

CHAPTER 8

ATTAINING THE SUPREME

Introduction / Connection between Chapter 7 and Chapter 8

- ❖ Last two verses of Chapter 7 – Lord used 6 technical terms
- ❖ Arjuna asks for clarification of these terms and thus asks 8 questions in Texts 8.1 – 8.2
- ❖ First, Krishna answers the first 7 questions and then discusses 8th question in detail
- ❖ Krishna also discusses:
 - *Yoga mishra bhakti* (Devotional service mixed with yoga)
 - *Shuddha Bhakti* (Unmixed, pure devotional service) and
 - Factors that determine soul's destination when it leaves the body

BREAKDOWN OF CHAPTER 8

SECTION I (8.1 – 8.4) — KRISHNA'S ANSWERS TO ARJUNA'S QUESTIONS

- Arjuna asks Krishna about Krishna's words at the end of the seventh chapter and He replies to each one of Arjuna's queries briefly
 - '*Brahman*' is the indestructible living entity
 - '*Adhyatma*' is the living entity's nature, which is to serve
 - '*Karma*' is that activity and its reactions which cause the development of a material body
 - '*Adhibhuta*' is the ever changing material manifestation
 - '*Adhideva*' – He who presides over all the demigods and their planets is *Adhidaiva*, the universal form of the Lord
 - '*Adhiyajna*' – Krishna, as the Supersoul, is within everyone's heart and is *Adhiyajna*, the Lord of all sacrifices

SECTION II (8.5 – 8.8) — REMEMBERING KRISHNA AT THE TIME OF DEATH

- One attains whatever one remembers at the time of death
- Krishna recommends Arjuna to undeviatingly meditate on Him, dedicate his activities to Him and thus attain Him

SECTION III (8.9 – 8.13) — REMEMBERING KRISHNA (Practice remembrance through meditation)

- By meditating on Krishna and His qualities, or by practicing *yoga-mishra-bhakti*, one can think of Supreme Personality of Godhead when quitting the body and reach the spiritual planets

SECTION IV (8.14 – 8.16) — PURE DEVOTIONAL SERVICE (Remembrance of Krishna through bhakti)

- By constant engagement in devotional service, one who undeviatingly remembers Krishna easily attains the Lord's abode, far from this miserable material world

SECTION V (8.17 – 8.22) — COMPARING THE MATERIAL & SPIRITUAL WORLDS / GLORIES OF SUPREME ABODE

- Material world is continually being created and destroyed
- Beyond this ocean of creation and destruction lies Krishna's abode, where He is present and can be attained only by unalloyed devotion to Him

SECTION I (8.1 – 8.4) KRISHNA'S ANSWERS TO ARJUNA'S QUESTIONS

Texts 8.1 – 8.4

COMMON THEME: "Understanding Krishna through proper inquiry"

- ❖ Arjuna asks 8 questions
- ❖ Krishna answers first 7 as follows (8.3 – 8.4):
 1. '**Brahman**' (Spirit) – Indestructible living entity
 2. '**Adhyatma**' (Controller of the body) – Eternal nature, the self (to serve the Supreme)
 3. '**Karma**' (Work/Fruitive activities) – Activity which generates a material body for the living entity
 4. '**Adhibhuta**' (The material manifestation) – Constantly changing physical world
 5. '**Adhidaiva**' (The supreme demigod) – "The universal form" which includes all demigods and their different planets
 6. '**Adhiyajna**' (The enjoyer of sacrifice) – Paramatma in every embodied being, Krishna Himself
 7. **Where does Adhiyajna reside?** – In the heart of all
- ❖ **8th Question –**
 8. How to remember Krishna at the time of death?
 - **Answer to 8th question is the main subject of the rest of chapter**

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.1*

- (a) **Atma** – according to Vedic dictionary – Refers to mind, soul, body and also senses
- (b) **Brahman** – It can refer to the Supreme Absolute Truth or individual soul
- (c) **Purushottama** –
 - Indicates Krishna to be the Supreme Person and not simply a friend
 - He is the Supreme authority able to give definite answers

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.2*

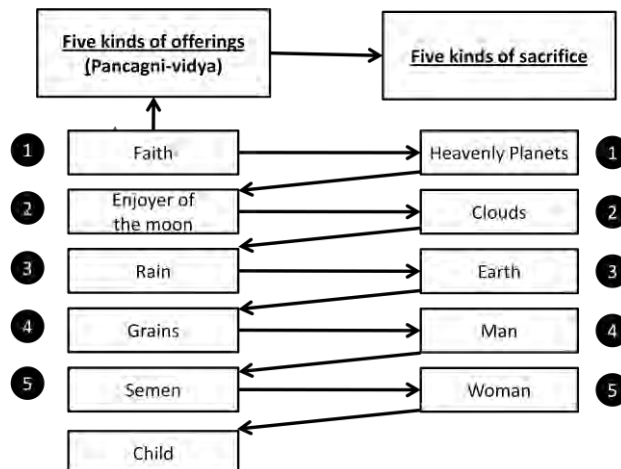
- (a) **Lord of sacrifice (Adhiyajna)** – Can be Indra or Vishnu
 - Vishnu – Chief of primal demigods including Brahma and Shiva
 - Indra – Chief of administrative demigods
 - Both are worshipped by *yajna*
 - The question is "who is the actual Lord of *yajna*"
- (b) **Lord as 'Madhusudana'** – to kill the demon of doubt, not expected to arise in the mind of a Krishna conscious devotee (Arjuna)
- (c) '**Prayana-kale**' means – at the time of death
 - Crucial time when whatever we do throughout life will be tested
 - Indicates Arjuna's anxiety to know the position of the Krishna conscious devotee at death
 - e.g. King Kulashekhar's prayers – He prays to die immediately when healthy because it is difficult to remember Supreme Lord when bodily functions and mind is disturbed
 - *Analogy: "Swan of my mind can enter the stem of Your Lotus feet" (study purport)*

