hellish
 - Idea of attaining heavenly kingdom – Phantasmagoria
 - Senses are like serpents whose teeth are broken
 - The highest personality in this material universe is no more significant than an ant
 - For a devotee the entire world is as good as Vaikuntha or spiritual sky
- (e) **How one achieves such a stage** – by the mercy of Lord Chaitanya, who preached pure devotional service

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.54 & 18.55:**
 What happens after attaining devotion?

Text 18.55*

THEME: Krishna proclaims: “Pure *Bhakti-yoga* is the only way” to understand Krishna and enter His abode

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.55

(a) Eligibility to understand Absolute Truth

- Krishna and His plenary portions cannot be understood – By mental speculation or by non-devotees
- Only way to know Krishna
 - Pure devotional service
 - Under the guidance of a pure devotee
- Without devotional service, Absolute Truth is always hidden – *Ref. Bg. 7.25*
 - Erudite scholarship or mental speculation or university degrees fail to reveal Absolute Truth

(b) Eligibility to enter lord’s abode

- One who is fully conversant with the science of Krishna

(c) Refutation of Mayavada – Becoming Brahman does not mean losing identity

- Devotional service means God, devotee, the process of devotional service
- Such knowledge is never vanquished even after liberation; same distinction is maintained
- Liberation involves getting free from material concept of life, but the individuality continues
- Importance of word “**Visate**” – “**Enters into Me**”
 - It implies to enter into the abode of the Lord in one’s individuality, to render service
 - *Analogy:* Green bird enters a green tree, not to become one, but to enjoy the fruits of the tree
 - *Analogy:* Impersonalists give the example of a river flowing into the ocean and happiness of merging, but personalists keep his personal individuality like an aquatic in the ocean

(d) How one’s devotional service begins after achieving brahma bhuta stage

- By hearing from the Lord
- Effect of hearing
 - *Brahma-bhuta* stage develops
 - Material contamination decreases
 - One can understand the Supreme Lord

(e) Other references on “Devotional service continues after liberation”

- *Ref. Vedanta Sutra 4.1.12*
- Srimad Bhagavatam defines “Real devotional liberation” as reinstatement of living entity in one’s own constitution position as fragmental part and parcel, and eternal servant of the Lord.

SECTION VI (18.56 – 18.60) WORKING IN PURE DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION VI

One must act in devotion, following Krishna's dictation:
If one does not, one will undoubtedly act in illusion

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION V & SECTION VI:** Krishna first spoke about elevation through karma and has just spoken about how a jnana-yogi may advance to the highest perfection. Beginning here, and for the next eleven verses (18.56 – 18.66), Krishna will speak directly about *bhakti*.

Text 18.56

Lord's protection described

THEME: "I personally protect My devotee from all reactions and lead him directly to My Supreme abode"

- ❖ Though engaged in all kinds of activities, My pure devotee is always under My protection and
- ❖ He reaches the eternal abode by My grace



PLEASE NOTE:

Similar themes are mentioned in Texts 8.14, 9.30 – 9.31, 12.7

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.56

- (a) **Significance of 'Mad-vyapasrayah'** – Means under the protection of the Lord
 - How protection comes – A pure devotee acts under the direction of Supreme Lord or His representative
- (b) **Nature or quality of service**
 - No time limitation for a pure devotee
 - Always, 24 hours engaged in the service of the Lord
 - Nature of the abode – Unchangeable eternal, imperishable and full of knowledge

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.56 & 18.57:**
What is the practical application of Krishna's instructions for Arjuna?

Text 18.57

Devotees mood of dependence described

THEME: Therefore perform your duties in full dependence on My protection

- ❖ In all activities just depend on Me
- ❖ Work always under My protection and be fully conscious of Me

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.57

- (a) **Mood of servant**
- Act fully under the direction of Supreme Lord
 - No individual independence
 - Unaffected by profit and loss – Acts only on behalf of the master
 - Discharges his duty faithfully
- (b) **How to exhibit that mood towards Krishna in His absence**
- Act according to *Bhagavad-gita* (Krishna's direction)
 - Act under guidance of Krishna's representative
- (c) **Significance of 'Mat-parah'** – One has no goal save and except acting to satisfy Krishna
- (d) **Misuse of "Concept of devotional service"** – Doing something whimsical and offering the results to Krishna
- Act only according to order to Krishna which comes through disciplic succession
 - Prime duty of life – Spiritual master's order

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.57 & 18.58:**
What will be the result of following Krishna's instructions? And of not following?

Text 18.58

THEME: If you work as per Text 18.57, you will pass all obstacles; otherwise you will be bound

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.58

- (a) **Krishna consciousness is free from all anxieties**
- Not unduly anxious about executing the duties of his existence
 - Krishna becomes his friend and looks after his comfort
- (b) **Krishna conscious person is liberated and free to act**
- Because everything is prompted by Krishna from within and confirmed by spiritual master
 - Otherwise conditioned soul is always under strict material laws

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.58 & 18.59:** What does Krishna mean when He states that one acting through false ego, not hearing Him, will be lost?

Text 18.59*

THEME: Your duty is to fight and even if you try to abandon, the modes will force you to do it

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.59

- (a) **Examples of acting according to nature** – Arjuna as a *ksatriya* has natural duty to fight
- (b) **Refusal to fight was under false ego** – because he was fearing that by killing his relatives he would incur sinful reactions
- (c) **Forgetfulness of conditioned soul** – Forget the relationship with Supreme Personality of Godhead and considering himself as the master of his actions
- (d) **Conclusion** – Unhesitatingly execute the order of Supreme Personality of Godhead – That will keep one safe under all circumstances

Text 18.60

THEME: “If you do not follow My orders, you will follow orders of lower nature like puppet”

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.60

- (a) **Result of following the Lord:**
 - Anyone who voluntarily engages himself under the direction of the Supreme Lord becomes glorious
 - Anyone who refuses to act so – He gets compelled to act by the modes

SECTION VII (18.61 – 18.63)
MORE CONFIDENTIAL KNOWLEDGE:
SURRENDER TO THE SUPERSOUL

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION VII

Perfection is available by focusing on the instructions of the Supersoul in the heart

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION VI & SECTION VII:** Ultimately, who is controlling illusion and rotating everyone through births and deaths on the wheel of *samsara* (material existence)?

