

## CHAPTER 3 KARMA YOGA

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### Connection between Chapter 2 and Chapter 3

- In *Bg. 2.49* “*durena hy avaram...*”, Krishna tells Arjuna
  - “To keep all abominable activities far distant by *Buddhi-yoga*”
- Arjuna thinks that *buddhi* means intelligence
  - By using his intelligence, he should avoid all abominable activities and thus, not fight
  - Still Krishna is urging him to fight
- Chapter 3 begins with Arjuna’s question to clarify this contradictory instruction
- According to Arjuna (renunciation) ‘*Jnana*’ and ‘work’ are incompatible

### BREAKDOWN OF CHAPTER 3

#### SECTION I (3.1 – 3.2) — RENUNCIATION OR WORK

- Arjuna asks if it is better to be situated in knowledge or to work, as if two were opposed to each other

#### SECTION II (3.3 – 3.9) — NISKAMA-KARMA YOGA

- Work combined with knowledge and detachment
- Offer the fruit of the work for the satisfaction of Krishna
- *Niskama-karma-yoga* allows the soul (active by nature) to be purified through detached activities

#### SECTION III (3.10 – 3.16) — FROM KARMA KANDA TO KARMA-YOGA

- If one cannot perform detached, dutiful work; it is better to follow *Karma-kanda* section of Vedas
- But do it for Krishna’s pleasure (All the Vedic duties which prescribe sacrifices, etc.)

#### SECTION IV (3.17 – 3.35) — NISKAMA-KARMA TO SET CORRECT EXAMPLE

- Dutifully acting without attachment sets the correct example for others, who are less advanced

#### SECTION V (3.36 – 3.43) — BEWARE OF LUST AND ANGER

- They foil one’s performance of duty, and incur sin
- Regulate senses and strengthen intelligence to control lust

## SECTION I (3.1 – 3.2) RENUNCIATION OR WORK

### Texts 3.1 – 3.2

**COMMON THEME:** Arjuna is confused

- ❖ Based on Text 2.49, Arjuna doubts the compatibility of *Karma* (Duty of fighting) & *Jnana* (*Buddhi – yoga* based on knowledge of the soul) and requests for the one conclusive path


#### FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 3.1 – 3.2

- Krishna consciousness often misused as an excuse** to avoid duty or misunderstood to be inertia (3.1). Correct understanding is
  - Without being trained in the philosophy of Krishna consciousness it is not advisable to chant the holy names in a secluded place
  - It only acquires cheap adoration from the innocent public
- Practical Application: Sign of a sincere student** – Sincere student places the doubt before master to elicit best course of action (3.1). In response Krishna explained *karma-yoga* (work in Krishna consciousness)
- Arjuna clears apparently confusing path of Chapter 2** for sincere students of *Bhagavad-gita*

## SECTION II (3.3 – 3.9) NISKAMA-KARMA-YOGA

#### PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION II

- Liberation or bondage is not determined by one's activities, but by one's consciousness in performing those activities. Thus, renunciation is not giving up of activities, but is the giving up of attachment to the fruit of activity
- Renunciation of activity without the necessary training, knowledge and purification will lead to destruction on the path of spiritual advancement. Without prescribed duties, an unfulfilled desire for activity will lead the premature renunciate to sinful action

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION I & SECTION II:** Krishna begins answering Arjuna's question by pointing out the defects in his desire to renounce duty in Texts 3.3 – 3.9

### Texts 3.3 – 3.9

**COMMON THEME:** This section describes the defects in the desire to renounce prescribed duty and thus focuses on the following points which summarize Texts 3.3 – 3.9:

- ❖ The "Active Nature of Soul"
- ❖ Inactivity is not an option available
- ❖ So it is advised to perform our activities in a way that they are directed towards self – purification and self-realization
- ❖ Self-purification and self-realization are the purposes of performing prescribed duties

**Text 3.3\***

**THEME: Both karma and sankhya are valid and interdependent parts of self-realisation.** Action without knowledge is mundane. Knowledge without action is powerless.

- ❖ Text 2.39 explained two processes
  - *Sankhya-yoga* or analytical study (based on *jnana*) ;
  - *Karma-yoga* or *buddhi-yoga* which involves activities or *karma*
- ❖ But the right understanding is that **“karma stage” and “jnana stage” are two rungs on the same yoga ladder** depending on **one’s “nistha”**
  - ‘Nistha’ is the word used in Text 3.3 – it means purity of heart or level of faith
- ❖ **Karma stage vs Jnana Stage** – *Karma* stage is the platform at which work is recommended and *jnana* stage is the platform when one is sufficiently purified and detached to renounce work


**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.3**

- (a) It compares the two paths of *Sankhya-yoga* and *buddhi-yoga*
  - **Sankhya-yoga or philosophical speculation**
    - Defined as the analytical study of the nature of spirit and matter
    - For whom – This is the subject matter for persons who are inclined to speculate and understand things by experimental knowledge and philosophy
  - **Buddhi-yoga or Direct Krishna Consciousness**
    - Described in Text 2.61 – *Buddhi-yoga* is to depend entirely on the Supreme (Krishna)
    - By working in *Buddhi-yoga* one is relieved from the bondage of work (2.39)
- (b) **Both yogas are interdependent as religion and philosophy**
  - Religion without philosophy is “sentiment / fanaticism”, and
  - Philosophy without Religion is “mental speculation”
- (c) **‘Ultimate Goal’** is Krishna for both yoga processes
- (d) **‘Purpose’** is to establish the real position of self with the Super-self

**COMPARISON OF SANKHYA-YOGA & BUDDHI-YOGA (3.3 purport)**

S. NO	SANKHYA-YOGA (Philosophical speculation)	BUDDHI-YOGA (Krishna consciousness)
1	<b>INDIRECT PATH</b>	<b>DIRECT PATH</b> A process of directly connecting the level of our activity or karma for the purpose of Krishna consciousness
2	<b>DEPENDENCE ON PERSONAL ENDEAVOUR</b> Meant for persons who want to understand things by experimental knowledge and philosophy on one’s own limited capacity	<b>DEPENDENCE ON KRISHNA’S MERCY</b> A process of depending Entirely on Supreme (2.61), and does not depend one’s own limited capacity of sense control, purity to advance. Therefore it is easy and better
3	<b>UNSURE OF SUCCESS</b> May never reach the highest rung of ladder which is to attain Krishna’s mercy	<b>SURETY OF SUCCESS</b> There is surety of success because strength is given by mercy of Krishna and Vaishnavas, thus one is easily relieved from bonds of action (2.39) and there is no flaw in the process (2.40) of <i>Buddhi-yoga</i>

S. NO	SANKHYA-YOGA (Philosophical speculation)	BUDDHI-YOGA (Krishna consciousness)
4	<p><b>INITIAL PURIFICATION REQUIRED BY PRESCRIBED DUTY</b> A gradual path of purification of senses by philosophical process</p>	<p><b>ENDS AND MEANS ARE THE SAME</b> Krishna consciousness is itself the purificatory process</p>

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.3 & 3.4:** Premature renunciation performed before sufficient purification at the karma stage, will neither bring purification nor liberation.

### Text 3.4

**THEME: Premature Renunciation carries no benefit** – Premature Renunciation of prescribed duties will neither lead to freedom from reaction (Purification of heart) nor Perfection (Success or Liberation) – Thus no benefit achieved

#### PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.4

Renunciation of activity is not a means of purification; it is the result of purification

#### FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.4

- (a) **When does one accept renounced order** – only when one is purified by the discharge of prescribed form of duties
- (b) **Purpose of “prescribed duties”** – To purify the hearts of ‘materialistic men’
- (c) **“Refutation of empiric philosophers that by adopting *sannyasa* one becomes “As Good as Narayana”**
  - Disadvantage of *sannyasa* without purification
    - Disturbance to social order
    - No success and no freedom from reaction.
- (d) **Practical application: Srila Prabhupada compares such ‘renunciation of activity’ to the ‘power of *buddhi-yoga*’** –
  - *Ref Bg. 2.40 “nehabhikramo naso...”* – Even a little endeavor in transcendental service of Lord, even if performed without the discharge of prescribed duties, whatever he may be able to perform directly purifies and saves one from the greatest difficulties

### Text 3.5

**THEME: *Sankhya-yoga* is impractical because soul is always active**

- ❖ Everyone is forced to act helplessly according to the qualities acquired from the modes of material nature
- ❖ Therefore no-one can refrain from doing something, not even for a moment

### FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.5

- (a) **Premature *sannyasa* is harmful**
- Premature renunciation is harmful because soul is always active
    - Either it has to be engaged in service of Krishna or
    - Under illusory energy where it may acquire three modes
- (b) **Thus this verse sets criteria on when one should take *sannyasa***
- Depending on the kind of modes one is affected by, *sastras* present different prescribed duties
    - to purify us from affinity of modes
    - to bring us to the level of jnana, with the knowledge of difference between body and soul
  - Thus when sufficiently purified, one can take *sannyasa*
- (c) **“Ultimate goal of *Sannyasa*, or any purificatory processes is to reach to the point of becoming Krishna conscious” (Ref. SB 1.5.17)**
- (d) **Krishna consciousness turns yoga-ladder into an elevator** – Therefore contact with Krishna (through contact with devotee) at any step of yoga ladder will speed up the process of purification

### Text 3.6

**THEME: Condemns “An unfortunate renunciant” who renounces without purification**

- ❖ **Defines ‘pretender’ or ‘*mithyacarah*’** – He restrains the senses of action but mind dwells on sense objects

### FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.6

**This purport focuses on some possible characteristics of such pretenders**

- (a) **Show-bottle spiritualist** – They make of show of yogic meditation which is “of no value”
- (b) **No value of the show of meditation**
- It is of no value because “mind is impure”, dwelling upon sense enjoyment
  - His knowledge has no value because the effects of such a sinful man’s knowledge are taken away by illusory energy of the Lord
- (c) **Greatest cheaters** – May speak dry philosophy to bluff sophisticated followers, but they are the greatest cheaters
- One who makes a show of being a yogi while actually searching for the objects of sense gratification must be called the greatest cheater
- (d) **What they should understand** – They should understand the following:
- For sense enjoyment one can act in any capacity of the social order,
  - But if one follows the rules and regulations of his particular status he can make gradual progress in purifying his existence



#### **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.6 & 3.7:**

Next Krishna compares an attached *sannyasi* and a detached householder

**Text 3.7\***

**THEME:** Appreciates a “Sincere dutiful householder” to be better than “Attached or *Mithyacarah* Sannyasi”

- ❖ One should sincerely try to control active senses by the mind and begin Karma-yoga without attachment