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.3

- (a) **Living entity and Supreme Lord (Both called Brahman) –**
 - Living entity is called ‘Brahman’ because eternal and indestructible, therefore same in quality as Lord
 - But Lord is differentiated by referring to as ‘Para-Brahman’
- (b) **Difference between material consciousness and spiritual consciousness**
 - Material consciousness – “trying to lord over” – results in *karma* (different bodies) – Such consciousness results in generating *karma*
 - *Karma* – It is the varied creation of material bodies by the force of material consciousness
 - Spiritual consciousness – to serve the Supreme
- (c) **Living entity is called marginal entity – Why?**
 - Because the living entity sometimes identifies with matter
 - And sometimes identifies with superior nature – then, he has only one spiritual body
- (d) **What happens when the living entity identifies with matter –**
 - Takes any one of 8,400,000 bodies
 - Basis of transmigration – *karma*
 - For elevation to heaven – performs *yajna* (see “Vedic Sacrificial Process” below)
- (e) **Krishna conscious viewpoint** – Avoid such sacrifices, take direct Krishna consciousness and go back to Godhead
- (f) **This verse refutes impersonal commentators who say – “Brahman takes the form of the *jiva* in material world”. They misunderstand Bg. 15.7**
 - The living entity is an eternal individual supported by two references:
 - Ref. Bg. 15.7: Living entity is an ‘eternal’ fragmental part and parcel of Myself
 - Ref. Vedic literatures – Distinguishes *Brahman* from *Para-Brahman*
 - **Supreme Lord is *Achyuta*** – He never falls; but *jiva* may fall down
- (g) **Vedic sacrificial process** – See diagram below

ACTIONS THAT RESULT IN A MATERIAL HUMAN BODY (8.3 purport)

VEDIC SACRIFICIAL PROCESS
(Chandogya Upanisad)



FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.4

- (a) **Adhibhuta** – Constantly changing physical nature which manifests as six changes of body: birth, growth, sustenance, by-products, dwindling and death
- (b) **Adhidaivata** – Universal form
 - Contemplated by neophytes who cannot approach the Supreme Lord in manifestation as Supersoul
 - Contemplated as follows:
 - Legs – lower planets
 - Head – upper plants
 - Eyes – sun and moon
- (c) **Adhiyajna** – Function of Supersoul
 - Witness of soul’s activities
 - Source of soul’s various types of consciousness
 - Gives individual soul – free independence
- (d) **“Eva”** – Stresses that Paramatma is non-different from Supreme Lord Krishna Himself
- (e) **Who understands the functions of all these manifestations of Supreme Personality of Godhead clearly** – only a pure Krishna conscious devotee

SECTION II (8.5 – 8.8)
REMEMBERING KRISHNA AT THE TIME OF DEATH

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION II

- To attain Krishna, one must remember Him at the time of death. This remembrance is more than a mental trick. The word used in Text 8.5 – 8.6 is ‘bhava’ which means mood. At death, one will automatically remember the mood he cultivated throughout his life
- The most effective means for fixing the mind on Krishna is ‘Harinama sankirtana’

Text 8.5

THEME: This verse stresses the importance of Krishna Consciousness – Whoever remembers the Supreme (Krishna) at the point of death will attain the Supreme destination (attains “My Nature”)

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.5

- (a) **Krishna consciousness means being ‘Purest of the Pure’** – because of constant remembrance of the Supreme Lord who is the ‘Purest of the Pure’
- (b) **Smaran (Remembrance)**
 - It is not possible for an impure soul
 - Purify yourself by practicing remembrance
 - If not practiced, one cannot remember Krishna at the end of his life

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.5 continued...

- (c) **How to practice remembrance** – to be effective at the time of death (8.5 – 8.6)
- Live in the mode of goodness
 - Life dedicated in service to Krishna and thus always thinking of Krishna
 - Constant and incessant chanting of the Holy Name (*best process*) – Srila Prabhupada mentions the full Hare Krishna maha-mantra three times in Texts 8.5 and 8.6 to stress the important of this process
 - Tolerate all impediments like a tree
 - Ref. Lord Chaitanya's Shikshastakam Verse 3: "taror iva..."