Text 18.61

THEME: Supreme Lord is the master and puppeteer

- ❖ He is situated in everyone’s heart
- ❖ Directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated on a machine (made of material energy)

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.61

- (a) **This verse points out limited discretion of Arjuna**
- Arjuna is not the supreme knower
 - Supreme Personality of Godhead is directing us according to our past deeds
 - Living entity in one body has to work under the spell of modes
 - *Analogy*: Person seated in a high speed motor car goes faster than one in a slower car, though the drivers may be the same
- (b) **Conclusion: Our duty is to surrender** because living entity is not independent and always under the Lord's control

Text 18.62*

THEME: Therefore surrender unto Him utterly

- ❖ **Result** – By His grace you will attain transcendental peace and the supreme and eternal abode

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.62

- (a) **Solution to relief of all miseries and achieving supreme abode** – Surrender unto the Supreme Godhead situated in everyone's heart
- (b) **Transcendental world** – *Ref. Vedic literatures*
- *"Paramam padam"* – Specifically refers to the eternal abode / spiritual sky / Vaikuntha
- (c) **Surrender to Supersoul implies surrender to Krishna**
- *Supporting Ref. Bg. 15.15; Bg. 10.12 – 10.13*

Text 18.63

THEME: More confidential knowledge is explained in Texts 18.61 – 18.63

- ❖ Krishna gives choice to Arjuna – "Deliberate on this fully and do what you wish to do"

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.63

- (a) **Importance of words "yathecchasi tatha kuru"** – Krishna gives the choice
- Indicates that God does not interfere with the little independence of the living entity
- (b) **Bhagavad-gita explains "How to elevate one's living condition"**
- Best advice given to Arjuna in interest of all living entities – Surrender unto the Supersoul in the heart
- (c) **Best way to accept Lord's instruction**
- Before surrendering one is free to deliberate on this subject as far as the intelligence goes
 - Such instructions also come through the spiritual master

SECTION VIII (18.64 – 18.66)
THE MOST CONFIDENTIAL KNOWLEDGE OF ALL:
BECOME A PURE DEVOTEE OF KRISHNA

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION VIII

The highest realisation in transcendental knowledge is to
reestablish one's relationship with the Supreme personality of Godhead

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION VII & SECTION VIII:** In one sense, the *Bhagavad-gita* could have finished with Text 18.63. Lord Krishna has left Arjuna with the choice to accept His direction or neglect His direction. Still because of Sri Krishna's compassion for Arjuna, He speaks on, giving Arjuna deeper impetus to surrender.

Lord Krishna clearly explains the essential meaning of the *Bhagavad-gita*, one should serve Him in full conviction and not concern himself with any other form of *Dharma*. One need only serve Krishna, as Krishna undoubtedly tends to all of the needs of His surrendered devotees

Text 18.64*

THEME: Krishna will reveal the supreme instruction

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.64

- (a) **What is most confidential knowledge**
 - Confidential – Knowledge of Brahman
 - More confidential – Knowledge of Supersoul
 - Most confidential – Just surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead
- (b) **Why “man mana...” is repeated twice**, as indicated by the word “bhuyah” (It is repeated in two verses i.e. *Bg.* 9.34 and *Bg.* 18.65)
 - To stress the essence of the teachings of *Bhagavad-gita*
- (c) **Who can understand this essence** – Only by one who is actually very dear to Krishna and not by a common man
 - This knowledge is not only for Arjuna but for all living entities

Text 18.65*

Essence of *Bhagavad-gita*

THEME: Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me, offer obeisances to Me and thus you will come to Me

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.65

(a) **Lord's advice**

- Do not become official mediator – Mold your life and all daily acts in relation to Krishna
 - Become a pure devotee of Krishna
 - Always thinking and working for Him
- Promise of the lord
 - Anyone who is in such pure Krishna consciousness will certainly return to the abode of Krishna
 - To engage in the association of Krishna face to face

(b) **Why this knowledge is spoken to Arjuna**

- Because He is a dear friend to Krishna

(c) **How can we obtain the same perfection as Arjuna**

- Anyone who follows the path of Arjuna can become a dear friend to Krishna and obtain the same perfection

(d) **Which form should be concentrated on as per 18.65**

- Concentrate mind upon Krishna as per Brahma Samhita's description – that constitutes the most confidential part of knowledge
- Not even divert one's attention to other forms of the Lord like Vishnu, Narayana, Rama etc.

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 18.65 & 18.66:** One may doubt that he is able to take advantage of Krishna's words and render the quality of pure devotional service that Krishna has requested. Should he first undergo renunciation, austerities and vows to purify his heart so that he will enhance his ability to surrender? Here is Krishna's answer.

