

# Bhagavad Gita

## Chapter 16

### The Divine and Demoniac Natures

### Daiva-Asura Sampad Yoga

# Section – I

## Divine and Demoniatic Qualities (1-6)

## Section-I Divine and Demoniatic Qualities (1-6)

|| 16.1-3 ||

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

abhayaṁ sattva-saṁśuddhir jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitiḥ  
dānaṁ damaś ca yajñaś ca svādhyāyas tapa ārjavam

ahiṁsā satyam akrodhas tyāgaḥ śāntir apaiśunam  
dayā bhūteṣv aloluptvaṁ mārḍavaṁ hrīr acāpalam

tejaḥ kṣamā dhṛtiḥ śaucam adroho nāti-mānitā  
bhavanti sampadaṁ daivīm abhijātasya bhārata

Fearlessness, purity of consciousness (**abhayaṁ sattva-saṁśuddhir**), having knowledge of the methods of jñāna (**jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitiḥ**), charity, sense control, worship of the Lord (**dānaṁ damaś ca yajñaś ca**), study of the Vedas, austerity, sincerity (**svādhyāyas tapa ārjavam**), non-violence, truth, absence of anger (**ahiṁsā satyam akrodhas**), lack of possessiveness, peace, not criticizing others (**tyāgaḥ śāntir apaiśunam**), mercy to living beings, absence of greed (**dayā bhūteṣv aloluptvaṁ**), gentleness, humility, steadiness (**mārḍavaṁ hrīr acāpalam**), strength, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness (**tejaḥ kṣamā dhṛtiḥ śaucam**), avoiding injury of others, and lack of pride (**adroho nāti-mānitā**) manifest (**bhavanti**) in a person born at a time indicating sattvic qualities (**daivīm sampadaṁ abhijātasya**).

## Baladeva

- In the sixteenth chapter Kṛṣṇa speaks about the natures of the saintly and demonic persons, teaching that the first type is excellent and the second is despicable.
- Describing how the roots of the aśvattha tree spread out, the Lord explained that the fortunate and unfortunate impressions caused by previous karmas were the secondary roots of the tree of saṁsāra.
- In the ninth chapter, the Lord narrated that the natures of living entities was either daiva, asura, or rākśasa (goodness, passion and ignorance.)
- The daiva nature, having sattva attitude and pious impressions, causing performance of duties according to the Vedas, is suitable for liberation.

## Baladeva

- That is the daivī sampat mentioned in this chapter, the excellent fruit of the aśvattha tree.
- The natures of asuras and rākṣasas, in the modes of passion and ignorance, which are causes of all evil, following the inclination for attachment and repulsion, filled with sinful impressions, causes these people to fall to hell.
- This is the asura sampat, the undesirable fruit of the tree.
- This is the purpose of the sixteenth chapter explains this.
- The Lord speaks of the daivī sampada in three verses.
- In those verses the Lord successively describes the duties of the four āśramas and varṇas.

## Baladeva

- First He speaks of the sannyāsīs.
- The sannyāsī is fearless (abhayam), free from the fear of how he will survive alone without any work.
- He has purity of mind (sattva samśuddiḥ) by performance of duties of his āśrama and varṇa.
- He is fully knowledgeable of the methods (yoga) of attaining jñāna (jñāna yoga vyavasthitiḥ), such as hearing.
- There three are his characteristics.
- Next he describes the householders. The householder offers food and other items owned by himself, earned by proper methods, to qualified persons (dāna).

## Baladeva

- He controls the external senses according to the rules (damah).
- He engages in the performance of prescribed sacrifices (yajña.)  
These three are the householder's characteristics.
- Next the Lord describes the brahmacārī.
- He is engaged in study (svādhyāyah), called brahma yajña.
- He is fixed in studying the Vedas, which are a group of sounds not created by men, which brings about realization of the Lord endowed with energies.
- This is the one quality of the brahmacārī.

## Baladeva

- Next He speaks of the vānaprastha. Tapa here refers to the three types of austerity, which will be mentioned in the eighteenth chapter. This is the one quality of the vānaprastha.
- The qualities of the brāhmaṇa are described.
- Ārjava means straightforward, meaning that he reveals to faithful listeners the meaning of important topics as he has understood them.
- Ahimsa means not to stop the life span of another living entity.
- Satya means making accurate statements concerning things one has seen without meaningless content.