Text 8.6


This verse is the basis of Text 8.5

THEME: Mentions the "General Law at the time of death"

- ❖ One's state of mind at the time of death determines the destination attained in the next life

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.6

- (a) **Text 8.6 establishes:**
- "Process of changing one's nature" at the critical moment of death – Srila Prabhupada explains that the best process is chanting Hare Krishna
 - Also establishes that the transcendental absorption in Krishna's service assures next body to be spiritual and not material
- (b) **How to make sure that one thinks of Krishna at death** – Practice remembrance during one's life; not just at death
- (c) **Refutes** – "Thinking anything will give the same result" (Preaching Application)
- (d) **Example:** Bharat Maharaja becoming a deer

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 8.6 & 8.7:** Arjuna may think: "Remembering may be better advice than fighting"; Krishna clears this misconception in Text 8.7. The Lord does not recommend giving up prescribed duties

Text 8.7*

THEME: "Always think of Me in the form of Krishna" and at the same time carry out your prescribed duties of fighting

- ❖ Thus Lord promises the goal – "surety of attaining Krishna" – without doubt

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.7

- (a) **Principle** – Throughout life, Practice remembering Krishna by dedicating mental, intellectual and physical activities to Lord's service *e.g.*
- Mental – Think of Me 'in form of Krishna' and 'by chanting Hare Krishna'
 - Physical – Carry out prescribed duty of fighting dedicated to 'Me'
 - Intellectual – Mind and intelligence fixed on 'Me'
 - Result – 'Freedom from all material contamination' and 'Surety of attaining Me'

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.7 continued...

(b) **How to practice?**

- Chant – Constantly chant Hare Krishna
- Continue Duties – Performing active devotional service through your prescribed duties

(c) **Text 8.7 is an important instruction** to all men engaged in material activities



LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 8.7 & 8.8:

To remember Krishna is so important, that Krishna repeats the same point in the next verse

Text 8.8

THEME: Further stresses the importance of remembering Him: Assurance that such a person who meditates on the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*cf.* Text 8.9 also discusses the aspect of meditation); and who constantly engages in remembering 'Me' (Krishna) will:

- ❖ Will remember Krishna at the time of death and
- ❖ Will attain supreme abode

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.8

(a) **Lord stresses, "The Importance of Remembering Him"** in this verse, this point is a repetition of the previous verse, Text 8.7, by Lord Himself

(b) **Refutes the concept that "Smaran" (remembering Krishna) requires inactivity**

- Thus it refutes the need to give up prescribed duty to remember Krishna

(c) **Most effective means to remember** the Supreme Lord – Chanting Hare Krishna – Benefits of chanting and remembering the Lord:

- Revival of memory of Krishna
- Ear, tongue and mind are engaged in Krishna's service
- Attain Supreme Lord and His planet
- *Analogy: Caterpillar to butterfly* – 'Forcing' the mind to think of Krishna transfers one to Krishna's planet: one achieves same bodily constitution as Krishna

(d) **Thinking of Krishna as a practical process** –

- Constant thinking of Supreme Lord in any of His features is possible by chanting Hare Krishna
- Practice is purifying – At the end of life one transfers to God's kingdom


(e) **Importance of Purusha** – Two points established

- Lord is the 'real enjoyer' and not the living entity, he is the marginal energy and 'meant to be enjoyed'
- Confirms Lord as a person – This connects to Text 8.9 – Which recommends meditating on Lord's form as a person
 - Yoga practice vs Chanting of Hare Krishna – Yoga practice is meditating on Supersoul within; while chanting Hare Krishna fixes the mind always on the Lord

SECTION III (8.9 – 8.13)
REMEMBERING KRISHNA
Practice remembrance through meditation

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION III


- By strict yoga practice one can fix the mind on Krishna's transcendental qualities, and go to Him at death
- Remembrance of Krishna means to meditate on His qualities. This is an important point because it reiterates the Supremacy of Krishna's personality. Qualities arise from personality, not from a void
- Steady yoga practice gives strength for one to focus his mind on Krishna (yoga balena) Preparing for the critical moment of death

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION II & SECTION III:** After "Stressing Remembrance", now He explains How He can be remembered

Text 8.9

THEME: Mentions *10 ways of thinking/meditating on the Supreme*

- ❖ **How to think of Krishna** (*This includes all the points of the purport*)
 1. **Kavi** – Knower of everything (past, present and future)
 2. **Oldest** – All born out of Him
 3. **Controller**
 4. **Smaller than the smallest**
 - Enters into each atom
 - Enters into the heart of the living entity; who is one ten-thousandth the tip of a hair
 5. **Maintainer of everything**
 6. **Beyond all material conception** – All big planets are floating by His energy
 7. **Achintya** – Inconceivable
 - God's energy is beyond our thinking jurisdiction
 - Logic and philosophical speculation cannot touch Him
 - Sign of real intelligence –
 - Accept the principles of sastra *as it is*
 - Avoid useless arguments and speculations
 8. **Always a person** – As indicated by the word '*rupam*'
 9. **Luminous like sun**
 10. **Transcendental, beyond this material nature**
- ❖ Text 8.9 refutes "Absolute Truth as impersonal"; Recommends meditation on personality

 **LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 8.9 & 8.10:** Krishna is thus discussing Bhakti, but Bhakti mixed with aspirations of a yogi seeking liberation from birth and death "*yoga mishra bhakti*". Meditating on Him as possessor of these qualities enables **one to realize Supersoul** who is the goal of yoga practice done by yogis