In his purport to Text 18.66, Srila Prabhupada glorifies full and immediate surrender to Krishna's service as the process that will qualify us for that service

Text 18.66*

Essence of *Bhagavad-gita*

THEME: If one simply thinks of Krishna at all times, what will happen to his duties. So Krishna says that:

- ❖ Give up those duties and all varieties of religion
- ❖ Our only duty is to exclusively surrender unto Him
- ❖ Thus material reaction will not touch you – Do not hesitate or fear

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.66

- (a) **What Krishna means by seeing “Abandon all varieties of religion”**
- Lord has described various kinds of knowledge and processes of religion
 - Now he recommends to give up all that and simple surrender
- (b) **How surrender will save**
- Lord personally promises to protect from all kinds of sinful reaction
- (c) **No need of strenuous effort to free oneself from sinful reaction –**
- Just “process of surrender” will automatically free one from all reactions; although *Bg. 7.28* demands freedom from all sin to understand Krishna
- (d) **Process of surrender: Ref. Hari-bhakti Vilasa (6 points)**
1. Simply accept such religious principles that are favorable to devotional service
 2. Avoid anything unfavorable to devotional service
 3. Confidence of Krishna’s protection in all circumstances
 4. No need of thinking how to keep body and soul together. Krishna will see to that
 5. Always think oneself helpless
 6. Consider Krishna as the only basis of one’s progress in life
- (e) **No need of other purificatory and religious processes** (Srla Prabhupada thus explains uselessness of worry and hesitation)
- Importance of “*ma sucah*” – Indicates “do not fear or hesitate”
 - One may be perplexed as to how one can give up all kinds of religious forms and simply surrender unto Krishna, but such worry is useless

**SUMMARISED THEME 18A
SUMMARY OF 18.54 – 18.66**

- A) **Confidential knowledge: Knowledge of Brahman (18.54)**
- BRAHMA-BHUTA platform: Joyful, never laments or desires to have anything, equally disposed to all living entities and attains pure devotional service
- B) **More confidential knowledge: Knowledge of Paramatma (18.61)**
- Supreme Lord in everyone’s heart
 - Body is a machine or a vehicle
 - Living entity is seated in a machine
 - Paramatma directs the wanderings
 - Surrender to Him
 - Thus attain transcendental peace in this life
 - Attain eternal abode in the next life
- C) **Most confidential knowledge: Devotional service to Bhagavan, Krishna**
- The process (18.65)
 - Always think of Me
 - Become My devotee
 - Worship Me
 - Offer homage unto Me
 - Essence of all religion: Surrender unto Krishna (18.66)
 - He will deliver one from all sinful reactions (18.66)

SECTION IX (18.67 – 18.71) PREACHING AND STUDYING THE BHAGVAD GITA

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION IX

There are auspicious results for anyone who encounters the sacred message of Bhagavad-gita, whether it be through preaching, studying or hearing

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION VIII & SECTION IX:** Krishna has just completed speaking the Bhagavad-gita. What now should be done with the jewels of transcendental knowledge just spoken by Krishna? Should they be kept secretly or distributed widely? If they should be distributed, who is qualified to receive them? What result comes to one who hears, studies or preaches Krishna's message?

Text 18.67

THEME: Do not teach *Bhagavad-gita* to one who is:

- ❖ Not austere
- ❖ Not devoted to Krishna's service
- ❖ Envious of Krishna

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.67

- (a) **PRACTICAL APPLICATION:** Various categories of persons who cannot understand *Bhagavad-gita*
- Professional commentators – who are envious and explain *Bhagavad-gita* to make a business
 - To those who are sensuous
 - Even if not sensuous but are strictly following the Vedic scriptural disciplines, but if he is not a devotee, he cannot understand Krishna
 - Even if one poses himself as a devotee, but not engaged in Krishna conscious activities, he cannot understand Krishna
- (b) **Why different people envy Krishna**
- Because He is the Supreme and nothing is above or equal to Him
- (c) **Who should not try to comment on *Bhagavad-gita*** – envious, faithless and those without understanding of Krishna from authority of a pure devotee

Text 18.68

Benediction for the teacher/preacher

THEME: One who teaches to Krishna's devotees gets "pure devotional service" and returns to Krishna

- ❖ Amongst whom is this *Bhagavad-gita* discussion is generally recommended
 - Only amongst devotees
 - Not for philosophical speculators

Text 18.69

Benediction for the teacher/preacher

THEME: No one is a more dear servant to Me than he (As mentioned in 18.68), nor will there ever be one more dear

Text 18.70

Benediction for the student

THEME: “One who studies this sacred conversion of ours, worships Me by his intelligence”

Text 18.71

Benediction for the student

THEME: If one hears with faith and without envy

- ❖ He becomes free from sinful reaction
- ❖ He attains to the auspicious planets where the pious dwells

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.71

(a) **Why a devotee holds open classes if 18.67 recommends that one should not preach to the envious**

- Although everyone is not a devotee still many men are non-envious
- They have faith in Him as Supreme Personality of Godhead
- Result - Hearing from a bona-fide devotee will free them from sinful reactions and they will attain to the planets of righteous persons
- Even a person who does not try to be a pure devotee attains the results of righteous activities

(b) **Importance of “Punya-Karmanam”**

- It refers to the performance of great sacrifices like ‘*Asvamedha-yajna*’
- Those righteous in performing devotional service but not pure, can attain the planetary system of Pole-Star, Dhruvaloka

SUMMARISED THEME 18B

WHAT TO DO WITH THE KNOWLEDGE GIVEN IN BHAGAVAD-GITA

- A) Distribute it
 - Then pure devotional service is guaranteed
 - One will go to Krishna
- B) Study it
 - This is worship with one’s intelligence
- C) Hear it with faith and without envy. It results in:
 - Freedom from sinful reactions
 - Attain to the auspicious planets where the pious dwell.

SECTION X (18.72 – 18.73) ARJUNA IS FIRMLY FIXED

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION X

- The result of hearing *Bhagavad-gita* properly is full surrender to Lord Krishna
- In the context of *Bhagavad-gita*, Arjuna represents all living entities that are faced with the Supreme decision of whether to serve Krishna or to turn away
- By properly hearing the science of *Bhagavad-gita* from Krishna or His representative, one understands fully his constitutional position as Krishna's servant, and he thus serves Krishna in full conviction, free from misgivings
- Thus, Arjuna, fixed in knowledge is fully prepared to fight for Krishna

Text 18.72

THEME: Krishna asks if, *Bhagavad-gita* has freed Arjuna from ignorance and illusion