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXTS 3.6 – 3.7**

- Taking to quick renunciation before one is qualified may be an attempt to acquire subtle sense gratification through profit, adoration and distinction. Krishna mockingly contrasts this pseudo-renunciation with the honest attempt at purification through the regulations of *karma-yoga*
- We should always act according to our level or position and never try to imitate higher levels, without purification; and thus follow the guidance of *guru, sadhu* and *sastra*

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.7**

- (a) **What is Prime ‘*svārtha-gati*’ or the ‘goal of self-interest’**
  - To reach Vishnu, which implies to be free from material bondage and enter God’s kingdom
- (b) **Purpose of ‘*Varnashrama*’ institution** – Designed to lead one gradually to this ‘goal of self-interest’
  - This implies that a sincere householder can also reach this destination by regulated service in Krishna consciousness
- (c) **“Sincerity” means**
  - Live a controlled life based on *sastras* and
  - Carry out your business without attachment
- (d) **“Sincere sweeper is better than charlatan meditator”**, who adopts show-bottle spiritualism to cheat innocent public

**Text 3.8**

**THEME:** Recommends Arjuna that his prescribed duty as *ksatriya* is “Fighting or Work” and not “renunciation”, as per discussion in Text 2.47 “*Karmany evadhikaras te...*”


- ❖ One cannot even maintain one’s physical body without work

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXTS 3.8**

Prescribed duties are too important to be capriciously abandoned. Besides the value in purifying the heart, they also maintain a balanced society and even one’s physical health

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.8**

- (a) **Two examples of pretenders**
  - Many pseudo-mediators who misrepresent themselves as belonging to high parentage, and...
  - Great professional men who falsely pose that they have sacrificed everything for the sake of advancement in spiritual life
- (b) **Prescribed duties are meant to 'cleansing of heart'** (Refer to Text 3.4 Focus of Learning box)
- (c) **What is the heart's contamination or the polluted propensities** – Desire to lord over material nature which manifests as the desire for sense gratification
- (d) **Renunciation for the purpose of maintenance of body and soul is condemned in this verse**
  - Without purification by prescribed duties, one should never attempt to be a so-called transcendentalist

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.8 & 3.9:** Arjuna wanted to avoid work out of fear that he will develop material attachments and desires and especially he fears the reaction that follows this work. Lord speaks Text 3.9 to differentiate ordinary entangling work from '*Karma-yoga*', which carries one to liberation.

**Text 3.9\***

**THEME: Work done as a sacrifice (yajna) for satisfaction of Vishnu is a means of liberation from all bondages**

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.9**

- (a) **Meaning of 'yajna'** – It refers to Lord Vishnu or Sacrificial performance
  - Some references given are as follows:
    - Vedas: "yajna vai visnu" – "Purpose of sacrifice" is pleasure of Vishnu
    - Vishnu-purana – Goal of *varnashrama* – Satisfaction of Vishnu
- (b) **Krishna Consciousness is process of 'Yajna' as per this verse because**
  - The same purpose is served whether one performs 'prescribed yajnas' or 'directly serves Lord Vishnu'
  - Also, *varnashrama* institution also aims at satisfying Lord Vishnu or Lord Krishna
- (c) **"Work in Krishna Consciousness"** – An art of doing work which requires expert Guidance
- (d) **PRACTICAL APPLICATION: How to perform 'work in Krishna consciousness'**
  - Act diligently and under expert guidance of a devotee
  - Not at all for sense gratification but all for Krishna's satisfaction
- (e) **Benefit of such action in Krishna consciousness**
  - Freedom from reaction
  - While performing one is in liberated state
  - Gradual elevation to love of God
  - Entrance into the kingdom of God
- (f) **Conclusion of Section II:** Text 3.9 elevates the '*Niskama-karma*' of Texts 3.3 to 3.8 to the level of *bhakti* by including knowledge of Vishnu

**SUMMARISED THEME 3A  
YOGA LADDER**

- (a) **KARMA-KANDA**
  - Encourages regulated sense gratification
  - Meant to bring general mass of people to the platform of religiosity
  - Purifies the practitioner in many ways:
    - Regulation brings detachment which fosters knowledge
    - Gradually Vedas expose him to Jnana and Upasana sections
    - Results of Yajna gives him faith in Sastras
    - Motivates him to associate with Brahmanas who give higher knowledge
  - Gradually the practitioner finds the 'futility of material life' and makes 'transcendence as his goal'
- (b) **SAKAMA-KARMA-YOGA** – Understands transcendence as the goal
  - Frustration in material life / Desires purification
  - Attempts to renounce fruits of labor
  - But attachment to material desires (fruits) still linger on
- (c) **NISKAMA-KARMA-YOGA** – Gives up the attachment to the fruits of work, but still attached to the work itself
- (d) **JNANA-YOGA**
  - Platform of philosophical enquiry
  - Detached from both, 'action' and the 'fruit of action'
- (e) **ASTANGA-YOGA**
  - Achieved when *jnana-yoga* elevates to the point of meditation
- (f) **BHAKTI-YOGA**
  - Can permeate any of the stages mentioned above other than Karma Kanda , but generally does not fully manifest before the deep realisation evolved at the Jnana stage (*Ref. Bg. 7.19 "Bahunam janmanam...."*)

**THE EXTENDED YOGA LADDER**

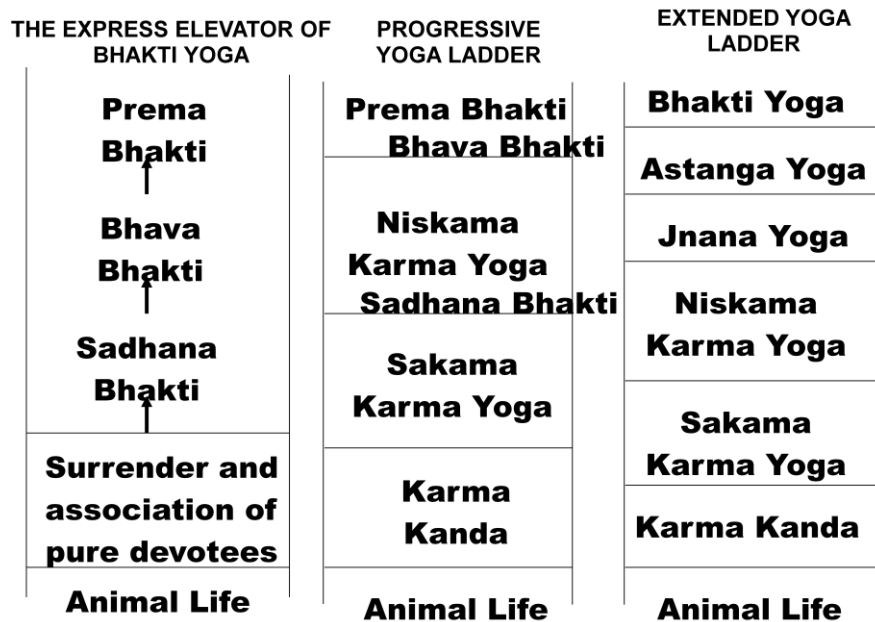
<b>ENTERS SUN PLANET</b>	<b>Bhakti Yoga</b>	<b>SIDE-TRACKING:</b>
<b>SUN DISK</b>	<b>Astanga Yoga</b>	→ <b>Mystic powers (yogis)</b>
<b>SUNSHINE</b>	<b>Jnana Yoga</b> No work (activity)	→ <b>Accumulating knowledge (jnanis)</b>
	<b>Niskama Karma Yoga</b>	
	<b>Sakama Karma Yoga</b>	→ <b>Fruits of work, fame or material enjoyment (karmis)</b>
	<b>Karma Kanda</b>	
	<b>Animal Life</b>	



**PROGRESSIVE YOGA LADDER**



**EXPRESS ELEVATOR vs YOGA LADDERS**




**PLEASE NOTE:** These diagrams have been extracted from His Grace Brhat-mrdanga Prabhu's Yoga Ladder course notes. An elaborate explanation of the Yoga ladder can be found in texts 3.9 & 3.16 in the Chapter 3 Appendix.

## SECTION III (3.10 – 3.16) FROM KARMA-KANDA TO KARMA-YOGA

### PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION III

- Lord Krishna has designed the material world to encourage sacrifice
- He does this by making material advancement dependent upon yajna
- By worshipping the Lord for material well-being, one becomes purified and advances

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION II & SECTION III:** If a person is too attached to material life, and cannot perform *Niskama karma-yoga*, for them Krishna describes the yoga ladder from lowest rung and gradually moving higher; from *Karma-kanda* to *Karma-yoga*. Srila Prabhupada ends all the purports in Section III by glorifying the supremacy and the need of *Sankirtana-yajna*


### Text 3.10

**THEME:** Krishna explains Vedic *karma-kanda* system – Live happily in this world and gradually achieve liberation

- ❖ Principle behind the concept of *karma-kanda* – By satisfying desires in a religious way, those who are attached will be purified

### FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.10

- (a) **Purpose of material creation**
  - A chance offered to conditioned souls to come Back to Godhead
  - To “Learn how to perform *yajnas*” for satisfaction of Supreme
- (b) **Benefit of *yajnas*:**
  - To get happiness in material world and
  - To purify the heart of the living entity
  - Later enter into kingdom of God and thus get ultimate liberation
- (c) **Cause of conditioning in material world** – Forgetfulness of our relationship with Krishna
- (d) **Purpose of Vedic Principles:** To help us in understanding this eternal relationship
- (e) **Understanding of the Lord as “*Pati*”** (Only master for all the living entities)
  - *Ref. Vedic hymns – “Patim visvasyatmesvaram...”*
  - *Ref. SB 2.4.20 – Vishnu is the only ‘pati’ or ‘Lord of all living entities’*
- (f) **Best yajna to satisfy Vishnu in the Age of kali** – “*Sankirtan-yajna*” – which is easy and sublime
  - Introduced by Lord Caitanya (*Ref. SB 11.5.32: “krsna-varnam...”*)
  - *Ref Bg. 9.14: “satatam kirtayanto...”* – Mahatmas constantly glorify the Lord

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.10 & 3.11:**  
Two results of sacrifices are:

1. Fulfilling all material desires (3.11 – 3.14)
2. Purify the heart to elevate one out of the material world (3.15 – 3.16)

**Texts 3.11 – 3.12**

**COMMON THEME: How our desire can be fulfilled in material world by demigod worship**

- ❖ Demigods being pleased by sacrifices will please the living entities; thus by co-operation between men and demigods prosperity will reign over all (3.11)
- ❖ Without *yajna*, one is a thief – One who enjoys the gifts without offering them to the demigods is certainly a thief (3.12)