Texts 8.10 – 8.13

COMMON THEME: Describes 'Practice of these Yogis' (*Yoga-mishra bhakti*). All these practices assist yogis in remembering Krishna; they are not end in themselves

- ❖ Practice *sat-chakra-yoga*, raise life air to *ajna-chakra* (8.10)
- ❖ Chant '*OM*' (8.11)
- ❖ Renounce all sense gratification, especially sex life (8.11 – 8.12)
- ❖ Fix mind on heart (8.12)

❖ Fix mind in devotion to Supreme Personality of Godhead at death (8.10 & 8.13)

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.10

- (a) **Sat-cakra-yoga** recommended in this verse
- (b) **Bhaktya-yukto** – indicates “to fix mind in devotion at death”
- (c) **Yoga-balena**
 - Indicates that without practice of yoga (*Sat-cakra-yoga* or *Bhakti-yoga*) one cannot come to the transcendental stage of remembering the Lord at death.
 - Advises “Practice transcendence through yoga during one’s life”
 - Refutes the idea that – “I will take up spiritual path at old age”

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 8.11 & 8.13 – (These two purports are combined because they share similar theme)

- (a) **Who enters into impersonal Brahman**
 - Those learned in Vedas
 - Who utters “om-kara”
 - Practice celibacy
 - Great sages in renounced order of Life
- (b) **Om and Hare Krishna Maha-mantra**
 - Vedic system – students learn to vibrate *Om* and learn of impersonal Brahman by living in complete celibacy
 - Modern system – No celibacy possible / No such institution
 - Lord Chaitanya preaches according to the injunctions for Kali-yuga
 - Only Yuga-dharma – Holy Name
 - **Om, Brahman and Krishna are non-different** (also study Text 7.8 for *Om* and Hare Krishna)
 - Impersonal sound of Krishna is *Om*
 - Hare Krishna contains *Om*
 - If anyone quits body chanting Hare Krishna – He goes to the spiritual planet
- (c) **Om and Brahman**
 - Brahman although is “one without second” has various manifestations
 - For Impersonalists – *Om-kara* is identical with Brahman

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.12

(a) **Pratyahara** – implies

- Withdraw senses from sense objects
 - Control five *jnanendriyas* (Knowledge acquiring senses) fully
 - No sense gratification allowed
- Mind focused fully on Supersoul
- Life force on top of head

(b) **For Modern Age**

- Above practices – impossible
- Best process – Krishna consciousness
- Somehow fix the mind on Krishna – immediately transcendence achieved


SECTION IV (8.14 – 8.16)

PURE DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

Remembrance of Krishna through Bhakti

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION IV

- The practice of Pure Devotional Service is the qualification for one to attain Lord's favour
- By Lord's mercy the pure devotee is promoted to spiritual realm

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION III & SECTION IV:** Krishna next discusses **pure devotional service** and the nature of 'spiritual world', which one attains by practicing **pure devotional service**

Text 8.14*

THEME: Bhakti Yoga is easier path: Although Yoga practice of Text 8.10 – 8.13 is genuine but **it is easier and more effective** to remember the Lord through unalloyed love and devotion

- ❖ The Lord is easy to be obtained by one:
 - Who remembers 'Me' without deviation
 - Constantly engaged in devotional service

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.14

- (a) Text 8.14 describes the **final destination of unalloyed devotees** who serve Supreme Personality of Godhead in *Bhakti-yoga*
- (b) **Their final destination – Easy to obtain Krishna. Because:**
- No material impediments in devotional service
 - Only qualification is the sincere desire to advance
 - *Jnana/Astanga-yoga* – depends on prior knowledge, renunciation and favourable situations for practice
 - In devotional service, Krishna gives intelligence on how to attain Him
 - *Ref. Bg. 10.10 “dadami buddhi yogam...”*
- (c) **Ananya-cetah** – Refers to Pure *Bhakti-yoga*
- Without mixture of *Jnana/Karma/Hatha-yoga*
 - No other desire but Krishna
- (d) **Pure Bhakti-yogis** (*Ananya chetah* – indicates “No other Desire”)
- *Karmi* – desires sense gratification
 - *Jnani* – desires relief from material misery
 - *Yogi* – desires mystic abilities
 - *Pure devotee* – desires only Lord’s pleasure / Ready to even go to hell (cf. CC : Niskama gets perfect peace)
- (e) **Satatam / Nityasah** – means always / regularly / every day – refers to pure devotees constantly remembering Krishna and meditating on Him – Thus wins Lord’s attention
- (f) **Creating Vrindavan** – pure devotee can create Vrindavan anywhere – *e.g.* Sri Advaita tells this to Lord Caitanya – “Wherever you are, O Lord, there is Vrindavan”
- (g) **Five ways of Bhakti-yoga** – *Shanta, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya* and *madhurya rasa*
- (h) **Great blessing of Krishna conscious process of chanting Hare Krishna maha-mantra is** – “Pure devotee and Lord never forget each other for a moment”

Texts 8.15 – 8.16

COMMON THEME: Describes “Result achieved by practicing pure bhakti”

Text 8.15*

THEME: Such ‘Bhakti-yogis’ achieve...