## Baladeva

- Akrodha is the control of anger which appears when an evil person criticizes oneself.
- Tyaga means not saying bad words when others insult. Śānti means control of the mind.
- Apaiśuna means not using bad words against another person in his absence.
- Dayā means intolerance of the suffering of other living entities.
- Alolupa means absence of greed.
- Mārdava or gentleness means intolerance of separation from association of saintly persons.

## Baladeva

- Hrī means bashfulness to do unlawful acts.
- Acāpala means absence of useless actions.
- These are the twelve characteristics of the brāhmaṇa.
- Next the Lord describes the kṣatriya qualities.
- Teja means not being conquered by lesser persons. Kṣamā means not showing anger to those lesser persons who treat one with contempt, though he is capable of such anger.
- Dhṛti means giving effort to support the fatigued senses, so that they remain energetic. These are the three qualities of the kṣatriya.

## Baladeva

- The qualities of the vaiśya are described next.
- Śauca means to be free of untruthfulness, deceit and other bad qualities in going about his mercantile affairs.
- Adroha means not to take up weapons to do violence to others. These are his two qualities.
- The Lord describes the qualities of the śūdra.
- Na atimānitā means to be devoid of thinking oneself worthy of worship and being humble before the three higher castes whom he regards as worthy of worship. This is one quality.
- The total comes to twenty-six qualities.

## Baladeva

- These are understood to be the principle qualities of the āśrama and varṇas.
- Those qualities which are not mentioned here should also be included. The list is not exhaustive.
- These qualities appear in a person born (jātasya) with auspicious impressions (daivīm sampadam) manifested through pious acts which show their fruits at the time of accepting a body. puṇyaḥ puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpena: he becomes pure by pure karmas, bad by bad karmas. (Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.5)
- This sampat or wealth is possessed by the devas,, those who respect the Lord.
- Because from this position a person has the possibility of attaining jñāna and bhakti, it is the excellent fruit of the tree of saṁsāra.

## Srila Prabhupada

- In the beginning of the Fifteenth Chapter, the banyan tree of this material world was explained.
- The extra roots coming out of it were compared to the activities of the living entities, some auspicious, some inauspicious.
- In the Ninth Chapter, also, the devas, or godly, and the asuras, the ungodly, or demons, were explained.
- Now, according to Vedic rites, activities in the mode of goodness are considered auspicious for progress on the path of liberation, and such activities are known as daivī prakṛti, transcendental by nature. Those who are situated in the transcendental nature make progress on the path of liberation.

## Srila Prabhupada

- For those who are acting in the modes of passion and ignorance, on the other hand, there is no possibility of liberation.
- Either they will have to remain in this material world as human beings, or they will descend among the species of animals or even lower life forms.
- In this Sixteenth Chapter the Lord explains both the transcendental nature and its attendant qualities and the demoniac nature and its qualities.
- He also explains the advantages and disadvantages of these qualities.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The word abhijātasya in reference to one born of transcendental qualities or godly tendencies is very significant.
- To beget a child in a godly atmosphere is known in the Vedic scriptures as garbhādhāna-saṁskāra.
- If the parents want a child in the godly qualities they should follow the ten principles recommended for the social life of the human being.
- In Bhagavad-gītā we have studied also before that sex life for begetting a good child is Kṛṣṇa Himself.
- Sex life is not condemned, provided the process is used in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness at least should not beget children like cats and dogs but should beget them so that they may become Kṛṣṇa conscious after birth.
- That should be the advantage of children born of a father and mother absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- The social institution known as varṇāśrama-dharma—the institution dividing society into four divisions of spiritual life and four occupational divisions or castes—is not meant to divide human society according to birth.
- Such divisions are in terms of educational qualifications.



## Srila Prabhupada

- They are to keep the society in a state of peace and prosperity.
- The qualities mentioned herein are explained as transcendental qualities meant for making a person progress in spiritual understanding so that he can get liberated from the material world.
- In the varṇāśrama institution the sannyāsī, or the person in the renounced order of life, is considered to be the head or the spiritual master of all the social statuses and orders.
- A brāhmaṇa is considered to be the spiritual master of the three other sections of a society, namely, the kṣatriyas, the vaiśyas and the śūdras, but a sannyāsī, who is on the top of the institution, is considered to be the spiritual master of the brāhmaṇas also.