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.11 – 3.12**


- This entire process is designed to foster a mood of dependence and service within the hearts of materialistic people
- With this goal in mind Krishna explains that those who receive the fruits of sacrifice without recognizing (and consequently offering back to) the Lord and the demigods, is a thief partaking of sinful life

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 3.11 – 3.12**

- (a) **“Who are demigods (3 different definitions)**
  - Empowered administrators of material affairs
  - Innumerable assistants in different parts of the body of Supreme Personality of Godhead
  - Authorized supplying agents on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead
- (b) **Function of the demigods (3.11)**
  - Supply all the benedictions necessary to keep body & soul together
  - Their pleasure and displeasure depend on the performance of *yajna*
- (c) **Chief purpose of all *yajnas* – Ultimate satisfaction of *Yajna-pati* “Vishnu” (3.11) – Ref. Bg. 5.29 “bhoktaram...”**
- (d) **Benefits of “*yajna*” (3.11)**
  - No scarcity of the supply of natural products – thus happiness in this world is guaranteed
  - Side Benefits: Gradual purification to help ultimate liberation – this happens in the following steps:  
When eatables are sanctified by *yajna* → Existence is Purified → Finer tissues in memory are sanctified → Thus one can think of path of liberation → All these combined lead to Krishna Consciousness, the great necessity of present day society
- (e) **For whom, sacrifice to demigods is recommended, if ultimate beneficiary is supposed to be Vishnu**
  - This is for one who cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead
- (f) **Basis of different *yajnas* – They are recommended based on different modes of different person. Ultimate Goal of all *yajnas* is gradual promotion to transcendental position**
- (g) **All material necessities come through *yajna* e.g.**
  - All eatables, either vegetarian or non-vegetarian (because all animals subsist on vegetation)
  - Heat, light, water, air etc.
  - All manufacturing enterprises

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 3.11 – 3.12 continued...**

- (h) **Purpose of all these material supplies**
- To keep body and soul together for the self-realization
- (i) **“Dangers” of not performing *yajnas***
- One is called a ‘thief’ – Because one forgets the purpose of creation and takes all the supplies for sense gratification and thus enjoys the gifts without offering to the demigods in return (3.12)
  - Society of thieves can “never be happy” because they have no aim in life (3.12)
  - “Gets sinful reaction” (3.13)
- (j) **Easiest *yajna* for this age – *Sankirtana-yajna*** inaugurated by Lord Caitanya

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.12 & 3.13:** Arjuna, however, could think, “I don’t need *yajnas*, demigods and opulent necessities of life. Nor must I perform *yajnas* to live. I will go to the forest and live by begging. I won’t take from the demigods, so I won’t be sinful by not offering *yajnas* to them. Not only won’t I be a thief, but I won’t take part in this ghastly, sinful warfare.”

Krishna replies in the next two verses. Krishna in Text 3.14 especially warns Arjuna that even in the forest, all food is nurtured by rain coming from the demigods. Therefore he cannot avoid his obligation to perform the sacrifices born of his prescribed duty.

**Text 3.13**

**THEME: Devotees get freed from all sins**, because they eat food which is first offered in sacrifice and thus they experience real peace and happiness

- ❖ Those who prepare food for personal sense enjoyment, verily eat only sin

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.13**

- (a) **Definition of ‘*Santas*’** – Devotees who are always in love with lord
- Ref. *Brahma Samhita* 5.38 – “*Premanjana...*”
- (b) **Different *yajnas* performed by devotees** – different varieties of devotional service as *sravanam*, *kirtanam* etc.
- (c) **Benefit** – Freedom from “sinful reaction”
- (d) **“*Sankirtana-yajna*”** : “**Easy process to happiness and peace**” for all people because without *yajna*, one is thief and sinful, and thus no happiness
- (e) **How devotees are freed from sinful reactions** – because they eat food first offered in sacrifice
- (f) **Fate of those who prepare food for their own self** – They are thieves and sinful – Thus there is no happiness



**PLEASE NOTE:** Refer to the Summarized Theme 3B “Cycle of Sacrifice” diagram below (After Text 3.15) which covers the translation of Texts 3.14 – 3.15

**Text 3.14**

**THEME: Cycle of sacrifice** – Sacrifice brings rains which nourishes the crop (food grains) which make living entities prosperous and happy

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.14**

- (a) **Why there is no need to worship demigods. Because:**
- Demigods are only the appointed officers for material management
  - Vedas give sacrifices to satisfy these demigods to achieve all material supplies
  - Satisfying Krishna satisfies all the demigods who are like different limbs of the body; therefore no separate need to worship the demigod
- (b) **Analogy of Krishna consciousness and antiseptic immunity:** Prasadam gives immunity from all material reactions, e.g. Antiseptic vaccine during epidemic
- Conclusion – Krishna conscious sacrifice provides freedom from all past sins and immunizes against future reactions
- (c) **Dangers of not accepting offered food –**
- Such a person continues to increase the volume of sinful action
  - Thus prepares the next body to resemble hogs and dogs to suffer the resultant actions
- (d) **Role of Sankirtana-yajna even for supply of food and protection from scarcity**
- For all eatables we have to depend upon the production of fields which depends on rains
  - Rains are controlled by demigods who are servants of the Lord
  - And the Lord can be satisfied only by sacrifices
  - Sacrifice for this age – *Sankirtana-yajna*

**Text 3.15**

**THEME: Following the acts of sacrifice as given in the Vedas is equivalent to following the will of Krishna.** Therefore it is purifying and transcendental.

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

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.15**

- *Yajna*, sacrifice, is more than an elaborate ritual. Adherence to one's duties is actually *yajna*. The Vedas prescribe various types of duties for different classes of beings.
- By participating in sacrifice (*yajna*), even with materialistic objective, one comes in contact with transcendence. This is because the Vedas directly emanate from the Lord.
- Sacrifice removes false ego, the sense of self-proprietorship. One can perceive transcendence to the extent that one partakes of sacrifice. Thus spiritual life can be seen as varying degrees of sacrifice for a transcendental cause. It starts with materialists performing *yajnas* to achieve pious sense gratification. The culmination of sacrifice is the life of a pure devotee, pure sacrifice

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.15**

- (a) **"Yajnartha-Karma"** – It implies "Necessity to work for satisfaction of Krishna only" (*yukta-vairagya*). This is more expressly stated here:
- If we have to work for the satisfaction of the *Yajna-purusha*, 'Vishnu', then we must find out the direction of work in Brahman, or the transcendental Vedas

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.15 continued...**

**(b) The need of Vedas:**

- Vedas – They are the codes of working direction
- *Analogy*: Just like one has to work in ordinary life by the direction of the state, one similarly has to work under the direction of the Supreme state of the Lord
- Avoiding the Vedas – Any unauthorized or sinful work, without Vedic direction is called Vikarma

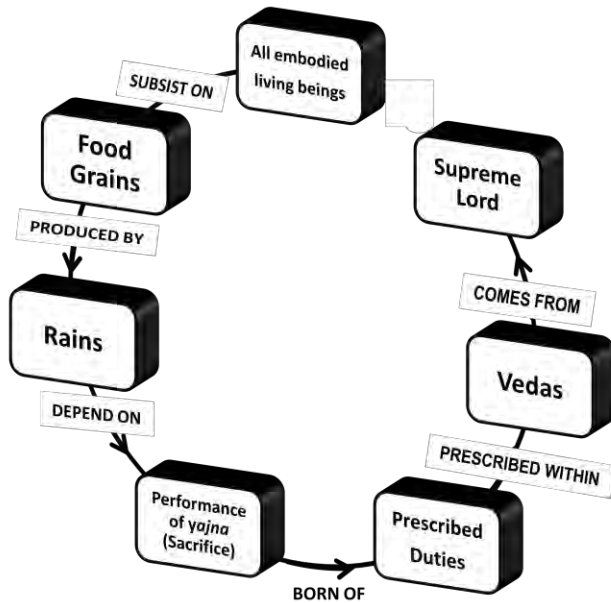
**(c) Omnipotency of the Lord** – This implies He can perform through each of His senses, the action of all other senses. 3 examples:

- Speak by breathing air – Vedas emanations from breathing of Lord
- Impregnates material nature by His glance
- Eat by seeing or hearing the words of devotion

**(d) Plan for the living entity**

- All conditioned souls are eager for material enjoyment.
- Vedic directions are designed in a way one can satisfy one’s perverted desires and then return to Godhead, having finished his so-called enjoyment
- Material creation offers conditioned souls to learn the science of *yajna* and attain liberation
- **Importance of Krishna consciousness** – Even those who have not followed the Vedic injunctions may adopt the principles of Krishna Consciousness and that will take the place of performance of Vedic *yajnas* or *karmas*

**SUMMARIZED THEME 3B  
CYCLE OF SACRIFICE (3.14 – 3.15)**



• **PURPOSE OF HUMAN LIFE**

Please the Supreme Lord

• **BEST PROCESS**

Please the Supreme Lord by unalloyed and un-deviated devotional service

• **BEST YAJNA FOR THIS AGE OF KALI**

*Sankirtan-yajna* – Chanting the holy names of the Lord

• **BEST MANTRA TO BE CHANTED**

Hare Krishna Maha-mantra

**CONCLUSION:** Thus All-pervading Transcendence is eternally situated in acts of sacrifice

**Text 3.16\***

**THEME: Emphasizes “Sacrifice is a must”**

- ❖ Without following these Vedic prescriptions, selfish activities simply take one into darkness
  - Thus one leads a life of sin
  - Living only for satisfaction of the senses such a person lives in vain

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.16**


- (a) **Condemns the ‘Mammonist Philosophy’ of “Work very hard and enjoy sense gratification”**
- (b) **The cycle of performing *yajna* is an absolute necessity**
  - *Yajna* is important for happiness in this world
  - Also, it helps one in spiritual elevation which is the purpose of human life.
  - *Yajna* process gradually purifies to bring one to the platform of Krishna consciousness – Therefore indirectly it is the practice of Krishna consciousness
    - If by performing *yajnas*, one does not become Krishna conscious, such principles are counted as moral codes
    - One should not therefore limit his progress only to the point of moral codes, but should transcend them, to attain Krishna consciousness
- (c) **Nature’s law for human life** – Human life is specifically meant for self-realisation in either of the three ways: *karma-yoga*, *jnana-yoga* or *bhakti-yoga*
  - *Exception* – No necessity to rigidly follow the prescribed *yajnas* for those transcendentalist who are above vice and virtue
  - But those engaged in sense gratification require purification by performance of *yajna*

**SECTION IV (3.17 – 3.35)**

**NISKAMA-KARMA-YOGA TO SET CORRECT EXAMPLE**

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION IV**

One in full knowledge is above material attachment. He does not need prescribed duties for purification. Still he acts, setting the example for those who are less knowledgeable

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION III & SECTION IV: A *Niskama-Karma yogi* may conclude:** “My prescribed duties are meant to bring material reward. But I do not have any material desire in this life, nor do I desire *Svargaloka*. I know I am not this body. So why should I need to perform my prescribed duties.” In the following verses (3.17 – 3.32) Krishna explains why one freed from material desires should nevertheless perform his duties.