- ❖ Krishna directly (the highest perfection)
- ❖ Never fall down from highest Vaikuntha planet
- ❖ No return to temporary world because
 - Material world is full of miseries
 - And they have attained the highest perfection

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.15

- (a) **Text 8.15 refers to “Personalist devotees”** of the Supreme Lord Krishna – They achieve highest perfection and are supreme souls (Mahatmas)
- (b) **Ref. Vedic Literatures** describe the ‘supreme planet’ as ‘Avyakta’ and ‘Akshara’ and ‘Parama-Gati’
- **Avyakta and Akshara** – Planet beyond Material vision and inexplicable
 - **Parama-Gati** – The Supreme destination, destination for Mahatmas
- (c) **Describes ‘Mahatmas’**
- Receive in Parampara – They receive transcendental messages from the realised devotees
 - Gradual development – They gradually develop devotional service in Krishna Consciousness
 - Highest Absorption – They get so absorbed that No desire of any elevation to any Material or Spiritual planets
 - Only desire – Only want Krishna and Krishna’s satisfaction – ‘The highest perfection of life’

Text 8.16*

THEME: Krishna glorifies the Supreme abode, by contrasting it to material world

- ❖ From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place.
- ❖ But one who attains to ‘My’ abode, never takes birth again

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.16

- (a) **To come to “Krishna consciousness is must” if you want to go to Krishna’s abode**
- All other yogis have to come to this level
- (b) **What about heaven** – It is a place of return (birth, old-age, disease, death)
- (c) **How to achieve Brahmaloaka** - By *Panchagni-vidya* of sacrifice (*Chandogya Upanisad*)
- (d) **Fate on Brahmaloaka**-If we do not cultivate Krishna Consciousness, we must return to earth.
- (e) **Scope of progress on higher planets** – If they progress in Krishna consciousness, can gradually elevate to
- Higher and higher planets
 - Can they go to Spiritual sky – if perfect in Krishna consciousness, can go to spiritual kingdom at universal devastation (*Ref. Sridhar Swami quoted*)

SECTION V (8.17 – 8.22) COMPARING THE MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL WORLDS / GLORIES OF SUPREME ABODE

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION V

- The only refuge from ocean of birth and death is Lord's Supreme abode
- This abode is only attainable by one who makes himself qualified to associate with the Lord
- This qualification is Pure Devotional Service



LINK BETWEEN SECTION IV & SECTION V:

Krishna compares material world with spiritual nature in Texts 8.17 – 8.22

Texts 8.17 – 8.19

COMMON THEME: In comparison to spiritual world, Material world is a place of repeated creation and destruction

- ❖ Material world is
 - Miserable and
 - Temporary
- ❖ Because, here everyone must suffer –
 - Birth, Old age, disease, death (8.16)
 - Constant creation and annihilation (8.17 – 8.19) – '*Bhutva Bhutva praliyate*'

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 8.17 – 8.19

(a) **Duration of material universe is limited**

- 1 kalpa = 1 day of Brahma = 12 hours of Brahma = 1 night of Brahma
- 1 kalpa = 1,000 *yuga* cycles. Each cycle has the following four *yugas* in this order and duration:
 - *Satya-yuga* = 1,728,000 years
 - *Treta-yuga* = 1,296,000 years
 - *Dvapara-yuga* = 8,64,000 years
 - *Kali-yuga* = 4,32,000 years
- One lifespan of Brahma = 100 years of Brahma = 311 trillion and 40 billion earth years
- *Analogy*:
 - Brahma's lifespan as compared to eternity is like lightning flash
 - Causal ocean has innumerable Brahmas like bubbles in Atlantic

(b) **Brahmaloka** if compared to material planets – not free from birth, disease, old-age and death

(c) **Who goes to Brahmaloka** – Elevated sannyasis

(d) **Fate of Brahma** – Because of service to the Lord, gets liberation

(e) ***Bhutva Bhutva praliyate*** – Repeated creation and destruction because of being captivated by illusory energy – Explained as follows

- Annihilation at Brahma's night – all living entities remain compact in body of Vishnu.
- Again manifest at arrival of day.
- End of Brahma's life all living entities remain unmanifest for millions of years, again to be manifest in another millennium

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 8.17 – 8.19 continued...

- (f) **3 types of annihilation** a living entity experiences (as per the purport), with respect to Brahma's life
- At death of the living entity every time he takes a body
 - End of Brahma's day
 - End of Brahma's life
- (g) **Intelligent persons**– Take to Krishna Consciousness
- Use human life fully in Devotional Service, chanting Hare Krishna.
 - No more Rebirths – Transfer in this life to the spiritual planet of Krishna and become eternally blissful



LINK BETWEEN TEXTS 8.19 & TEXTS 8.20:

Krishna compares material world with spiritual nature in Texts 8.17 – 8.22

Texts 8.20 – 8.21*

COMMON THEME: Describes the spiritual world, the abode of the Lord.