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.72

- (a) **Why Krishna asks this question as spiritual master**
 - As spiritual master it was His duty to know, if Arjuna understood *Bhagavad-gita* in proper perspective
- (b) **Expected result of hearing** (As per Krishna's expectations)
 - Ignorance and illusion dispelled
- (c) ***Bhagavad-gita* is not an ordinary book** – So what is expected
 - Any person fortunate to hear from a bona-fide representative is sure to become liberated and get out of the darkness of ignorance

Text 18.73*

THEME: Arjuna's realisations (4 points):

1. My illusion is now gone
2. Regained my memory by Your mercy
3. I am now firm and free from doubt
4. Prepared to act according to Your instructions

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.73

- (a) **Constitutional position of living entity (Arjuna represents living entity)**
 - Has to act according to the order of the Supreme Lord
 - Meant for self-discipline
 - Eternal servant of the Supreme Lord
- (b) **Cause of conditioning by material nature** – Forgetfulness of the Supreme Personality of Godhead
- (c) **Service is the constitution of the living entity**
 - Normal condition – Serves the Supreme Lord
 - Illusory condition – Serves the external energy and bound by lust and desires
- (d) **What is the illusion** – Bound by lust and desire, one thinks himself to be the master of this world and serves the external energy
 - The last snare of Maya; the proposition that he is no longer a conditioned soul but he is God
 - Our refutation: If he would be God, how could he be in doubt
 - What it means to be free from illusion
 - Voluntary surrender
 - Agrees to act in Krishna consciousness
- (e) **Significance of the word “moha”** – Refers to that which is opposed to knowledge
 - Real knowledge is “living entity is the servant of God”
- (f) **How to overcome illusion** – By mercy of Lord and His pure devotee
- (g) **What is Krishna consciousness** – To act according to Krishna’s order
 - Why a conditioned soul acts under illusion – Because lacking knowledge of Krishna’s position as Supreme proprietor, enjoyer, controlled and friend of everyone and full of all six opulences
- (h) **Role of Bhagavad-gita**
 - One understands Krishna factually
 - e.g. Arjuna understood Him not only as a friend but also as Supreme Personality of Godhead
 - Understands Krishna’s plan
 - e.g. Arjuna understood Krishna’s plan to reduce the unnecessary population

SECTION XI (18.74 – 18.78)
SANJAYA’S PREDICTIONS AND REALISATIONS

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION XI

- The *Bhagavad-gita* is a magnificent, glorious and enlivening message. The *Bhagavad-gita* is not like an ordinary book from some mundane author. It is the Lord’s own potency of knowledge, by which He enlightens the fallen souls.
- One who studies the *Bhagavad-gita*, therefore, experiences direct association with Lord Krishna. One who hears properly becomes Krishna conscious, He can see Krishna in all things. Therefore his life becomes exciting and wonderful at every step
- When one is Krishna conscious, he appreciates Krishna’s position as the Supreme shelter of all. It is Krishna’s will that is Supreme. Therefore, the devotee, by surrendering to that will, will find only victory, and never find defeat

Text 18.74

THEME: Sanjaya relates his experience of the whole conversation: “Hairs standing on end”

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.74

- (a) **What was so wonderful about the message**
- Supreme Personality of Godhead was speaking about Himself and His energies to the living entity, Arjuna (a great devotee of the Lord)
 - Important conversation between two great souls had never taken place before and would not take place again
- (b) **How to make our life happy and successful**
- Follow in the footsteps of Arjuna to understand Krishna

Text 18.75

THEME: Sanjaya acknowledges the mercy of Vyasa, by whose mercy he could hear the master of mysticism, Krishna

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.75

- (a) **Import of this verse**
- One has to understand Krishna not directly, but through the medium of the spiritual master
 - Spiritual master is the transparent via medium and experience is still direct
- (b) **Krishna as the master of all mysticism**
- Many mystics and yogis are there all over the world, but Krishna is the master of all *yoga* systems
 - Topmost yogi according to Krishna’s instruction: one who surrenders unto Krishna (*Bg.* 6.47)
- (c) **Vyasadeva is as bona-fide as Arjuna**
- Because he comes in the disciplic succession and Sanjaya is the direct disciple of Vyasa
 - Vyasa is a disciple of Narada Muni who is a direct disciple of Krishna
- (d) **Sanjaya could see and hear Krishna directly because**
- He is a direct disciple of Vyasa
 - Also senses are purified, by the grace of Vyasa
- (e) **Disciplic succession is must**
- Without disciplic succession one cannot hear Krishna and his knowledge (especially regarding *Bhagavad-gita*) is always imperfect
- (f) **Spiritual master is the representative of Vyasadeva**
- Therefore birthday of spiritual master is celebrated as Vyasa-puja

Text 18.76

THEME: Sanjaya recalls and finds thrilling pleasure at every moment by remembering *Bhagavad-gita*

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.76

- (a) **Transcendental position of spiritual life**
 - Understanding of *Bhagavad-gita* is so transcendental that anyone who becomes conversant with the topics of *Bhagavad-gita* becomes righteous and cannot forget such talks
- (b) **How one develops such understanding** – This comes from hearing from the right source and leads to full Krishna consciousness
- (c) **Result of Krishna consciousness**
 - One becomes increasingly enlightened
 - Enjoys life with a thrill, not only for some time, but at every moment

Text 18.77

THEME: Further experiences of Sanjaya: Remembering the wonderful form of Krishna he becomes struck with wonder more and more and rejoices again and again

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.77

- (a) **It appears that Sanjaya also saw the universal form**
 - Some great devotees could also see the Universal Form when it was shown to Arjuna
 - And Vyasa is one of them who disclosed this to Sanjaya

Text 18.78*

THEME: *Bhagavad-gita* begins with Dhrtarashtra's asking about the battlefield, so Sanjaya answers that Krishna and Arjuna cannot be defeated and "you" have no hope for victory

- ❖ Wherever there is Krishna, the master of all mystics, and Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will certainly be opulence, victory, extraordinary power and morality