**Texts 3.17 – 3.18**

**COMMON THEME: Self-realized soul is free from all material duties** – Yes, one with no material desires and who is already purified has no need of material duties nor has he any aversion to them

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXTS 3.17 – 3.18**

- Sastra and guru assigns one duty according to his material attachments
- One is given activities to purify him while letting him fulfill his desires in a regulated way
- The only person free from duties is the self-realisation man because he has no desires to fulfill, nor any purification to achieve

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 3.17 – 3.18**

- (a) How a Krishna conscious person is free from all other obligations and prescribed duties, save and except his activities in Krishna consciousness – It is all due to the following reasons:
- **Krishna consciousness purifies** – Due to Krishna consciousness, all impiety within is instantly cleansed
  - **Fixed in identity** – By clearing of consciousness, one becomes fully confident of his eternal relationship with the Supreme
  - **Self-illuminated** – Then one becomes self-illuminated by the grace of the Lord
  - **Loses all material interests** – Such a person is no longer interested in material activities and no longer takes pleasure in material elements like wine, women and similar infatuations
  - **Free from all obligations** – Krishna conscious man does not take shelter of any person, man or demigod; thus free from all obligations

**Texts 3.19 – 3.21**

**COMMON THEME:** Such great people or purified souls perform prescribed duties without attachment to set the proper example for the common man

- ❖ Why a self-realized soul works (3.20 – 3.21):
  - To set the example e.g. Janaka Maharaja
- ❖ How he works (3.19):
  - With detachment from fruits
  - As a matter of duty, under proper guidance
  - For Krishna
- ❖ Benefits of such work (3.19):
  - One attains the Supreme
- ❖ 2 examples of leaders who perform their duties just to “set an example”
  - Janaka Maharaja (3.20)
  - Krishna, Himself as a householder (3.22 – 3.24)

**Text 3.19**

**THEME:** Prescribed duties as the recommended path to attain the Supreme

- ❖ One should act as a matter of duty without being attached to the fruits
- ❖ By working without attachment one attains the Supreme

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.19**

- (a) **Two meanings of ‘Supreme’**
- The Supreme is the Personality of Godhead for the devotees
  - The Supreme is liberation for the impersonalists
- (b) **Certainty of progress for Krishna conscious devotees** – A person acting in Krishna consciousness under proper guidance and without attachment to the results, is certainly making progress towards the Supreme goal of life
- (c) **‘Perfect action of highest degree’ as per Supreme Personality of Godhead’**
- To act on behalf of the Supreme, without attachment for the result
  - *Example of ‘Personal Attachment’* – To be a good man or a non-violent man e.g. Arjuna wants to avoid fighting; but is told to fight for the interest of Krishna



**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.19** continued...

(d) **Vedic rituals vs Krishna consciousness**

- Purpose of Vedic rituals like prescribed sacrifices – They are performed for purification of impious activities that were performed in the field of sense gratification
- Action in Krishna consciousness – Such action is transcendental to the reactions of good and evil work
  - A Krishna conscious person acts only on behalf of Krishna and has no attachment to the results
  - Engages in all kinds of activities but is completely unattached

**Text 3.20**

**THEME: Example of perfection achieved by a leader by performance of prescribed duties**

- ❖ Kings such as Janaka attained perfection solely by performance of prescribed duties
- ❖ Therefore perform your work just for educating the people in general

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.20**

- (a) **Why Janak Maharaja had no obligation for Vedic prescribed duties** – Because he was a self-realized soul
- (b) **Why still he performed his prescribed duties**
  - Just to set an example
  - As the King of Mithila, he had to teach his subjects how to perform prescribed duties
- (c) **Another example** quotes by Srila Prabhupada to emphasize the need for prescribed duties – Krishna and Arjuna fought on the battlefield to teach people in general that “violence is necessary where good arguments fail”
- (d) **How experienced persons in Krishna consciousness act**
  - Without any interest in the world; still works to teach the public how to live and how to act
  - Experienced persons act in such a way that others will follow

**Text 3.21\***

**THEME: A leader should perform prescribed duties to set an example for others**

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.21**


- (a) **Definition of ‘Acarya’** – An ideal teacher who teaches by perfect personal behavior
- (b) **Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on ‘teaching’**
  - One should behave properly before he begins teaching
  - *e.g.* A leader cannot teach the public to stop smoking if he himself smokes
- (c) **What are the ‘Standard books/scriptures for humanity’** – The revealed scriptures like *Manu Samhita* and similar others
- (d) **What is the ‘basis of leaders’ teachings’** – These should be based on the principles of such standard sastras

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.21 continued...**

- (e) **Examples of 'Natural leaders' and their 'responsibility'**
- Natural leaders – The King or the executive head, the father and the school teacher
  - Responsibility – They have great responsibility to their dependents to help them progress on the spiritual path
- (f) **Srimad Bhagavatam's recommendation for progress** – Follow in the footsteps of great devotees

**Texts 3.22 – 3.24**

**COMMON THEME: Second example of performing duties as a leader** – “Krishna also performs prescribed duties” although He has no material desires

 **PLEASE NOTE:** Points of the purports for Texts 3.22 – 3.33 are included as some of the sub-points below; as such there is no individual Focus of Learning section for these texts; This is however, a separate Focus of Learning section for Text 3.24

- ❖ **Why He has no prescribed duties** (Bg. 3.22)
  - There is no work prescribed for Me within all three planetary systems
  - Nor am I in want of anything; Nor have I the need to obtain anything
  - Srila Prabhupada gives a supporting reference – *Ref Svetasvatara Upanisad Bg. 6.7-6.8* – Describes Krishna as Supreme self-sufficient, beyond all the prescribed duties
    - **Conclusion** – Since everything is in full opulence in the Personality of Godhead and is existing in full truth, there is no duty for the Supreme Personality of Godhead
- ❖ **Why He still carefully performs prescribed duties** (Bg. 3.23)
  - To set example
  - To keep social tranquility for progress in spiritual life (Bg. 3.23)
  - To establish religion (purpose of descent) (Bg. 3.23)
- ❖ **What if He does not follow** (Bg. 3.24)
  - All the worlds would be put into ruination, because all would follow My path
  - Unwanted population (*Varna-sankara*) will be created
  - “I would thereby destroy the peace of all living beings”

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.24**

- (a) **This verse shows 'varna-sankara' is caused by 'not fighting'** and not by 'fighting' (*refutes Bg. 1.40*)
- This refutes Arjuna's argument based on “Destruction of family” as given in Text 1.37 – 1.43
- (b) **'Imitating' and 'following' are not on the same level. The examples are**
- We cannot imitate Krishna's Rasa Lila or lifting Govardhana Hill, but one should follow the instructions
  - Many pseudo devotees of Lord Shiva indulge in smoking ganja and other drugs, but one cannot imitate Lord Shiva's drinking the ocean of poison
- (c) **Suggestion to prevent us from imitating** – One should consider the position of the Ishvaras (controllers) who can actually control the movements of the sun and moon; therefore we cannot imitate the Ishvaras who are super powerful; one should simply follow their instructions

**Text 3.25**

**THEME: Compares attached and detached worker** and thus establishes that self-realized person performs duties to set proper example for common people

- ❖ 'Ignorant' – work with attachment
- ❖ 'Self-realized'
  - Work without attachment
  - To set the example and lead people on the right path
- ❖ **Basis of differentiation** between attached and detached worker – 'Desire'



**PLEASE NOTE:** Text 3.26 is covered after Texts 3.27 and 3.28.

Texts 3.25, 3.27 & 3.28 deal with a common them: The differences between the attached and detached worker.

Texts 3.26 and 3.29 deal with another common them: How a detached person deals with an attached person.

**Texts 3.27 – 3.28**

**COMMON THEME:** Differences in consciousness of 'Ignorant' (Material consciousness) and 'Knower of Absolute Truth' (Krishna consciousness)

- ❖ **Study purports 3.25; 3.27 – 3.28** to find out the differences in the following points:

**ATTACHED WORKER (Ignorance) vs DETACHED WORKER (Knower of Absolute Truth)**

S. NO	DIFFERENTIATING THEME	ATTACHED WORKER (3.27)	DETACHED WORKER (3.28)
1	'One' differentiating factor – <b>Desire</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Desires</b> own sense gratification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Desires</b> Krishna's satisfaction</li> </ul>
2	<b>Convictions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convinced by false ego that he is the doer of everything</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convinced of his awkward position in material association</li> </ul>
3	<b>Knowledge of Identity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Does not know</u> that body is produced by material nature which works under the supervision of the Lord</li> <li>• <u>Does not know</u> that he is under the control of Krishna</li> <li>• <b>Symptoms of nescience</b> (Ignorance or <u>not knowing</u>) – One takes all the credit for doing things independently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Knows</u> his real identity as part and parcel of the Supreme, who is eternal bliss and knowledge</li> <li>• <u>Knows</u> that somehow he is entrapped in the material conception of life</li> <li>• Meaning of "<b>tattva-vit</b>" – Ref. SB One who knows the Absolute Truth in three different features and knows one's factual position in relationship with the Supreme</li> </ul>
4	<b>Engagements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Does not engage</u> his bodily and mental activity in the service of Krishna; because he forgets that the Supreme Lord is Hrsikesha (The master of the senses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Engages</u> himself in the activities of Krishna consciousness and thus naturally gets unattached from activities of material senses</li> </ul>
5	<b>Consequences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One forgets the Supreme Personality of Godhead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Consequence of knowledge</u> is that he is not disturbed by all kinds of material reactions; and considers all reactions to be the mercy of the Lord</li> </ul>

**LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.25 & 3.26:** If a person in knowledge is expected to set an example, then why don't they set an example of renunciation? **ANSWER:** Most people are not qualified to follow the example of renunciation. If an attached person renounces worldly responsibilities, he will eventually try to fulfill desires through irresponsible means

### Text 3.26\* & Text 3.29

**COMMON THEME: How a 'Detached man' relates to a 'Man in ignorance'**


- ❖ Not agitate their minds attached to fruitive activities
- ❖ Not induce them to stop work
- ❖ Engage them in all activities for gradual Krishna consciousness

### PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXTS 3.26 & 3.29

- One who realizes the futility of materialistic activities should not encourage the masses to give up work prematurely
- Instead he should encourage them to work by his own example
- Engaging in the prescribed process of purification slowly but surely brings one to genuine self-realisation, but premature renunciation simply makes one a social parasite

### FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 3.26 & 3.29

- (a) **Why a self-realized soul should not disturb others who are attached to 'fruitive acts' (3.26)**
- **Vedic rituals lead to ultimate goal** – Ref. Bg. 15.15 All Vedic rituals are meant for understanding Krishna, the ultimate goal of life
  - **Conditioned souls study Vedas to a limited end** – Conditioned souls do not know anything beyond sense gratification and they study the Vedas to that end
  - **Give conditioned soul a chance for gradual elevation** – Through regulated fruitive activities and sense gratification as per Vedic rituals, one is gradually elevated to Krishna consciousness
- (b) **What is the end of all Vedic rituals (3.26)**
- Ref. Bg. 15.15 All Vedic rituals are meant for understanding Krishna, the ultimate goal of life
- (c) **Definition of 'Manda' and what are their activities (3.29)**
- **'Manda'** – A lazy person who is too much attached to the bodily consciousness without the understanding of the spirit soul
  - Their activities
    - Accept bodily connections with others as kinsmanship, land of birth as the object of worship and formalities of religious rituals as ends in themselves
    - Engages in social work, nationalism and altruism
- (d) **How devotees are more kind than Lord (3.29)**
- Lord recommends that for such people spiritual realisation is a myth
    - One should not try to agitate materially engrossed persons; better to prosecute one's own spiritual activities
    - Such bewildered persons may be engaged in primary moral principles of life as non-violence and similar materially benevolent work
  - But devotees know the heart of the Lord – They undertake all kinds of risks to engage ignorant men in Krishna consciousness (The Absolute necessity for living entity)

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.29 & 3.30:** While the past several verses have stressed *niskama-karma-yoga* (detached work), the next verse describes *bhakti*.

### Text 3.30\*

**THEME: Discusses the stage of *bhakti-yoga***

- ❖ Recommends to work exclusively for Krishna and teach others to do the same
  - Surrendering all your works “unto Me”
  - With full knowledge of Me
  - Without desires for profit
  - With no claims of proprietorship
  - Free from lethargy, FIGHT!

#### PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 30

The highest level of self-realized work is pure devotional service, above ritualistic religion or dutiful work for purification

#### FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.30

- (a) This verse indicates the “**Purpose of *Bhagavad-gita***”
- (b) ‘**Military discipline**’ as the ‘mood’ in Krishna conscious duties
- (c) **Why such a difficult mood recommended**
  - Duties must be carried out with dependence on Krishna, as in military discipline. Because
    - That is the constitutional position of the living entity – Eternally subordinate to the Supreme Lord
    - Living entity cannot be happy independent of the co-operation of the Supreme Lord
- (d) **Meaning of**
  - ‘**Adhyatma-cetas**’ – One who is fully Krishna conscious and depends solely and wholly on the Supreme Soul without personal considerations
  - ‘**Nirasih**’ – To act on the order of the master without expecting fruitive results
    - E.g. Cashier counting millions of dollars for the employer
  - ‘**Mayi**’ (Unto Me) – Nothing in the world belongs to anyone, but everything belongs to the Supreme Lord
  - ‘**Nirmana**’ (Nothing is mine) – Free from sense of proprietorship
  - ‘**Vigatah-jvara**’ – Without feverish mentality or lethargy
    - Give up any reluctance to fight because of bodily relationships
- (e) **What is the ‘Path of liberation’ recommended in conclusion**
  - **Act according to *Varnashrama*** – Everyone according to his quality and position has a particular type of work to discharge
  - **Act in right consciousness** – Discharge all such duties in Krishna consciousness

### Text 3.31

**THEME: Result of acting according to Lord’s injunctions (Bg. 3.30)**

- ❖ How to follow:
  - With faith
  - Without envy
- ❖ Result – Freedom from all bondage

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.31**

One's ability to advance in spiritual life is directly connected with his faithful and non-envious acceptance of Krishna and His teachings. Even if one is not at the stage of devotion mentioned in Text 3.30, as long as he is sincerely faithful to the words of Krishna, he will ultimately qualify for pure devotional service

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.31**

- (a) **Truth of Krishna consciousness is eternal**
  - The injunction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the essence of all Vedic wisdom and therefore is eternally true without exception
- (b) **Studying *Bhagavad-gita* without faith has no benefit**
  - Many philosophers write commentaries on *Bhagavad-gita*, but have no faith in Krishna
    - Their destiny – Never gets liberated from the bondage of fruitive action
- (c) **Firm faith gives surety of success**
  - But one who has firm faith, even though unable to execute such orders, such a person is surely promoted to pure Krishna consciousness
- (d) **Firm faith, even though unable to execute the injunctions**
  - In the beginning of Krishna consciousness, one may not fully discharge the injunctions of the Lord
  - Still he will surely be promoted to the stage of Krishna consciousness, if:
    - One is not resentful of the principle and
    - Works sincerely without consideration of defeat and hopelessness


**Text 3.32**

**THEME: Flaw of not being Krishna conscious –**

- ❖ Such a person out of envy disregard these teachings and do not follow them
- ❖ Fate of disobedient persons
  - Is considered bereft of all knowledge and befooled
  - Ruined in their endeavors for perfection

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.32**

- (a) **Analogy for 'Disobedience'** – As there is punishment for disobedience to the order of the supreme executive head, similarly there is punishment for disobedience to the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead
- (b) **What is the 'ignorance' and 'destiny' of disobedient soul**
  - He is ignorant of his own self and of the Supreme Brahman, Paramatma and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, due to vacant heart
  - Destiny – Therefore there is 'No hope for perfection'

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.32 & 3.33:** Why do people who transgress your desire not fear punishment from You , as criminals fear from a king? **ANSWER:** Text 3.33 (The next verse)


**Text 3.33**

**THEME: We cannot force someone to give up his conditional nature and material desires**

- ❖ Even a man of knowledge acts according to his own nature
- ❖ Everyone follows the nature he has acquired from the three modes
- ❖ What can repression accomplish

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.33**

- (a) **Only 'platform' to be free from modes** – Transcendental platform of Krishna consciousness (*Ref. Bg. 7.14*)
- (b) **'High education' fails to help** – Impossible to get out of Maya simply by theoretical knowledge.  
Examples:
- Many so called spiritualists pose as advanced in science but inwards or privately, they are completely under the modes of nature
  - One may be academically learned but because of long association with material nature, he is in bondage
- (c) **'Without being fully in Krishna consciousness one should not give up one's occupational duties** – because:
- Krishna consciousness helps one to get out of material entanglement, even though one may be engaged in his material prescribed duties
  - No-one should suddenly give up his prescribed duties and become a so-called transcendentalist artificially
  - Stay in one's position and try to attain Krishna consciousness under **superior training**

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 3.33 & 3.34:** Maya, despite one's intelligence, is invested with the potency to push a conditioned soul away from Krishna consciousness. The next verse answers the question, "If we all are helplessly forced to act according to our natures, what is the use of so many rules in the sastra to regulate our activities?"

**Text 3.34\***

**THEME: Gradually purify them** (conditioned souls) by dovetailing their sense enjoyment propensities according to religious duty

- ❖ Stumbling blocks on path of self-realization (3.34)
  - Attachment and aversion pertaining to senses and their objects
- ❖ How to get out of it (3.34)
  - Do not come under the control of such attachment and aversion
  - There are principles to regulate attachment and aversion

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXTS 3.33 – 3.34**

- Except for the self-realized all people are driven to act by the three modes of nature
- Therefore the sincere aspiring spiritualist follows the path of regulation to gradually purify his modal attachments, while giving him enough sense gratification to pacify his mind
- Still, if one clings on to the concessions given for sense gratification in the sastra, he risks falling down to sinful life

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.34**

- (a) **Cause of material encagement and how to get out**
- Unrestricted sense enjoyment is the cause
  - One can get out by following rules and regulations of the revealed scriptures
    - *e.g.* Sex enjoyment is allowed under the license of marriage ties
- (b) **Explain: “There is always a chance of accident, even on royal road”**
- As long as the material body is there, the necessities of material body are allowed, but under rules and regulations
  - Yet one should not rely upon the control of such allowances – sense gratification under regulation may also lead one to go astray
    - *e.g.* Sense gratification in married life
- (c) **‘One attachment’ leads to all detachments** – What?
- Attachment to Krishna consciousness (Loving service of Krishna)
- (d) **Avoid one detachment** – What?
- To be detached from Krishna consciousness at any stage of life
- (e) **What is whole purpose of all detachments** – Ultimately to become situated on the platform of Krishna consciousness

**Text 3.35\***

**THEME: Never imitate another’s duties** – “It is very dangerous to give up one’s own duty and try to follow someone else’s path”

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

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.35**

The following three angles may help one understand why one should rather perform one’s own duty although imperfectly, than do another’s, although he can do it perfectly

1. **Accepting another’s duty promotes whimsicality and thus ultimately creates havoc** – It creates the option to reject his duty if it proves uncomfortable and thus invites a fall to the platform of accepting and rejecting in terms of sense gratification
2. **Accepting another’s duty causes a social disruption** – Prescribed duties are given not only for personal purification but also to have a stable society of different integrated parts. If one decides to change his activities, those who depend on him for certain needs, may be let down
3. **Accepting another’s duty is not as easy as one thinks** – One’s conditioned tendencies run deeper than he realizes. Giving up one’s natural work is very difficult. Engaging in unnatural work promotes dissatisfaction and thus the risk of falldown to immorality escalates




**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.35**

- (a) **Two kinds of prescribed duties**
- Materially prescribed duties – Duties enjoined according to one’s psycho-physical condition, under the spell of the modes
  - Spiritual duties – As ordered by the spiritual master for the transcendental service of the Krishna
- (b) **Common ‘principle’ for both kinds of prescribed duties** – Following the authorized direction is always good
- (c) **‘Decisive factor’ for material prescribed duties: It is all based on ‘Influence of modes’, e.g.**
- *Brahmana* is in mode of goodness – Non-violent
  - *Ksatriya* is in the mode of passion – Allowed to be violent
- (d) **When one can transcend the level of ‘materially prescribed duties’ –**
- Everyone has to cleanse his heart by gradual process and not abruptly
  - However when one transcends the modes and is fully situated in Krishna consciousness, he can perform anything and everything under the direction of a bona-fide spiritual master.
- Examples:
- *Vishvamitra* was originally a *ksatriya*, but later on acted as a *brahmana*
  - *Parasurama* was originally a *brahmana*, but later on acted as a *ksatriya*
- As long as one is on the material platform he must perform his duties as prescribed according to the modes; at the same time with a full sense of Krishna consciousness

**SECTION V (3.36 – 3.43)**  
**CONQUERING THE ULTIMATE ENEMY: LUST**

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION V**

The arch-enemy of spiritual advancement is **lust**. One can curb lust by following regulations of religious life (sense control) and by cultivating knowledge of the soul’s real nature.