## Srila Prabhupada

- For a sannyāsī, the first qualification should be fearlessness. Because a sannyāsī has to be alone without any support or guarantee of support, he has simply to depend on the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- If one thinks, "After I leave my connections, who will protect me?" he should not accept the renounced order of life.
- One must be fully convinced that Kṛṣṇa or the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His localized aspect as Paramātmā is always within, that He is seeing everything and He always knows what one intends to do.
- One must thus have firm conviction that Kṛṣṇa as Paramātmā will take care of a soul surrendered to Him. "I shall never be alone," one should think.

## Srila Prabhupada

- "Even if I live in the darkest regions of a forest I shall be accompanied by Kṛṣṇa, and He will give me all protection."
- That conviction is called abhayam, fearlessness. This state of mind is necessary for a person in the renounced order of life.
- Then he has to purify his existence. There are so many rules and regulations to be followed in the renounced order of life.
- Most important of all, a sannyāsī is strictly forbidden to have any intimate relationship with a woman. He is even forbidden to talk with a woman in a secluded place.
- Lord Caitanya was an ideal sannyāsī, and when He was at Purī His feminine devotees could not even come near to offer their respects. They were advised to bow down from a distant place.

## Srila Prabhupada

- This is not a sign of hatred for women as a class, but it is a stricture imposed on the sannyāsī not to have close connections with women.
- One has to follow the rules and regulations of a particular status of life in order to purify his existence.
- For a sannyāsī, intimate relations with women and possession of wealth for sense gratification are strictly forbidden. The ideal sannyāsī was Lord Caitanya Himself, and we can learn from His life that He was very strict in regards to women.
- Although He is considered to be the most liberal incarnation of Godhead, accepting the most fallen conditioned souls, He strictly followed the rules and regulations of the sannyāsa order of life in connection with association with women.

## Srila Prabhupada

- One of His personal associates, namely Choṭa Haridāsa, was associated with Lord Caitanya along with His other confidential personal associates, but somehow or other this Choṭa Haridāsa looked lustily on a young woman, and Lord Caitanya was so strict that He at once rejected him from the society of His personal associates.
- Lord Caitanya said, "For a sannyāsī or anyone who is aspiring to get out of the clutches of material nature and trying to elevate himself to the spiritual nature and go back home, back to Godhead, for him, looking toward material possessions and women for sense gratification—not even enjoying them, but just looking toward them with such a propensity—is so condemned that he had better commit suicide before experiencing such illicit desires." So these are the processes for purification.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The next item is jñāna-yoga-vyavasthiti: being engaged in the cultivation of knowledge.
- Sannyāsī life is meant for distributing knowledge to the householders and others who have forgotten their real life of spiritual advancement.
- A sannyāsī is supposed to beg from door to door for his livelihood, but this does not mean that he is a beggar.
- Humility is also one of the qualifications of a transcendently situated person, and out of sheer humility the sannyāsī goes from door to door, not exactly for the purpose of begging, but to see the householders and awaken them to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Srila Prabhupada

- This is the duty of a sannyāsī.
- If he is actually advanced and so ordered by his spiritual master, he should preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness with logic and understanding, and if one is not so advanced he should not accept the renounced order of life.
- But even if one has accepted the renounced order of life without sufficient knowledge, he should engage himself fully in hearing from a bona fide spiritual master to cultivate knowledge.
- A sannyāsī, or one in the renounced order of life, must be situated in fearlessness, sattva-saṁśuddhi (purity) and jñāna-yoga (knowledge).

## Srila Prabhupada

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



## Srila Prabhupada

- Then as far as dama (self-control) is concerned, it is not only meant for other orders of religious society, but is especially meant for the householder.
- Although he has a wife, a householder should not use his senses for sex life unnecessarily.
- There are restrictions for the householders even in sex life, which should only be engaged in for the propagation of children.
- If he does not require children, he should not enjoy sex life with his wife. Modern society enjoys sex life with contraceptive methods or more abominable methods to avoid the responsibility of children. This is not in the transcendental quality, but is demoniac.

## Srila Prabhupada

- If anyone, even if he is a householder, wants to make progress in spiritual life, he must control his sex life and should not beget a child without the purpose of serving Kṛṣṇa.
- If he is able to beget children who will be in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can produce hundreds of children, but without this capacity one should not indulge only for sense pleasure.
- Sacrifice is another item to be performed by the householders, because sacrifices require a large amount of money.
- Those in other orders of life, namely brahmacarya, vānaprastha and sannyāsa, have no money; they live by begging. So performance of different types of sacrifice is meant for the householders.