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 18.78

- (a) **Krishna exhibits opulence of "Renunciation" on battlefield**
 - Krishna's accepting the post of charioteer for Arjuna
- (b) **What was predicted about Maharaja Yudhisthira's life:**
 - Because Krishna and Arjuna were on the side of Yudhisthira, his victory was certain
 - After victory, his kingdom would flourish more and more because not only was he righteous and pious but also a strict moralist; never spoke a lie to anyone in his life
- (c) **Argument: Krishna inciting Arjuna to fight is immoral**
 - **Response:** *Bhagavad-gita* is the supreme instruction on morality: i.e. Bg. 9.34 (One must become a devotee of Krishna)
 - Essence of all religion (Bg. 18.66): Surrender unto Him
 - All other processes may be purifying and may lead to this process, but the last instruction of "surrender" is the last word in all morality and all religion
- (d) **Essence of Chapter 18 and *Bhagavad-gita***
 - Path of regulative principles according to social orders and different courses of religion may be confidential path
 - To realize oneself by philosophical speculation and meditation is more confidential
 - Surrender unto Krishna is most confidential
- (e) **Important subjects discussed in *Bhagavad-gita***
 - Actual truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and living entities and material nature are His two energies
 - Five principle subject matters have been discussed: Isvara, Jiva, Prakriti, Kala and Karma;
 - *Isvara, Jiva, Prakriti* and Kala appear to be different superficially, but nothing is different from the Supreme (Isvara)
 - This is according to Lord Caitanya's philosophy: "Inconceivable oneness and difference"
 - Living entities are the marginal energy of Krishna and have a particle of independence
 - By proper use of that independence one attains his normal condition in the pleasure giving potency

CHAPTER 18 Appendix
Selected Texts extracted from “Surrender unto Me”

Text 18.1

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments on this verse as follows:

Arjuna remained unclear as to the Lord’s meaning when He used the word sannyāsa in statements such as, “When the embodied living being controls his nature and mentally renounces all actions, he resides happily . . .” (Bg. 5.13), and when He used the word tyāga in statements such as, “Abandoning all attachment to the results of his activities . . .” (Bg. 4.20). Arjuna thus inquires in this verse, “Do the words sannyāsa and tyāga have completely different meanings, like the two words “mountain” and “tree,” or do they have congruous meanings, like the words “Kuru” and “Pāṇḍava”? If the first case is true, then I want to know what the separate identities of sannyāsa and tyāga are. If the second case is true, then maybe there is some superficial, quasi-distinction between the two ideas and I would like to know what that is. O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa, O Hṛṣīkeśa, because You are the impeller of the active functions of intelligence, You Yourself have brought about my doubt. O killer of Keśī, please destroy my doubt as you destroyed Keśī.”

Text 18.5

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments that just as fibers exist within the stem of a lotus, these three activities contain knowledge that purifies the heart and elevates one.

Text 18.14

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments that we are doers—our activities do spring from our own free will—but our endeavor is not the independent cause of actions:

If the jīva’s being a doer is under the regulating control of the Supreme Lord, then we have to say that his activity does not proceed from his own will and that he is actually just like a stone or some other inert object. In that case, don’t the injunctions and prohibitions of scripture become useless? The answer is, the jīva receives from the Supreme Lord a body and senses endowed with specific potencies, of which he then becomes the proprietor. Acquiring those potencies, the jīva exerts his free will and assumes control of his body and senses for the purpose of fulfilling karmic endeavors. The Supreme Lord, present within all these coverings, sanctions the jīva’s activity and inspires him to act. In this way there is no contradiction between the Supreme’s control and the jīva’s having his own willpower to act or to refrain from acting.

Text 18.18

Kṛṣṇa here uses two words, jñānam and jñeyam, knowledge and the object of knowledge (two of the six topics in Chapter Thirteen). This again indicates that Chapter Eighteen is a summary of the Gītā.

Text 18.40

Kṛṣṇa is developing His summary of all the prior chapters. As a basic summary of the first six chapters, He explained karma and how detached work frees us from material bondage. Next He summarized the third set of six chapters, the jñāna chapters, in which work free of reaction is explained from the viewpoint of jñāna: When the eternal soul accepts that he is not the doer and surrenders to the ultimate sanctioner of all activities, the Supersoul, no reactions are accrued by him. Kṛṣṇa concluded by explaining the actual doer in the material world: the three modes of material nature.

Kṛṣṇa will now describe the progressive journey through karma and jñāna to realization of the Supersoul. He will then reach the philosophical conclusion of Bhagavad-gītā: bhakti, in which the living

entity not only realizes the Supersoul but surrenders to Him, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Text 18.46

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says, “Worshiping Kṛṣṇa by one’s own prescribed work, offering it to Him while thinking within one’s mind, ‘May my Lord be pleased by this work,’ one attains to the perfection of real knowledge.”

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa raises the question, “What if one possesses the nature and qualities of work of one varṇa, but wishes to perform the work of a different varṇa?” Kṛṣṇa answers that question in the following text.

Text 18.48

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments: “Kṛṣṇa confirms that all prescribed duties, not only the work of a kṣatriya, contain faults, or ‘smoke.’ Even a brāhmaṇa’s work has defects. One should therefore cleanse away the faulty part of one’s duty by offering the duty to the Supreme Lord. And for the sake of self-realization one should serve—giving careful attention to that part of his duty which gives rise to knowledge.”

Rather than renouncing the work born of one’s nature, one should worship the Lord through his work. Detachment and devotion while working, not renunciation of the activity, will cancel the defects inherent in the work.

Text 18.54

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes:

When one’s superficial designations have dissipated, one becomes brahma-bhūta—of the nature of Brahman, or pure, uncovered spirit—because his contamination of the material modes is now finished. He becomes a satisfied soul, and then he no longer laments as before for what he loses, or hankers for what he has not obtained. That is because he no longer falsely identifies with his body and other material things. He, like a child, is equal to all beings, both the gentle and the wicked. This is because he no longer judges by externals. And then, when his jñāna has become extinguished, like a fire whose fuel is used up, he attains to eternal devotion for Me—in the form of hearing, chanting and so on—which was already present within his jñāna. Because this bhakti is a function of My internal energy, it is distinct from māyā’s energy and so is not dispelled even after both avidyā and vidyā are dispelled. Therefore this bhakti is parā, separate from and better than jñāna, and because it is separate from both niṣkāma-karma and jñāna, it is exclusive (kevala).