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION IV & SECTION V:** Next, Arjuna asks an important question. After hearing Text 3.34, one may determinedly think, “Yes, from today onward I will steadily do my duty and control my attachments and aversions. I will act only according to sastra.” Experience teaches, however, that such immediate inspirations may prove difficult to adhere to over time. Arjuna, being aware of reality, asks the following question.

**Text 3.36**

**THEME: Arjuna’s enquiry** – There is some force that pushes one to abandon duty and act sinfully, even against one’s own will. What is that force?

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.36**

- (a) **Original nature of living entity**
  - As part and parcel of the Supreme, he is originally spiritual, pure and free from all material contaminations
  - Therefore he is not subject to the sins of the material world
- (b) **Perverted nature of living entity**
  - When living entity is in contact with material nature, he acts in many sinful ways without hesitation
  - **Sometimes against his own will** – He is forced to act even if he doesn't want to
- (c) **Link between 3.36 & 3.37:** What impels sinful action – Supersoul or not?
  - Sinful actions are not impelled by the Supersoul within, but are caused by another cause mentioned in Text 3.37

**Text 3.37\***

**THEME: Lust is that force** which impels one to act sinfully

- ❖ Characteristics of lust:
  1. Born of mode of passion
  2. Changes into wrath (born of the mode of ignorance)
  3. Forces us to act sinfully
  4. All-devouring greatest enemy of living entity

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.37**

- Lust also has its origin in transcendence
- Lust originates when the soul's inherent love for Krishna is refracted back upon himself
- Thus lust, the intense desire to please one's senses, is a reflection of the soul's original intense desire to please Krishna's senses

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.37**

- (a) **When and what contact transforms 'love' into 'lust'**
  - Living entity comes in contact with material creation and eternal love for Krishna transforms into lust, in association with the mode of passion
  - *Analogy:* Milk in contact with sour tamarind transforms into yoghurt
- (b) **Elevate passion (lust) into mode of goodness & not degrade into mode of ignorance – How?**
  - By the prescribed method of living and acting
  - Benefit – Then one can be saved from the degradation of wrath, by spiritual attachment
- (c) **Ever-blissful spiritual entities come to material world under lust. Why?**
  - Because of misuse of their partial independence – service attitude is transformed into the propensity to Lord over
  - Purpose of material creation – To give facility to the conditioned souls to fulfill their lustful propensities

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.37 continued...**

- (d) **When does living entity inquire about reality**
  - When completely baffled by prolonged lustful activities
- (e) **One should inquire – What?**
  - Inquire about the Supreme – Ref. *Vedanta Sutra*: “*atatho brahma-jijnasa...*”
  - Supreme – Who is He? – Ref. *SB* “*janmady asya...*” – *The origin of everything is the Supreme Brahman*
- (f) **What is origin of lust**
  - The origin of everything is in the Supreme – Therefore origin of lust is also in the Supreme
- (g) **How to make ‘lust’ and ‘wrath’ be spiritualized, and thus making them our friends**
  - By desiring everything for Krishna i.e. in Krishna consciousness. Examples:
    - Hanuman used his wrath for Lord Rama
    - Arjuna is induced to exhibit wrath on the battlefield

**Text 3.38**

**THEME: Lust covers the living entity – 3 different degrees of covering**

- ❖ Fire covered by smoke
- ❖ Mirror covered by dust
- ❖ Embryo covered by womb

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.38**

- (a) **Comparisons of 3 levels of covering:**
  - Smoke/fire – beginning of Krishna consciousness
  - Mirror/dust – cleansing by spiritual methods
  - Embryo/womb – knowledge completely covered
- (b) **Also another category of comparison:**
  - Smoke/fire – consciousness of human beings
  - Mirror/dust – consciousness of birds and beasts
  - Embryo/womb – helpless like trees
- (c) **Human life is an opportunity**
  - A chance to kindle fire of Krishna consciousness by careful handling of smoke
  - One can conquer lust, by cultivation of Krishna consciousness under proper guidance

**Text 3.39**

**THEME: Further characteristics of lust**

- ❖ Covers the living entities pure consciousness
- ❖ Lust is never satisfied
- ❖ *Analogy*: Never satisfied, like fire which is never satisfied by constant supply of fuel (*Ref. Manu Smrti*)

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.39**

- In a completely different analogy, Krishna compares lust to fire.
- Lust is never satisfied with any amount of fuel: it simply grows as it is fed
- The best way to stop lust is to stop feeding it and let it die

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.39**

- (a) **Analogy: Material world is like 'Shackles of sex life' (Maithunya-agara)**
  - This is the punishment for living entities disobedient to the laws of God
- (b) **Lust – symbol of ignorance, because**
  - Advancement of material civilization on the basis of sense gratification means increasing the duration of material existence
  - So-called happiness from sense gratification is the ultimate enemy of the sense enjoyer

**Texts 3.40 – 3.43**

**COMMON THEME: How to conquer the enemy – Lust**

**Text 3.40\***

**THEME: Know the 3 sitting places of lust – Senses, Mind and Intelligence**

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.40**

- (a) **What are the repositories of lust** – Mind and the senses
- (b) **Mind as center of all sense activities** – Reservoir of ideas of sense gratification
- (c) **Intelligence** – Capital and next-door neighbor
- (d) **Intelligence influences the spirit soul** – How?
  - Lusty intelligence influences the spirit soul to acquire the false ego and identify itself with matter, and thus with the mind and senses
  - Spirit soul becomes addicted to enjoying the material senses and mistakes this as true happiness
- (e) **False identification: Manifested in various ways (Ref. SB 10.84.13)**
  - Identifying the body made of three elements with one's own self
  - Considering the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen
  - Considering the land of birth worshipable
  - Goes to place of pilgrimage simply to take a bath rather than meet men of transcendental knowledge

**Text 3.41\***

**THEME: Regulate the senses** – *Since* the senses are the weakest, they are the easiest to begin conquering lust with. Therefore destroy lust in senses by following religious regulations

- ❖ Lust as destroyer of '*jnana*' (knowledge) and '*vijnana*' (self-realisation)

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.41**

- One's senses are influenced by lust when he feels attracted to pleasure and repulsed by pain
- The senses send images of desirable and undesirable objects to the mind

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.41**

- (a) **What is 'jnana' and 'vijana'**
- **Jnana** – Knowledge of the self as distinguished from the non-self
  - **vijana** – Specific knowledge of the spirit soul's constitutional position and his relationship to the Supreme Soul
- (b) **Learn Krishna Consciousness from Bhagavad-gita**
- *Ref. SB 2.9.31: "The knowledge of self and Superself is very confidential and has to be understood as explained by the Lord Himself"*
  - What is Krishna Consciousness based on *Bhagavad-gita*?
    - Living entities are part and parcel of the Lord, and simply meant to serve the Lord
- (c) **Krishna consciousness protect love from deteriorating into lust**
- Lust is only the perverted reflection of 'Love of God', which is natural for every living entity
  - Krishna conscious education from the very beginning prevents that natural love from deteriorating into lust
  - When 'love of God' deteriorates into lust, it is very difficult to return to the normal condition
- (d) **Power of Krishna Consciousness** – 'Even a late beginner benefits and can become a lover of God by following the regulative principles of devotional service'

**Text 3.42**

**THEME: Hierarchy of sitting places of lust**

- ❖ Working senses are superior to dull matter
- ❖ Mind is higher than the senses
- ❖ Intelligence is higher than the mind
- ❖ Soul is higher than the intelligence

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.42**

- (a) **Senses are superior to matter, because**
- The senses are different outlets for the activities of lust
- (b) **Solution to the whole problem**
- Understand the constitution of the soul and engage in the direct connection with Krishna in Krishna-Consciousness
  - In Krishna Consciousness – these outlets (senses) are not in use to exhibit lust
- (c) **Only stoppage of bodily action does not help**
- Bodily action means function of the senses and stopping the senses means stopping all bodily action
  - But the mind is always active, even though the body may be silent *e.g.* dreaming
  - Therefore the soul has to be directly engaged with the Supreme, then all other subordinates (intelligence, mind etc) follow
    - *Ref. Katha Upanisad:* Soul is referred to as "*mahan*" because superior to all, senses, mind and intelligence
    - *Ref. Bg. 2.59: "param drstva nivartate..."* – Higher taste

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.42 continued...**

(d) **Solution to the whole problem**

- Directly understanding the constitutional position of soul is the real solution
- By complete surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead
  - By intelligence one engages the mind in Krishna consciousness
  - *Analogy*: Even though the senses are very strong like serpents, they will no more effective than serpents with broken fangs

(e) **CAUTION!** Even though the soul is the master of intelligence and mind, and the senses also, still, unless it is strengthened by association with Krishna in Krishna consciousness, there is every chance of falling down due to the agitated mind

**Text 3.43\***

**THEME: Steady the mind by deliberate spiritual intelligence** (Krishna consciousness)

- ❖ Knowing that the soul is higher than material senses, mind and intelligence, take strength to defeat the enemy
- ❖ By spiritual strength conquer this insatiable enemy lust

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF TEXT 3.43**

- Images of lust arise in the mind and attack the intelligence. If defeated, the intelligence is commandeered to make plans for fulfilling the lusty desires of the mind
- Thus lust enters through the senses and conquers the mind and intelligence

**FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 3.43**

(a) **Essence of Chapter 3**

- Do not give up work and prescribed duties all of a sudden
- Greatest enemy of conditioned soul – Desire for over-lording and for sense gratification, which are manifestations of lust
- Gradually develop Krishna consciousness and then one can be situated in a transcendental position unaffected by mind and senses – by the help of steady intelligence directed towards one's pure identity
- Chapter 3 is conclusively directed towards Krishna consciousness by knowing oneself as the eternal servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and not the impersonal voidness as the ultimate end

(b) **In Immature stage** – 'philosophical speculations' and 'artificial attempts to control senses by yoga' fails to help

- **Recommendation:** One must be trained in Krishna Consciousness by higher intelligence