The Spiritual world is:

1. **Eternal** – Free from birth and death
2. **Infallible**, because Krishna's superior energy is opposite to material energy in quality
3. **Full of unlimited bliss**, as opposed to the material world which is full of miseries
4. **Fulfills all desires**
5. **All attractive**
6. **Unmanifest** to mundane eyes
7. **Transcendental** to manifest and unmanifest (**difference** from material world – **repeatedly** manifest and unmanifest) – Lord's abode never changes like material world / Composed of cit-sakti
8. **Supreme destination**
9. **A place of no return**

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 8.20 – 8.21: REFERENCES ON LORD'S ABODE

- (a) **Description of Abode** – *Brahma Samhita* ("chintamani...") *Study Purport*
- (b) **As 'ultimate destination'** – *Katha Upanishad*
- (c) **A place of no return** – *Bhagavad-gita* (8.15; 8.21; 15.6)
- (d) **Absolute nature** – Krishna's abode is non-different from Him
- (e) **Replica of Goloka Vrindavan** – Bhauma Vrindavan (on this planet)

Text 8.22*

THEME: How to attain that abode of Lord?

- ❖ The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is greater than all, is attainable by unalloyed Devotional Service – **Ananya Bhakti**
- ❖ Although He is present in His abode, He is all pervading, and everything is situated within Him

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.22

- (a) **Bg. 2.22** clearly states that the **Supreme destination**, from which there is no return, is the abode of Krishna, the Supreme Person
- (b) **Lord as all pervading by “Spiritual and material energies”**
- (c) **Variegatedness of Spiritual energy** – Ref. *Brahma Samhita* (“*ananda chinmaya rasa...*”)
- (d) **Material energy** – Although the Lord is always in His Supreme abode, He is nonetheless all pervading by His material energy,
- (e) **“yasyantah sthani bhutani...”** – This phrase in Text 8.22 means that everything is sustained within Krishna, within His spiritual or material energies
- (f) **Importance of the word ‘bhaktya’** – To enter Krishna’s Supreme abode or any of the Vaikunta planets is possible only by bhakti
- (g) **Vedic description of “Supreme abode”** – “Supreme Personality of Godhead” resides in the Supreme abode and has millions of plenary expansions
- Ref. *Gopala-Tapani Upanisad* 3.2 – Describes that Supreme Abode and the Supreme Personality of Godhead
 - *Analogy*: Vedas compare the Lord with a tree bearing many flowers, fruits, leaves etc. Similarly the Lord expands into many plenary expansions
 - Ref *Brahma Samhita* 5.37 – “Goloka eva...” – Although the Lord resides in the Supreme Abode, He is all pervading
 - Ref *Svetasvatara Upanisad* – “*parasya shaktir...*” – Supreme Lord although residing far away, systematically conducts everything in the cosmic manifestation by His all pervading energies


SECTION VI (8.23 – 8.28)**SUPREMACY OF PURE DEVOTION IN ATTAINING KRISHNA**

Subsection A: 8.23 – 8.26: Attaining the Supreme through mystic yoga

Subsection B: 8.27 – 8.28: Supremacy of *Bhakti* in attaining the Supreme

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION VI

A devotee is confident about Krishna’s protection; he need not make any special endeavour for his ultimate salvation.

 **LINK BETWEEN SECTION V & SECTION VI:** Krishna has now concluded describing the spiritual world and the process of reaching it. In the final six verses of this chapter Krishna discusses the process by which a soul should leave his body to attain the Supreme.

Text 8.23*

THEME: Lord declares to explain...

Process by which “Soul should leave the body to attain Supreme” – in the next few verses

Texts 8.24 – 8.27

COMMON THEME: These verses mention different ways to leave the body and thus achieving different destination.

- ❖ Devotees don't worry about proper time to leave the body, but leave everything in Krishna's hands and become fixed in devotion. This is because:
 - Krishna takes care and gives protection
 - Devotional service gives results of all other practices

WAYS OF LEAVING THE BODY

-
1. **Path:** In light, influence of fiery God, auspicious moment of day, Fort night of waxing moon, or 6 months when sun travels to north (8.24)
For whom: Path of yogis and Jnanis
Destination: Brahmajyoti
-
2. **Path:** In darkness/night, during smoke, fortnight of waning moon or 6 months when sun passes to south reaches the moon and again comes back (8.25)
For whom: Path of Karma-kandis
Destination: Attain heavenly planets, and then return to earth
-
3. **Path:** At any time (8.27)
For whom: Path of unalloyed devotees
Destination: Krishna-loka
-

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 8.23 – 8.27

- (a) **Can a yogi choose time of leaving** – an expert *yogi* can choose;
 - If not expert in choosing, then it depends upon accident or destiny
- (b) **Kala** – refers to presiding deity of time
- (c) **Travel to moon planet**
 - Eligibility – one expert in fruitive acts/sacrificial methods
 - *Ref. Kapildev in Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 3*
 - Life duration – 10,000 years (demigod calculation)
 - Engagement – soma rasa and other pleasures
 - Fate – when credits finished, one return to earth
- (d) **Yoga-yukta** – implies to engage constantly in Krishna Consciousness in all the activities.
 - Example – Rupa goswami's yukta vairagya
 - Devotee does not worry about different paths and is undisturbed (8.27), because...
 - Firmly established in Krishna Consciousness and chant Hare Krishna
 - Best way to absorb – dovetail in the service of Krishna