## Srila Prabhupada

- They should perform agni-hotra sacrifices as enjoined in the Vedic literature, but such sacrifices at the present moment are very expensive, and it is not possible for any householder to perform them.
- The best sacrifice recommended in this age is called saṅkīrtana-yajña.
- This saṅkīrtana-yajña, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, is the best and most inexpensive sacrifice; everyone can adopt it and derive benefit.
- So these three items, namely charity, sense control and performance of sacrifice, are meant for the householder.

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## Srila Prabhupada

- Then svādhyāya, Vedic study, is meant for brahmacarya, or student life.
- Brahmācārīs should have no connection with women; they should live a life of celibacy and engage the mind in the study of Vedic literature for cultivation of spiritual knowledge. This is called svādhyāya.
- Tapas, or austerity, is especially meant for the retired life.
- One should not remain a householder throughout his whole life; he must always remember that there are four divisions of life—brahmacarya, gr̥hastha, vānaprastha and sannyāsa.
- So after gr̥hastha, householder life, one should retire.

## Srila Prabhupada

- If one lives for a hundred years, he should spend twenty—five years in student life, twenty-five in householder life, twenty-five in retired life and twenty-five in the renounced order of life. These are the regulations of the Vedic religious discipline.
- A man retired from household life must practice austerities of the body, mind and tongue. That is tapasya. The entire varṇāśrama-dharma society is meant for tapasya. Without tapasya, or austerity, no human being can get liberation.
- The theory that there is no need of austerity in life, that one can go on speculating and everything will be nice, is recommended neither in the Vedic literature nor in Bhagavad-gītā.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Such theories are manufactured by show-bottle spiritualists who are trying to gather more followers.
- If there are restrictions, rules and regulations, people will not become attracted.
- Therefore those who want followers in the name of religion, just to have a show only, don't restrict the lives of their students, nor their own lives. But that method is not approved by the Vedas.
- As far as the brahminical quality of simplicity is concerned, not only should a particular order of life follow this principle, but every member, be he in the brahmacārī āśrama, gr̥hastha āśrama, vānaprastha āśrama or sannyāsa āśrama. One should be very simple and straightforward.

# Srila Prabhupada

- Ahimsā means not arresting the progressive life of any living entity.
- One should not think that since the spirit spark is never killed even after the killing of the body there is no harm in killing animals for sense gratification.
- People are now addicted to eating animals, in spite of having an ample supply of grains, fruits and milk. There is no necessity for animal killing. This injunction is for everyone.
- When there is no alternative, one may kill an animal, but it should be offered in sacrifice. At any rate, when there is an ample food supply for humanity, persons who are desiring to make advancement in spiritual realization should not commit violence to animals.



## Srila Prabhupada

- Real ahimsā means not checking anyone's progressive life.
- The animals are also making progress in their evolutionary life by transmigrating from one category of animal life to another.
- If a particular animal is killed, then his progress is checked.
- If an animal is staying in a particular body for so many days or so many years and is untimely killed, then he has to come back again in that form of life to complete the remaining days in order to be promoted to another species of life.
- So their progress should not be checked simply to satisfy one's palate. This is called ahimsā.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Satyam. This word means that one should not distort the truth for some personal interest.
- In Vedic literature there are some difficult passages, but the meaning or the purpose should be learned from a bona fide spiritual master.
- That is the process for understanding the Vedas. Śruti means that one should hear from the authority. One should not construe some interpretation for his personal interest.
- There are so many commentaries on Bhagavad-gītā that misinterpret the original text. The real import of the word should be presented, and that should be learned from a bona fide spiritual master.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Akrodha means to check anger.
- Even if there is provocation one should be tolerant, for once one becomes angry his whole body becomes polluted.
- Anger is a product of the mode of passion and lust, so one who is transcendently situated should check himself from anger.
- Apaisunam means that one should not find fault with others or correct them unnecessarily. Of course to call a thief a thief is not faultfinding, but to call an honest person a thief is very much offensive for one who is making advancement in spiritual life.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Hrī means that one should be very modest and must not perform some act which is abominable.
- Acāpalam, determination, means that one should not be agitated or frustrated in some attempt. There may be failure in some attempt, but one should not be sorry for that; he should make progress with patience and determination.
- The word tejas used here is meant for the kṣatriyas. The kṣatriyas should always be very strong to be able to give protection to the weak.
- They should not pose themselves as nonviolent. If violence is required, they must exhibit it. But a person who is able to curb down his enemy may under certain conditions show forgiveness. He may excuse minor offenses.