**SUMMARISED THEME 3C**  
**CHARACTERISTICS OF LUST (3.37 – 3.41)**

1. Born of mode of passion (3.37)
2. Changes into wrath (born of the mode of ignorance) (3.37)
3. Forces us to act sinfully (3.37)
4. All-devouring greatest enemy of living entity (3.37)
5. Covers the living entity's pure consciousness (3.38)
  - As smoke covers fire
  - Mirror covered by dust
  - Embryo covered by womb
6. Lust is never satisfied, like fire (3.39)
7. Sitting places of lust – Senses, Mind and Intelligence (3.40)
8. Covers *jnana* (knowledge) and *vijana* (self-realisation) (3.41)

**SUMMARISED THEME 3D**  
**CONCLUSION – HOW TO FIGHT LUST (3.40 – 3.43)**

- (a) **Regulate senses** – Because the intelligence and mind are difficult to control, one begins by regulating the senses
  - How to regulate the senses
    - By devotional service according to sastra
    - Under guru's direction
- (b) **Engage soul in Krishna consciousness** – One can attack the lust in mind and intelligence by contemplating that he is spiritual, superior to the dictates of the senses, mind and intelligence. He can thus practice acting on the platform of spiritual desire (Krishna consciousness) rather than material lust
  - Intelligence is strengthened
  - Mind is engaged in Krishna consciousness
  - Mind engages senses which become serpents with broken fangs (Analogy)
- (c) **If no Krishna consciousness, then:**
  - Senses drag mind
  - Mind drags intelligence
  - Intelligence drags soul into sense gratification

## CHAPTER 3 Appendix

### Selected Texts extracted from “Surrender unto Me”

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#### Introduction

“Buddhi-yoga” is bhakti-yoga, but it literally means the yoga of buddhi, intelligence. Taking the meaning of buddhi as intelligence, Kṛṣṇa’s order would mean that Arjuna, by the use of his intelligence, should avoid all abominable activities. Kṛṣṇa has even emphasized intelligence by using the word buddhi ten times in the final thirty-three verses of the Second Chapter.

We can thus easily imagine Arjuna concluding that he should renounce fighting and thus keep the abominable activity of killing his kinsmen far distant by buddhi-yoga, or linking his intelligence to the Supreme. “But why then,” thinks Arjuna, “is Kṛṣṇa still urging me to fight?”

#### Text 3.3

Śrīla Viśvanatha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the word niṣṭhā (“faith” or “platform”) is significant. Karma and jñāna are two platforms or stages on the path to transcendental consciousness. The karma stage is the platform on which work is recommended, and the jñāna stage is the platform on which one is sufficiently purified and detached to renounce work. They are not separate processes, but two rungs, one above the other, on the yoga ladder. Depending on one’s niṣṭhā (his position, faith or purity of heart), one is recommended to act either on the platform of karma or jñāna. Arjuna has misunderstood this point and is thinking of jñāna and karma as two processes leading in different directions.

#### Text 3.7

This verse describes the dutiful householder as being better situated than the mithyācāra sannyāsī. In his purport Śrīla Prabhupāda glorifies the varṇāśrama system because it leads a conditioned soul gradually toward self-realization.

#### Text 3.9

Verses 3–8 have hinted at niṣkāma-karma, work with both knowledge and detachment. Niṣkāma-karma, in other words, combines karma and jñāna. Niṣkāma-karma allows a soul to be active, but in a detached way, so that he is protected from material entanglement. Higher still, as stated in text 9, is when one’s knowledge increases to include knowledge of Viṣṇu, and the detached activities one then performs are offered to Him with devotion. Niṣkāma-karma is meant to lead to bhakti.

The question arises: “What if a person is overly attached to material life and cannot perform niṣkāma-karma-yoga?” To explain this, Kṛṣṇa now describes the yoga ladder, beginning with the lowest rung and gradually moving higher. The next seven verses (10–16) describe the progressive stages of the yoga ladder from karma-kāṇḍa to karma-yoga.

Every soul in the material world attempts (either subtly or grossly) to position himself—not Kṛṣṇa—as the enjoyer and controller. This is true regardless of the body the soul inhabits. The striving of ignorant animals for pleasure, according to their limited capacity, is the same as that of spiritually undeveloped humans, who, in their attempt to taste sensual pleasure, act in ignorance.

The Vedas and their supplements contain 100,000 lakhs of verses (one lakh equals 100,000); of these, a great majority discuss fruitive activities, and only a small percentage discuss jñāna-kāṇḍa, which leads the living entity toward transcendental knowledge and ultimately to an understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Vedic culture provides a system by which the materi-



ally attached person can satisfy his material desires yet gradually become purified. Therefore such a high percentage of Vedic information centers on karma-kāṇḍa, the performance of sacrifices to reach higher planets and to satisfy superior beings, the demigods.

To become situated under the protection of such a system, one must agree to regulate his enjoyment by the descending authority of Vedic formulas. One following that system does not act simply as he desires. His mood of subservience to God's order in the form of the Vedas—even though his purpose is to attain sense pleasures—is purifying, for he is following Kṛṣṇa's system. By following this Vedic system of sacrifice, one also implicitly accepts the principle that he is not independent; rather, his enjoyment depends upon the satisfaction of higher authorities. Śrīla Prabhupāda confirms this in his purport to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.7.32: "Sacrifices recommended in the Vedic literature for satisfaction of the demigods are a sort of inducement to the sacrificers to realize the existence of higher authorities." Such followers of the Vedas are called karma-kāṇḍīs.

Gradually, by following the Vedic system, one may accept an eternal, transcendental objective to replace his temporary, fruitive goals. With that acceptance, one abandons the designation of karma-kāṇḍī and becomes a karma-yogī. By properly performing his appropriate duties, the karma-yogī will gradually move from sakāma-karma-yoga (attached work) to niškāma-karma-yoga (detached work on the platform of jñāna, knowledge). He can then follow the yoga ladder upward toward liberation, Paramātmā realization and finally devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. His association and desires will dictate how far he actually climbs on his step-by-step ascension of the yoga ladder. The Bhagavad-gītā describes this gradual ascension in Chapters Three through Six.

In addition to the step-by-step process, Kṛṣṇa explains what takes place when, either from the beginning of one's practices or on any rung of the ladder, one attains the association of a devotee and comes to accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and oneself as Kṛṣṇa's servant.

Śrīla Prabhupāda describes this in relationship to Mahārāja Parikṣit's meeting with Śukadeva Gosvāmī, in his purport to Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 2.4.3–4:

The three activities of religion, economic development and sense gratification are generally attractive for conditioned souls struggling for existence in the material world. Such regulated activities prescribed in the Vedas are called the karma-kāṇḍīya conception of life, and householders are generally recommended to follow the rules just to enjoy material prosperity both in this life and in the next. Most people are attracted by such activities. As a great emperor of the world, Mahārāja Parikṣit had to observe such regulations of the Vedic karma-kāṇḍīya section, but by his slight association with Śukadeva Gosvāmī he could perfectly understand that Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Personality of Godhead (Vāsudeva), for whom he had a natural love since his birth, is everything, and thus he fixed his mind firmly upon Him, renouncing all modes of Vedic karma-kāṇḍīya activities. This perfectional stage is attained by a jñānī after many, many births. The jñānīs, or the empiric philosophers endeavoring for liberation, are thousands of times better than the fruitive workers, and out of hundreds of thousands of such jñānīs one is liberated factually. And out of hundreds of thousands of such liberated persons, even one person is rarely found who can firmly fix his mind unto the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

As soon as a person accepts his position as a servant of Kṛṣṇa, though he may be practicing either sakāma-karma-yoga or niškāma-karma-yoga, he is no longer on the same step-by-step path as other practitioners. Although he may not be fully realized and may still have material attachments, nevertheless, he is more fortunate because he has acknowledged the ultimate goal and will, by

steady and appropriate practice, gradually advance in a way that appears parallel to other practitioners but in fact is not.

A devotee who practices sakāma-karma-yoga, for example, will gradually have his material attachments loosened by his performance of appropriate practices. This is also true of the nondevotee sakāma-karma-yogī. The devotee sakāma-karma-yogī, however, is far superior because he has already begun to aspire for the highest goal. The nondevotee sakāma-karma-yogī is on the transcendental path but may never reach an understanding of the highest goal. Therefore he may never reach the highest rung of the yoga ladder.

Additionally, when one proceeds in a step-by-step fashion, his advancement is limited by his own capabilities, but one who sets Kṛṣṇa's service as his goal attains the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and the Vaiṣṇavas. They act as his supports throughout his spiritual journey. The nondevotee faces these two difficulties: He may never understand that the highest rung of the yoga ladder is to attain Kṛṣṇa's service, and he is limited by his own detachment, purity and power to advance. He does not gain the assistance of Kṛṣṇa's descending mercy.

Actually, as Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in his purport to Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 19.149, only a devotee can become niṣkāma, desireless:

If one understands Kṛṣṇa, he immediately becomes desireless (niṣkāma) because a kṛṣṇa-bhakta knows that his friend and protector in all respects is Kṛṣṇa, who is able to do anything for His devotee. Kṛṣṇa says, kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati: "O son of Kuntī, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes." Since Kṛṣṇa gives this assurance, the devotee lives in Kṛṣṇa and has no desire for personal benefit. The background for the devotee is the all-good Himself. Why should the devotee aspire for something good for himself? His only business is to please the Supreme by rendering service as much as possible. A kṛṣṇa-bhakta has no desire for his own personal benefit. He is completely protected by the Supreme. Avaśya rakṣibe kṛṣṇa viśvāsa pālana. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that he is desireless because Kṛṣṇa will give him protection in all circumstances. It is not that he expects any assistance from Kṛṣṇa; he simply depends on Kṛṣṇa just as a child depends on his parents. The child does not know how to expect service from his parents, but he is always protected nevertheless. This is called niṣkāma (desirelessness).

Although karmīs, jñānīs and yogīs fulfill their desires by performing various activities, they are never satisfied. A karmī may work very hard to acquire a million dollars, but as soon as he gets a million dollars he desires another million. For the karmīs, there is no end of desire. The more the karmī gets, the more he desires. The jñānīs cannot be desireless because their intelligence is unsound. They want to merge into the Brahman effulgence, but even though they may be raised to that platform, they cannot be satisfied there. There are many jñānīs or sannyāsīs who give up the world as false, but after taking sannyāsa they return to the world to engage in politics or philanthropy or to open schools and hospitals. This means that they could not attain the real Brahman (brahma satyam). They have to come down to the material platform to engage in philanthropic activity. Thus they again cultivate desires, and when these desires are exhausted, they desire something different. Therefore the jñānī cannot be niṣkāma, desireless. Nor can the yogīs be desireless, for they desire yogic perfections in order to exhibit some magical feats and gain popularity. People gather around these yogīs, and the yogīs desire more and more adulation. Because they misuse their mystic power, they fall down again onto the material platform. It is not possible for them to become niṣkāma, desireless.