Text 8.28

THEME: Explains the knowledge that fixes the devotee in the path of devotion

- ❖ Such a devotee automatically and effortlessly achieve all the results of *Jnana*, *Yoga* and *Karma* and all the Vedic forms of purification
- ❖ This verse is a summation of Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 which particularly deals with Krishna consciousness and devotional service

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 8.28

(a) **Path of Vedic Literatures**

- **Brahmachari life** – study Vedas under Spiritual master, many austerities and penances, trained in celibacy and menial services, beg alms, take food only under master’s order
 - **Vedic study not meant for** – recreation of armchair speculators, **but for** building a perfect character
- **Householder life** – Sacrifices and, charity according to time, place and person.
- **Retired life (Vanaprastha)** – tapasya
- **Sannyasa**
- **Purpose of Vedic path** – gradual elevation to perfectional stage

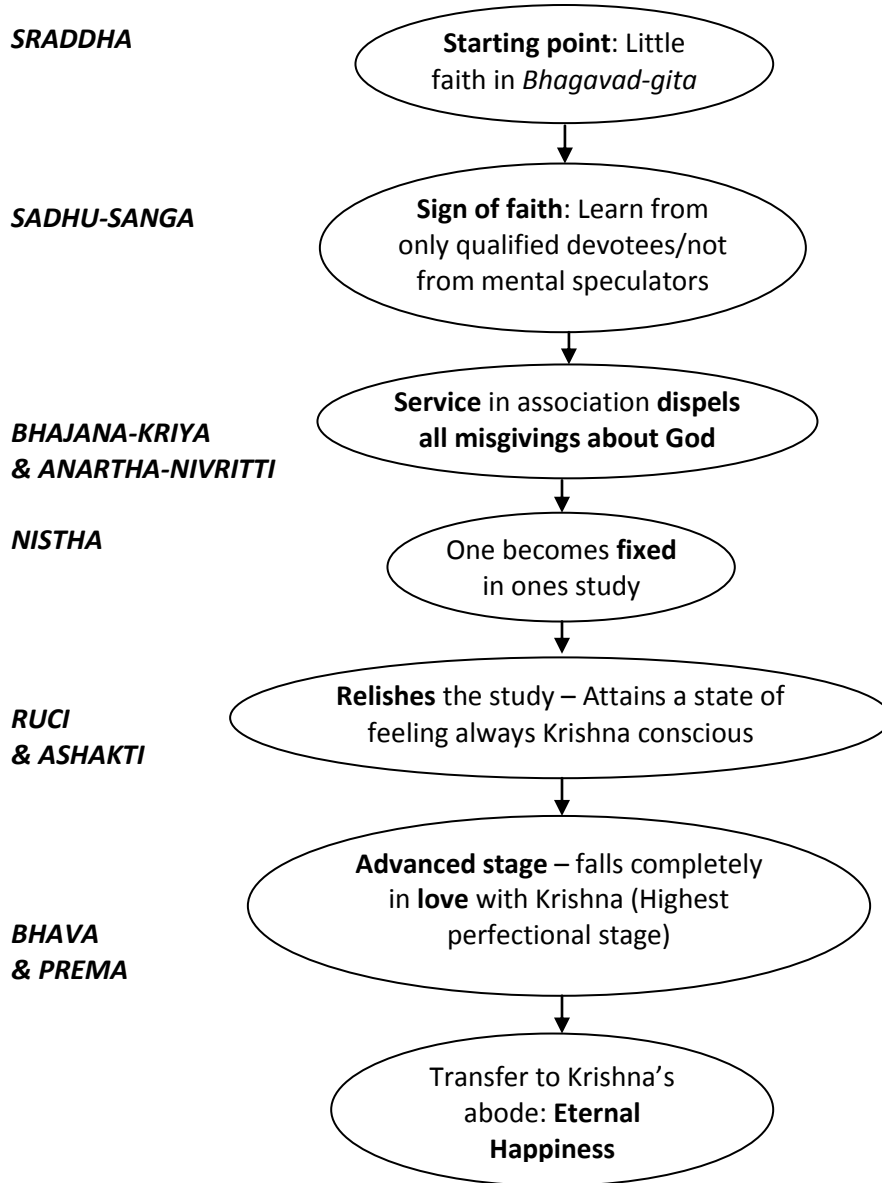
(b) **Beauty of Krishna Consciousness** – by one stroke of Devotional services, one surpasses all the rituals of different ashrams.

(c) **Idam veditva** – it implies one should understand the instruction of Krishna very scrutinizingly

- **Which?** – those in Bg. Chapters 7 and 8
- **How?** – By hearing in the association of devotees
- **How not?** – Academic scholarship/mental speculation
- **Great fortune?** – To understand middle 6 chapters in the association of devotees
- **Why fortune?** – Because, life becomes glorified beyond all *yajna*, *dana*, *tapa* etc., and all the results of such activities are automatically achieved simply by Krishna Consciousness

PLEASE NOTE: The last paragraph of the purport is covered in the diagram below

RELISHING STUDY OF BHAGAVAD GITA Bg. 8.28



END OF CHAPTER 8

CHAPTER 8 Appendix

Selected Texts extracted from “Surrender unto Me”

Text 8.1

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa analyzes Arjuna’s remaining questions as follows: “What is the adhyātma?” asks if the adhyātma, the self, pertains to the gross or subtle body.