## Srila Prabhupada

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

## Srila Prabhupada

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

## Section-I Divine and Demonic Qualities (1-6)

|| 16.4 ||

**dambho darpo 'bhimānaś ca  
krodhaḥ pārūṣyam eva ca  
ajñānam cābhijātasya  
pārtha sampadam āsurīm**

False pretence, pride, attachment (**dambho darpo abhimānaś ca**), anger, cruelty (**krodhaḥ pārūṣyam eva ca**) and lack of discriminating power (**ajñānam ca**) manifest in one born at a time indicating tamasic or rajasic qualities (**āsurīm sampadam abhijātasya**).

## Baladeva

- The Lord now speaks of qualities of the asura which cause hellish existence, in one verse.
- Dambha means performance of religious duties with the intention of being known as a religious person. Darpa means pride in having a good lineage or knowledge, thinking that one should be respected.
- Krodha means anger. Pāruṣya means using rough language in front of others.
- The word ca indicates all the qualities opposite to those mentioned in the previous verses, such as cāpala, having useless actions. [Note: Thus the asura sampat includes such qualities as himsā, asatya, atyāga, aśānti, paiśunam, and lolupatva.]



## Baladeva

- Ajñāna means devoid of intelligence to discriminate between what is proper and what is improper conduct.
- The word ca indicates the qualities such as adhṛti, and those following from the previous list (śaucam, droho, ātimānitā).
- These qualities appear in a person born with inauspicious impressions (āsurīm sampadam) which manifest from sinful actions, and which bear fruit at the time of taking a body.
- The śruti says pāpaḥ pāpena: the sinful person is born through sinful acts.

## Srila Prabhupada

- In this verse, the royal road to hell is described.
- The demoniac want to make a show of religion and advancement in spiritual science, although they do not follow the principles.
- They are always arrogant or proud in possessing some type of education or so much wealth.
- They desire to be worshiped by others, and demand respectability, although they do not command respect.
- Over trifles they become very angry and speak harshly, not gently.

## Srila Prabhupada

- They do not know what should be done and what should not be done.
- They do everything whimsically, according to their own desire, and they do not recognize any authority.
- These demoniac qualities are taken on by them from the beginning of their bodies in the wombs of their mothers, and as they grow they manifest all these inauspicious qualities.

## Section-I Divine and Demoniac Qualities (1-6)

|| 16.5 ||

daivī sampad vimokṣāya  
nibandhāyāsūrī matā  
mā śucaḥ sampadaṁ daivīm  
abhijāto 'si pāṇḍava

The daiva qualities lead to liberation (**daivī sampad vimokṣāya**) and the asuric qualities lead to bondage (**nibandhāya āsurī matā**). Do not worry Arjuna (**mā śucaḥ pāṇḍava**). You have been born with the sattvic qualities (**daivīm sampadaṁ abhijātaḥ asi**).

## SVCT

- The Lord shows the effects of these two attainments in this verse.
- “It appears that I have the asuric traits which will lead to bondage in saṁsāra, since I desire to kill enemies by shooting arrows and am thus filled with cruelty and anger.”
- To comfort Arjuna who was thus worried, the Lord speaks.
- “Do not worry. You are born with the daiva qualities. O Pāṇḍava!
- For one born in a kṣatriya family, anger and cruelty during war are prescribed by the scriptures. To do otherwise would make you of the asuric nature, possessing violence and other bad qualities.”

## Srila Prabhupada

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

## Section-I Divine and Demoniatic Qualities (1-6)

|| 16.6 ||

**dvau bhūta-sargau loke 'smin  
daiva āsura eva ca  
daivo vistaraśaḥ prokta  
āsuram pārtha me śṛṇu**

There are two types of created beings in this world (**dvau bhūta-sargau loke asmin**)— the divine and demonic (**daiva āsura eva ca**). I have described the divine at length (**daivo vistaraśaḥ prokta**). Hear from Me about the demonic, O son of Pṛthā (**āsuram pārtha me śṛṇu**).