The idea of the use of the word “attains” (labhate) is that although this bhakti was already partly active previously for the purpose of allowing the achievement of liberation through the processes of jñāna and vairāgya, at that time it was not clearly perceivable, just as the Supersoul residing in every living being’s heart is also not clearly perceivable. Therefore, instead of saying, “He performs devotional service,” the Lord says, “He attains devotional service.” It is just like a person keeping gold and gems within a mixture of beans. After the beans are removed, the gold and gems, which were already present, become separately available in their pure form (kevala).

Text 18.55

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments:

Having obtained that bhakti, what then does one achieve? This is answered with the introduction of a new idea in the verse beginning bhaktyā [text 55]. Only by bhakti does a jñānī, or one of the various kinds of devotees, factually understand Me. After all, I have said, “I am obtainable only by bhakti.” This being the case, the jñānī being discussed understands Me after the function of vidyā has stopped influencing him, and

then he enters into Me in the sense of coming to experience the happiness of sāyujya (being merged into the existence of the body of the Lord).

. . . Some persons want to attain sāyujya without bhakti by jñāna alone. Imagining themselves to be jñānīs, their only success is the trouble they take. They are very contemptible. Others understand that without bhakti there can be no liberation, so they practice jñāna mixed with bhakti. But they consider the Personality of Godhead an illusory concept superimposed on māyā and think that the body of the Personality of Godhead is composed of the material modes. Therefore even when they achieve the culmination of yoga, those jñānīs who presume that they are liberated are still contemptible. Thus it is stated, “Each of the four social orders, headed by the brāhmaṇas, was born through different combinations of the modes of nature from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Lord in His universal form. Thus the four spiritual orders were also generated. If any of the members of the four varṇas and four āśramas fail to worship or intentionally disrespect the Personality of Godhead, who is the source of their own creation, they will fall down from their position into a hellish state of life.” (Bhāg. 11.5.2–3)

. . . Factually, however, the nature of the Lord’s humanlike form is sac-cid-ānanda. Its becoming visible is simply by the influence of the Lord’s inconceivable mercy, as is stated in the Nārāyaṇādhyātma: “Although the Supreme Lord is always unmanifest, He becomes visible by His own energy. Without that energy who could ever see that supreme master, the reservoir of all pleasure?”

Many thousands of śruti statements establish that the Supreme Lord’s body is sac-cid-ānanda: “Displaying His sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha, He is sitting at the base of a desire tree in Vṛndāvana.” “He takes His personal form, which is the same as the transcendental sound of the Vedas.” Nonetheless, the contemptible jñānīs interpret other śrutis, such as, “Know māyā to be nature and the possessor of māyā to be the Supreme Lord” to mean that the Supreme Lord is also a false concept superimposed on māyā. In fact, however, the māyā the Lord is conjoined with is his personal, internal energy, which is also called māyā.

However, those who practice jñāna mixed with bhakti, while thinking that the personal form of the Supreme Lord is sac-cid-ānanda, gradually attain bhakti after the influences of avidyā and vidyā cease to act on them. They are jīvan-muktas and are of two types. Some of them perform devotional service for the sake of attaining sāyujya. These achieve transcendental realization of the supreme entity and sāyujya within that Supreme. They are certainly praiseworthy. The others are very fortunate souls. By some trick of fate they get the association of sober, pure devotees. By the influence of such devotees, they give up their desire for liberation. Like Śukadeva and others, they drown in the sweet taste of the mellows of devotional service. They are supremely praiseworthy.

18.56: In this verse, Kṛṣṇa has used the words mat prasādād avāpnoti śāśvataṁ padam avyayam to state that by His grace a devotee attains His eternal, imperishable abode. In this regard, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives the following dialogue between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna:

“A sakāma or niṣkāma devotee attains My eternal abode—Vaikuṅṭha, Mathurā, Dvārakā or Ayodhyā.”

“But how do these various abodes persist at the time of total annihilation?”

“My abode is infallible, and does not undergo any loss even at the total annihilation of the universe. This is due to My inconceivable power.”

“But a jñānī comes to the stage of naiṣkarmya and achieves sāyujya only after many lifetimes of various austerities and only after all the material action of his senses has ceased. How is it, then, that the devotees attain Your eternal abode simply by taking shelter of You, even though they are still engaged in karma and still have material desires?”

“By My grace this happens. You should understand that My mercy has inconceivable power.”

Text 18.57: Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura describes Kṛṣṇa’s instruction to Arjuna: “Offering all your activities, your varṇāśrama duties and your ordinary work to Me, you should be dedicated to Me. I should be your only goal and the whole purpose of Your life. In this way you should be re-

nounced and without desires. Always fix your mind on Me, both while executing your duties and at other times as well. Always remember Me.”

Śrīlā Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa adds: “Having Me as the only goal of your life, you should renounce, and offer all your prescribed work to Me, your master. Taking shelter of Me in buddhi-yoga, you should always think of Me while executing your duties.”

Text 18.59

Śrīlā Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura adds more of Arjuna’s and Kṛṣṇa’s thoughts:

“Well, it’s true. For a kṣatriya like me, fighting is the supreme duty. But in this particular circumstance, I don’t want to become involved because I fear the sinful reactions for killing family members.”

In response, Kṛṣṇa, in a chastising mood, speaks this verse beginning yad ahaṅkāram. “Now you are not honoring My words, but later, because you are a great hero, your natural eagerness to fight will unavoidably manifest itself. Then, when you set out to kill Bhīṣma and the others on your own accord, I will laugh at you.”