“What is karma?” asks if karma (activity) refers to fruitive or spiritual activity and why, if they are equivalent, he should fight.

In “What is the adhibhūta?” Arjuna is asking “What gross, physical things are you referring to—items such as pots or the bodies of living beings?”

“Who is the adhidaiva?” asks if the adhidaiva, the governor of the demigods, is a demigod or the Virāṭ Puruṣa (the universal form of the Lord).

The prefix adhi is significant. One definition of it is “above, over and above.” In another respect, then, Arjuna is asking about the identity of the adhi, the one above or ruling over the body, the physical manifestation and the demigods.

Text 8.2

Arjuna now inquires about the sixth term, adhiyajña. By inquiring about adhiyajña, Arjuna wants to understand the identity of the one who is ultimately worshiped by the performance of sacrifice. Is it Viṣṇu? A demigod? And whoever He is, where in the body does He live?

Text 8.7

Often devotees wonder if it is necessary to remember Kṛṣṇa while they do their duty or whether doing the duty for Kṛṣṇa is sufficient. Here is Kṛṣṇa’s answer. We should remember Kṛṣṇa and do our prescribed duties. Even though it may be difficult to remember Kṛṣṇa while we work, it will be far more difficult to remember Him at the time of death when our consciousness is disturbed and overwhelmed with pain. Therefore Kṛṣṇa wants us to practice now. Kṛṣṇa will repeat His desire for us to constantly remember Him in Bg. 18.57 and in other verses.

It is interesting that Kṛṣṇa says, mām anusmara (“go on remembering Me”) even before yudhya ca (“and fight”). We should remember Kṛṣṇa in devotion and work for His pleasure.

Text 8.14

Ananya-cetāḥ means undeviating, with no desire for heavenly pleasure or liberation. Satatam and nityaśaḥ mean always serving, with no break—for one’s entire life—without consideration of time and place. Kṛṣṇa is so pleased by such an attitude that He becomes su-labhaḥ, easy to obtain, even if one is not yet on that platform but only desiring to reach it. Kṛṣṇa removes all obstacles from such a devotee’s path. A vivid example illustrating the importance of ananya-cetā bhakti is found in Lord Caitanya’s lilā.

Once Lord Caitanya went to evacuate. When He returned, He was holding His tongue. When the devotees saw this peculiar sight, they asked Him why He was doing that. Mahāprabhu replied that His tongue was acting so improperly that it wouldn’t stop chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa even when He was engaged in such a filthy activity. Therefore He was forced to hold His tongue to restrain it. At that time, a small boy named Gopāla bravely spoke up.

Gopāla said, “No, no, this isn’t the correct philosophy. Kṛṣṇa’s names are pure and should be chanted at all times. For instance, if one were about to die, would he think, ‘Oh, this is an inauspicious, dirty time and therefore I shouldn’t chant?’ No, at all times, regardless of the external purity of the situation, one should remember Kṛṣṇa and chant His names.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied, “You have properly understood the philosophy. You are my guru. You are Gopāla Guru.”

Text 8.15

After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogīs in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains, “Such devotees enter Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes and happily take birth when Kṛṣṇa appears in the house of Vasudeva as his son.”

Text 8.16

Kṛṣṇa makes it clear that His planet is supreme. The term mām upetya used in both texts 15 and 16 means “achieving Me.” Kṛṣṇa, through repetition, emphasizes this, because He does not want us bewildered by a desire to go to the heavenly planets. He therefore clearly states that every situation in the material world is miserable. We should desire only mām upetya, to achieve Him.

Text 8.21

These verses explain the paramām gatim, the supreme abode mentioned in Bg. 8.15. That place is eternal and transcendental, and it is that supreme abode for which we hanker. Unfortunately, we search for it within the realm of time and matter. When we attain Kṛṣṇa’s supreme abode, we, along with Kṛṣṇa’s other devotees, will continuously exult in our loving relationship with Him. What a striking contrast to the material world! In the material sphere we are “again and again helplessly annihilated.” Spiritual life, however, carries us to the supreme destination, which is never annihilated.

The term avyakta does not mean “formless” in this context, but “materially unmanifest.” That which is avyakta is composed of Kṛṣṇa’s internal energy.

Text 8.22

Here the words tv ananyayā reiterate the statement made in Bg. 8.14. Ananya-cetāḥ satataṁ yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ: our desires must be undeviatedly focused upon Kṛṣṇa. Maintaining desires for jñāna, karma, yoga and so on, prevents us from attaining Kṛṣṇa.

Text 8.23

These four verses (23-26) pertain to the jñāna-yogīs, karma-yogīs and aṣṭāṅga-yogīs, and they explain how yogīs must carefully plan their deaths so that they will not return to the material world. The last two verses of this chapter (27-28) are for the devotees.