## Baladeva

- Seeing that Arjuna's lamentation did not go away, the Lord began to describe the qualities of the asura.
- In this world of humans who are ordained to act (asmin loke), there are two types of created humans (bhūta sargau).
- When a person in this world of men restricts his inborn attraction and repulsion through the injunctions of scripture and performs goals according to the scriptures, he is godly.
- When he gives up scriptural injunctions and acts against scripture under the control of attraction and repulsion, he is demonic.



## Baladeva

- There does not exist anything other than dharma and adharma in wandering through millions of births in this universe.
- The śruti says dvayā ha prājapatyā devāś cāsurāś ca: the deva and the asura, these two were produced by Brahmā. (Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.3.1)
- I have in detail described the divine persons in verses 1-3. Now hear about the demon. I will describe him in detail

## Srila Prabhupada

- Lord Kṛṣṇa, having assured Arjuna that he was born with the divine qualities, is now describing the demoniac way.
- The conditioned living entities are divided into two classes in this world.
- Those who are born with divine qualities follow a regulated life; that is to say they abide by the injunctions in scriptures and by the authorities.
- One should perform duties in the light of authoritative scripture. This mentality is called divine.
- One who does not follow the regulative principles as they are laid down in the scriptures and who acts according to his whims is called demoniac or asuric.
- There is no other criterion but obedience to the regulative principles of scriptures. It is mentioned in Vedic literature that both the demigods and the demons are born of the Prajāpati; the only difference is that one class obeys the Vedic injunctions and the other does not.

# Section – II

## The Demoniac Nature (7- 20)

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.7 ||

pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca  
janā na vidur āsurāḥ  
na śaucam nāpi cācāro  
na satyam teṣu vidyate

Demonic people do not understand (**āsurāḥ janā na viduh**) dharma and adharma (**pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca**). They do not have (**teṣu na vidyate**) cleanliness, regulated activities (**śaucam api ācāro**), or truthfulness (**ca satyam**).

## Baladeva

- In twelve verses, the Lord discusses the demonic group.
- The demonic persons do not know what is to be performed as dharma and what is to be avoided because it is adharmā.
- The use of the word ca twice indicates that they do not also know the scriptural injunctions for dharma and prohibitions of adharmā. This is because they do not have any regard for the Vedas.
- They do not have internal or external cleanliness (śaucam) necessary for following vedic injunctions.
- They do not have conduct (ācārah) according the rules of Manu and others. They do not have truth (satyam), words telling the facts for the benefit of living entities.
- Their teachings are like the sound of jackels and vultures.

# Srila Prabhupada

- In every civilized human society there is some set of scriptural rules and regulations which is followed from the beginning.
- Especially among the Āryans, those who adopt the Vedic civilization and who are known as the most advanced civilized peoples, those who do not follow the scriptural injunctions are supposed to be demons.
- Therefore it is stated here that the demons do not know the scriptural rules, nor do they have any inclination to follow them.
- Most of them do not know them, and even if some of them know, they have not the tendency to follow them. They have no faith, nor are they willing to act in terms of the Vedic injunctions.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The demons are not clean, either externally or internally.
- One should always be careful to keep his body clean by bathing, brushing teeth, shaving, changing clothes, etc.
- As far as internal cleanliness is concerned, one should always remember the holy names of God and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.
- The demons neither like nor follow all these rules for external and internal cleanliness.
- As for behavior, there are many rules and regulations guiding human behavior, such as the Manu-saṁhitā, which is the law of the human race.

# Srila Prabhupada

- Even up to today, those who are Hindu follow the Manu-samhitā.
- Laws of inheritance and other legalities are derived from this book.
- Now, in the Manu-samhitā it is clearly stated that a woman should not be given freedom.
- That does not mean that women are to be kept as slaves, but they are like children.
- Children are not given freedom, but that does not mean that they are kept as slaves. The demons have now neglected such injunctions, and they think that women should be given as much freedom as men.