The conclusion is that only the devotees who are simply satisfied in serving the Lord can actually become desireless. Therefore it is written: *kṛṣṇa-bhakta niṣkāma*. Since the *kṛṣṇa-bhakta*, the devotee of *Kṛṣṇa*, is satisfied with *Kṛṣṇa*, there is no possibility of falldown.

Thus by studying Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, no one can become bewildered and mistake a rung on the yoga ladder as the goal. Śrīla Prabhupāda mercifully reveals *Kṛṣṇa*’s ultimate desire for the conditioned soul—*sarva-dharmān parityajya*: that he abandon all forms of religion and surrender to Him. Why should we remain incomplete, fixed at one level of the elaborate Vedic system, when we can achieve the system’s full purpose by the simple, easy step of surrender to *Kṛṣṇa*? By writing *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, Śrīla Prabhupāda clearly proved that the Lord’s devotee is even more merciful than the Lord.

### Text 3.16

He lives in vain because human life is meant for spiritual elevation and he has wasted that opportunity. His engaging solely in animalistic endeavors ensures his taking a lower birth. The performance of *karma-kāṇḍa* sacrifices, however, would gradually purify him by redirecting his desires from concentration on the temporal to concentration on the eternal.

Here is how a follower of the Vedic system progresses: Instead of trying to enjoy his senses unrestrictedly, a follower of the Vedas surrenders to Vedic authority, which then regulates his actions and engages him in *karma-kāṇḍa* sacrifices. The goal of those sacrifices is to attain prosperity, either in this life or a future life. Desiring abundance, he may perform a sacrifice to give birth to a son, to reap a bountiful harvest or to overcome a disease. Those are considered low-level sacrifices because their fruits are limited to this life.

Gradually, however, by associating with *brāhmaṇa* priests, he hears about sacrifices that will award him birth on the higher, heavenly planets. Simultaneously, as he lives in this world, he inevitably experiences a variety of miseries. Family members die, droughts occur, his riches are plundered—difficulties must over time arise because that is the nature of the material world. He is pushed to seriously contemplate *Svargaloka*: “Why be satisfied with wealth, a son or health in this life? I can go to *Svarga*, drink *soma-rasa*, dance with beautiful women and wander blissfully through the *Nandakanana* gardens. Why live for a hundred years when I can live for thousands?”

*Karma-kāṇḍa* sacrifices meant to attain either short-term or long-term results are born of the mode of passion. They are performed for selfish, sensual enjoyment. Long-term sacrifices, however, are a step further on the path because they are based on the implicit acceptance of the soul’s eternity. The performer of the sacrifice will think, “I am not this body. Therefore I will perform opulent sacrifices, leave this body behind and attain heaven.” Within that thought is the seed of eternal spiritual life.

Then he hears from his priests that there is distress even in heaven. *Indra* fears attacks on his kingdom. Thus he realizes that he too will experience fear even in *Svargaloka*. Despite having fulfilled his material desires, he recognizes that his heart is still devoid of true satisfaction. Gradually the truth of material reality dawns on him: Birth and death are everywhere, and the material world is temporary, frustrating and miserable.

Over time, he becomes receptive to the philosophy of transcendence. Having heard from his priests about sacrifices, and having experienced their results, he has become more trusting of the priests and the *śāstras*. He has also become more detached from material life, because performing sacrifices has allowed him to taste the happiness of sacrificing the hard-earned results of his work.

His goal slowly evolves. He no longer thinks of attaining more material happiness, but of leaving the material world. Now, after having heard countless verses glorifying karma-kāṇḍa sacrifices and their heavenly results, he is ready to consider the jñāna-kāṇḍa section of the Vedas and to contemplate a nonmaterial, spiritual life based on the soul's eternality. Thus he is no longer a karma-kāṇḍī, but a karma-yogī.

A karma-yogī is someone who has accepted transcendence as his objective. There are two types of karma-yogīs: Brahmavādīs (impersonalists) and devotees. Each may be on one of two levels: sakāma (with material desires) or niškāma (free from material desires). If a Brahmavādī associates with merciful and powerful devotees, he can abandon his attempts to reach the Brahman and aspire for loving service at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Both types of karma-yogīs progress gradually from sakāma to niškāma by dutifully performing their prescribed duties. As their realizations increase, they also become more detached from matter. Thus they leave their performance of sakāma-karma-yoga and climb to the next rung of the yoga ladder and become niškāma-karma-yogīs, performers of dutiful, detached work. Their work is no longer motivated by fruitive desire, and they perform their work on the platform of jñāna.

While progressing in this way, however, the niškāma-karma-yogī may conclude: "My prescribed duties are meant to bring me material rewards. I no longer have material desires. I don't want a son or money or a nice house. I have no desire to go to Svargaloka. I know I am not my body. Because I no longer have material desires, I do not need to perform my prescribed duties."

### **Text 3.21**

Few people consider their own disqualification: "He is more qualified than me, so I should be wary of my tendency to imitate him." If we see another's activities and they seem pleasurable, we immediately want to join in. We do not stop to consider whether such activities will uplift us or degrade us. Kṛṣṇa's instructions to Arjuna are meant to uplift humanity. Even though Arjuna, being highly qualified, might do well by going to the forest and begging, others who are less qualified will become degraded because they will imitate Arjuna without considering their own disqualification for renunciation.

### **Text 3.26**

We may preach to an attached materialist: "It's no use working for māyā. You can't take your gains with you when you die. What will you eternally gain by such work?" Obviously that is true, but Kṛṣṇa herein recommends an additional strategy: encouraging those who are attached to use their work and its fruits for devotional service. Kṛṣṇa again says that premature renunciation, without spiritual realization, leads to degradation.

This verse describes how those with knowledge should relate to those without knowledge. A person with knowledge should, by his example and words, encourage those who are attached to the results of their work to engage them in Kṛṣṇa's service. This is practical. The third line, *joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi*, indicates that we should first work ourselves, and then (as said in the fourth line) engage others in devotional work.

We have already discussed three levels of work: (1) working only for the fruits (karma-kāṇḍa), (2) establishing Kṛṣṇa as the goal yet remaining attached to the fruits (sakāma-karma-yoga), and (3) being completely detached from the fruits of work (niškāma-karma-yoga). In the second form of work, though the mode of passion is still present, one advances from passion to goodness by re-

nouncing a portion of the results of one’s work. A person working in this way will gradually become detached, attain transcendental knowledge and advance toward the transcendental platform.

Two men may be doing similar work, but each may be working with a different consciousness. Superficially it may appear that their work is the same, but a sakāma worker is attached to the fruits of his work and to the specific nature of the work he does. The niškāma worker is detached from the fruits of his work, but remains attached to the work itself. The quality of the work is measured by their attachments.

The highest stage of work occurs when one is detached from the fruits of his work and from the work itself. He continues to work, but his impetus is simply devotional surrender to the order of guru and Kṛṣṇa.

### **Text 3.30**

Kṛṣṇa orders Arjuna to fight, but He also describes the consciousness in which Arjuna should perform that duty. “Without desires for profit” and “with no claims to proprietorship” indicate freedom from the mode of passion. “Freed from lethargy” hints at freedom from ignorance. Knowledge of the difference between the soul and the body is simply born of the mode of goodness (sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam—Bg. 14.17). But “full knowledge” is beyond goodness and is transcendental, as it indicates knowledge of the soul’s eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. When “surrendering all your works unto Me” (mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi) is added to the other above-mentioned requirements, Arjuna’s niškāma-karma, fighting in goodness, becomes bhakti-yoga, detached work done in devotion for Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure. Although Kṛṣṇa has often requested Arjuna to act on the platform of detachment and duty, He now reveals His actual desire that Arjuna fight with devotion.

### **Text 3.34**

According to the dictates of the modes of nature, the conditioned living entity does whatever his mind suggests. Because the mind is surrendered to the senses, whatever we are attached to (rāga), we do, and whatever we are averse to (dveṣa), we avoid. Kṛṣṇa here instructs us that our actions should not be based on attachment and aversion, which are stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization.

The senses are attracted to the pleasures of this world, especially sex and those bought by wealth. They are repulsed by holy places, fasting, selflessly following our spiritual master and other items that limit sense enjoyment. Śāstra directs us to shift our rāga and dveṣa away from sense gratification by encouraging us to perform our duty with the ultimate aim of acting only for Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure. The next verse, therefore, again stresses that we should perform our prescribed duties.

### **Text 3.35**

We should be careful to do our own duty and not the duty of another. Duty, like medicine prescribed by a physician, has its proper, curative effect only upon the patient to whom it has been prescribed. A spiritual master prescribes different duties for different individuals according to their natures.

### **Text 3.37**

Lust is more subtle than wrath. A man of lusty intentions may go undetected. An angry person, however, is easily noticed. Lust inevitably turns to wrath because it cannot be satisfied. Lust burns like fire, and like fire, it is all-devouring. If fuel is added to a fire, rather than satisfying the fire, it makes the fire burn more fiercely. In rāja-nīti (instructions for kṣatriyas on diplomacy) it is said that

an enemy is controlled with words, gifts, a position or finally, punishment. Lust, however, is mahā-pāpām, the mightiest enemy, and most of these ordinary methods will not defeat it. Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments that daṇḍa, punishment, is the only way to deal with lust.

Lust arises from the mode of passion. We should meticulously avoid rajo-guṇa if we wish to be free of lusty desires.

#### **Text 3.40**

Lust is the greatest enemy because it covers our knowledge of the Absolute Truth. And, as it has already been explained in verse 28 of this chapter, it is that knowledge which makes the difference between working for Kṛṣṇa and working for fruitive results.

#### **Text 3.41**

While controlling our senses, however, we should not neglect our intelligence. The intelligence, like a guard, is the next-door neighbor of the soul, and its business is to protect us from māyā. If the guard has been corrupted by lust, however, the situation is as dangerous as when a bodyguard is bribed by the enemy. Thus the materially contaminated intelligence, which works in the service of our enemy, should be neglected. We should instead accept the intelligence of guru, sādhu and śāstra.

#### **Text 3.43**

In this chapter, Kṛṣṇa has glorified transcendental knowledge as that which elevates us from sakāma-karma-yoga to niṣkāma-karma-yoga, from the platform on which we perform our duty with attachment to the platform of detached action. Transcendental knowledge has been described as having the power to purify our consciousness of passion and raise it to goodness. Now, in the final verse of this chapter, Kṛṣṇa has certified transcendental knowledge as being able to award our intelligence the strength to overcome lusty desires. After describing so many of the benefits of transcendental knowledge, Kṛṣṇa will further glorify it in Chapter Four.