We should note Kṛṣṇa’s words: Whether or not Arjuna surrenders to Kṛṣṇa, he will fight. Why, then, chapter after chapter, has Kṛṣṇa pushed Arjuna to fight? What was the necessity of Kṛṣṇa’s offering numerous instructions?

Kṛṣṇa wanted Arjuna to fight in the proper consciousness—in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore He told Arjuna to surrender unto Him and fight on His order with devotion. “Do it,” Kṛṣṇa explained, “because I have already killed Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Droṇa—all these warriors.” The armies have already been defeated, and the battle has already been won. Kṛṣṇa doesn’t require Arjuna’s martial skill for victory, but He wants Arjuna to act with devotion as His instrument. Arjuna’s devotion will be expressed by fighting on the battlefield.

Śrīlā Prabhupāda once explained during a 1974 morning walk in Los Angeles: “Somebody protested that ‘Your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement makes people dull,’ but they have not seen the Vaiṣṇava. There were two fights in Indian history. One was between Rāma and Rāvaṇa and one was at Kurukṣetra. And the hero in both was a Vaiṣṇava. We are going to produce such Vaiṣṇavas, not these dull rascals, sitting down. We don’t want these Vaiṣṇavas—sitting-down rascals. We want Arjuna or we want no one. That is a Vaiṣṇava.”

Text 18.60: Kṛṣṇa herein continues instructing all conditioned souls to surrender to Him because it is in their own interest. If we choose not to surrender to Kṛṣṇa, however, it does not mean that we will be able to remain independent. All—those who surrender and those who do not—are controlled. The difference is that the surrendered souls are controlled and protected by Kṛṣṇa, and the unsundered are forced to dance like marionettes, their strings pulled by illusion.

Text 18.62

Śrīlā Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes: “Some say that taking shelter of the Supersoul as described here is meant only for worshipers of the Supersoul, whereas taking shelter of the Personality of Godhead is later going to be mentioned as appropriate for the worshipers of Godhead. Someone else, however, may say, ‘The same Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is my worshipable Deity is also my spiritual master. He is teaching me bhakti-yoga and giving me helpful instructions that lead to the development of bhakti-yoga. I take shelter of Him. That same Kṛṣṇa is indeed the Supersoul within

me. May He kindly impel me in all activities. I take shelter of Him.’ Such a devotee constantly thinks in this fashion.”

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa explains Kṛṣṇa’s words thus: “‘You should in all ways take shelter of that Supreme Lord, the Supersoul, with the activities of your body and so on. You will achieve the supreme peace, characterized as release from all kinds of distress, and also the eternal abode, the personal residence of the Lord, glorified in such śruti statements as tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam. That Supreme Lord is none other than Me, your friend. This is proven by My previous statements, such as: “I am situated in everyone’s heart.” It is also proven by your agreement to this in your own statements made in accordance with the authority of Devarṣi Nārada and others, such as: “You are the Supreme Absolute Truth, the supreme abode,” and by the empiric evidence of your vision of the universal form. Therefore you should follow My instructions.”

Text 18.64

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has mentioned the following in his commentary on texts 63–64:

Thus the six chapters teaching jñāna have reached their completion. These six chapters of the śāstra, Śrī Gītā, are jewels of spiritual education. They form part of a treasure chest containing the rarest secret of bhakti. The first six chapters dealing with karma form the golden, lower part of the chest, and the third six chapters dealing with jñāna form its gem-studded cover. The bhakti found within is the most precious treasure in the three worlds. It has the power to bring Śrī Kṛṣṇa under control. It shines brilliantly as the most excellent of precious jewels. The key to obtaining this jewel is the pair of verses on the cover of the treasure chest, the sacred sixty-four syllables beginning man-manā bhava [texts 65–66].

Seeing His dear friend Arjuna silently deliberating on the Gītā-śāstra, with its deep meanings, the Lord felt His heart melt like butter out of compassion and said, “My dear friend Arjuna, I will now speak the essence of this entire śāstra. You don’t have to exert yourself any more with this troublesome deliberating.”

Text 18.65

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa offer similar comments. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states:

“You will come to Me, achieve Me, so therefore offer your mind to Me. Or else offer your ears and other senses. Or else offer incense, flowers and so on. I tell you truly that I will give you even My own self in exchange. You have no reason to doubt this.”

The Amara-koṣa defines satyam as meaning “a vow” and “the true facts of a case.” Yet Arjuna may reply, “But people born in Mathurā district always make vows. In every sentence they utter they use the word satyam.”

Kṛṣṇa replies, “Then I say this. I make a solemn vow: ‘You are dear to me!’ And no one cheats someone who is dear to him.”

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa states:

“As explained before, if you develop the qualities of always thinking of Me and so on, you will certainly come to Me, who am your beloved friend Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī. I have qualities such as being dark blue like a blue lotus flower, and I appear in a human form. You will not go to some other form of Mine like the thousand-headed Puruṣa, the thumb-sized Supersoul, Lord Nṛsiṁha or Lord Varāha. This is my vow, that in truth I will give you possession even of Myself, Your friend.”

The Nānārtha-varga defines the word satyam as “a vow” and “the true facts of a case.” Yet Arjuna replies, “But because You are from Mathurā, even Your having made a vow does not destroy my doubt.”

To this the Lord responds, “Then I say this: You are very dear to Me, and the affectionate people of Mathurā do not deceive those who are dear to them, what to speak of deceiving one who is most dear. He to whom I am very dear is also very dear to Me. I cannot tolerate the absence of such a person, as I have already said in the words beginning priyo hi and so on. Therefore you should trust My words: ‘You will indeed achieve Me.’”

Text 18.66

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s commentary adds further drops of sweetness: “Kṛṣṇa says, ‘Previously I told you that you did not have the qualification for the most excellent, unalloyed devotion to Me. At that time I said, “Whatever you do, whatever you eat . . .” and told you that your qualification was for karma-miśra-bhakti. Now, however, by My special mercy I have given you the qualification for unalloyed bhakti. I have violated My own rule that unalloyed devotion may be obtained only when, somehow or other, one receives the mercy of My pure devotee, just as I will violate My own promise while fighting with Bhīṣma.’”

Text 18.73

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura adds the following exchange between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa: “Arjuna replies, ‘What more can I ask? Abandoning all dharmas, I approach You for shelter. I am now free from anxiety and have full trust in You. Henceforth, having taken full shelter of You, I will accept Your order as my dharma. You are the suitable bestower of shelter. I will no longer follow the dharma of my āśrama or the processes of jñāna-yoga and so on. From now on I will have nothing to do with any of those.’ Then Kṛṣṇa says, ‘My dear friend Arjuna, there remains a little work left in the matter of My relieving the earth of her burden, and I want to do this through you.’”

Text 18.78

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa ends his Gītā-bhūṣaṇa, “the ornament of the Bhagavad-gītā,” with the following words: “Having obtained the boat of the Lord’s desire, I have submerged myself in the sea of Bhagavad-gītā, where I have collected many very wonderful gems of its purports. Due to my great feelings of joy, I cannot raise myself out of this sea. I only hope that the cunning son of Nanda is pleased with me. I, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, have with great effort compiled this commentary named Śrī-gītā-bhūṣaṇa. May the saintly devotees correct any faults it contains. They are always eager to taste the sweetness of pure love for Śrī Govinda, and their hearts are always melting with compassion.”

**APPENDIX A
THE MODES OF MATERIAL NATURE**

VERSE	ITEM	MODE OF GOODNESS	MODE OF PASSION	MODE OF IGNORANCE
14.6 to 14.8	Binding Force	Sense of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happiness • Satisfaction • Knowledge • Superiority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment to fruitive activities • Binds by the ropes of desire and attachment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madness • Indolence (Laziness) • Sleep
14.11 to 14.13	Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illuminates the gates of the body with knowledge • Frees one from sinful reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intense, unlimited desires and longings • Great attachment • Fruitive activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delusion/ Illusion • Darkness • Madness • Inertia
14.14 to 14.15	Destination at death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attains the pure, higher planets of the great sages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attains earthly planets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth in lower species
14.16 to 14.18	Results of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pure • Knowledge (sees things as they are) • Elevation to higher planets like Brahmaloaka or Janaloka 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misery • Greed • Earthly planets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foolishness • Madness • Illusion • Life in hellish worlds
17.4	Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demigods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ghosts and Spirits
17.8 to 17.10	Food	Type of foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juicy, fatty, wholesome and pleasing to the heart Effect of such foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases the duration of life • Purifies one's existence • Gives strength, health, happiness and satisfaction 	Type of foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too bitter, Too sour, salty, hot pungent, dry and burning Effect of such foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distress • Misery • Disease 	Type of foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepared more than three hours before being eaten • Food that is tasteless, decomposed and putrid • Food consisting of remnants and untouchable things Effect of such foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infection • Disease

VERSE	ITEM	MODE OF GOODNESS	MODE OF PASSION	MODE OF IGNORANCE
17.11 to 17.13	Sacrifice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to directions of scripture As a matter of duty Without desire of reward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs for some material benefit For the sake of pride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without regard for the directions of scripture Without distribution of prasadam (spiritual food) Without chanting of Vedic hymns Without remuneration to the priests Without faith
17.17 to 17.19	Austerity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performed with transcendental faith Without expecting material benefits Only for the sake of the Supreme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performed out of pride For the sake of gaining respect It is neither permanent nor stable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performed out of foolishness With self-torture To destroy or injure others
17.20 to 17.22	Charity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given out of duty Without expectation of return At the proper time and place To a worthy person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With expectation of some return With the desire for fruitive results In a grudging mood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performed at an impure place At an impure time To unworthy persons Without proper attention and respect
18.7 to 18.9	Renunciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing prescribed duty only because it ought to be done Renounces all material association Renounces all attachment to the fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renounces prescribed duties as troublesome or out of fear of bodily discomfort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renounces prescribed duties because of illusion
18.20 to 18.22	Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge by which one undivided spiritual nature is seen in all living entities, though they are divided into innumerable forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge by which one sees that in every different body there is a different type of living entity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge by which one is attached to one kind of work as all in all Without knowledge of the truth Which is very meager

VERSE	ITEM	MODE OF GOODNESS	MODE OF PASSION	MODE OF IGNORANCE
18.23 to 18.25	Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulated by sastras Performed without attachment Without love or hatred Without desire for fruitive results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With great effort by one seeking to gratify his desires Enacted from a sense of false ego 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performed in illusion In disregard of scriptural injunctions Without concern for future bondage or for violence or distress caused to others
18.26 to 18.28	Performer of action (worker)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs his duty without association with the modes of material nature Without false ego With great determination and enthusiasm Without wavering in success or failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attached to work and fruits of work Desiring to enjoy those fruits Greedy Envious Impure and Moved by joy and sorrow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work against the injunctions of the scripture Materialistic Obstinate Cheating Expert in insulting others Lazy Always morose and Procrastinating
18.30 to 18.32	Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done What is to be feared and what is not to be feared What is binding and what is liberating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot distinguish between religion and irreligion Between action that should be done and action that should not be done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers religion to be irreligion and irreligion to be religion Under the spell of illusion and darkness Always striving in the wrong direction
18.33 to 18.35	Determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unbreakable Sustained with steadfastness by yoga practice Controls the activities of mind, life and senses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One holds fast to fruitive results in religion, economic development and sense gratification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One cannot go beyond dreaming Fearfulness Lamentation Moroseness Illusion
18.37 to 18.39	Happiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Just like poison in the beginning and nectar at the end Awakes one to self-realisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derived from contact of the senses with their objects Appears as nectar at first but poison at the end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blind to self realisation Delusion from beginning to end Arises from sleep, laziness and illusion