## Srila Prabhupada

- However, this has not improved the social condition of the world.
- Actually, a woman should be given protection at every stage of life.
- She should be given protection by the father in her younger days, by the husband in her youth, and by the grown-up sons in her old age.
- This is proper social behavior according to the Manu-saṁhitā.
- But modern education has artificially devised a puffed-up concept of womanly life, and therefore marriage is practically now an imagination in human society.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The social condition of women is thus not very good now, although those who are married are in a better condition than those who are proclaiming their so-called freedom.
- The demons, therefore, do not accept any instruction which is good for society, and because they do not follow the experience of great sages and the rules and regulations laid down by the sages, the social condition of the demoniac people is very miserable.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.8 ||

asatyam apratiṣṭham te  
jagad āhur anīśvaram  
aparaspara-sambhūtam  
kim anyat kāma-haitukam

They say the world is false (**te āhuh jagad asatyam**), without a foundation (**apратиṣṭham**), without a creator (**anīśvaram**), having arisen without cause (**aparaspara-sambhūtam**). What else can be said (**kim anyat**)? Its cause is just some speculation according to ones desire (**kāma-haitukam**).

They say the world is false (**te āhuh jagad asatyam**), without a foundation (**apратиṣṭham**), without a creator (**anīśvaram**). It arises by innate properties of matter (**aparaspara-sambhūtam**). It arises by lust alone (**kim anyat kāma-haitukam**).

# SVCT

- This verse describes the thinking process of the asuras.
- They say that the world is an illusory conception, based on falsity (asatyam); that it is without shelter (apratiṣṭha), not having even the basis of a flower in the sky; that it is without creatorship of a controller since it is false (anīśvaram).
- Because it has arisen from nowhere like entities from perspiration, it has not arisen from a cause (aparaspara-sambhūtam).
- What else can be said (kim anyat)?
- Its cause is just according to the desire of those who propound theories about it (kāma haitukam).
- If they can imagine that the world arises only by illusion, then that becomes the cause.

## SVCT

- Others explain the verse thus: It has no proof, no confirmation from the Vedas, Purāṇas or other sources of knowledge (asatyam).
- It is said:  
**trayo vedasya kartāro bhaṇḍa-dhūrta-niśācarā**
- The makers of the three Vedas are jackals imitating wise men. [Note: This is the philosophy of Cārvāka and others of the Lokāyata school. This is quoted by Śrīdhara Svāmī as well, but the source is not given.]
- It has no state of dharma or adharma (apraṭiṣṭham).
- The ideas of dharma and adharma are both mistaken conceptions. The Lord also is conceived on the basis of mistake or bhrama (anīśvaram).

## SVCT

- “It is observed that the world arises only from the mutual interactions of men and women.” This is not a fact.
- The world does not arise from their interaction (aparaspara-sambhūtam).
- Though it is said that the child arises from the mother and father, it is a mistaken idea, like false knowledge that the pot has arisen from the potter.
- What should be said?
- The cause of the world is simply a speculation of one’s whim (kāma-haitukam).
- By logic, whatever different persons speak about atoms, māyā or God, they talk of that as the cause.

## Baladeva

- The Lord shows the conclusions of the demons.
- He speaks first of one soul (impersonal) philosophy.
- This world is false (asatyam), filled with error, like thinking shell is silver.
- The world has no basis (apratiṣṭham), like a flower in the sky.
- It has no God as a cause for its creation, maintenance and destruction (anīśvaraḥ).
- Being of this nature, it is just composed of an illusion. If there were a Supreme Lord within the world, the world He created would not be so ephemeral.

## Baladeva

- Therefore they consider that the world must be false.
- This one soul without qualities, known by all sources of knowledge, because of error in knowledge, reflects itself through ignorance as another entity—in the form of the material world, the individual jīvas and the Lord.
- From the time of realizing ones real nature as the one soul, there is no contradiction, there is only oneness. Until that time of awakening, everything is like elephants, horses and chariots in a dream.
- In realizing ones true nature, what was imagined out of ignorance should disappear along with the notion of being a separate jīva, just as the chariots and horses disappear during deep sleep.



## Baladeva

- The Lord then describes the theory of svabhāva or nature, advocated by the Buddhists.
- The world does not arise from the intercourse between men and women (aparaspara sambhūtam) or like a potter produces a pot (with intention), since the parents produce a child with lack of knowledge.
- Even after men and women enjoy one time only, children appear, and scorpions appear from sweat spontaneously.
- Thus creation takes place by its own nature, spontaneously, by natures inherent properties.

## Baladeva

- The Lord describes the theory of the Lokāyatas (Carvaka).
- What more can be said?
- There is no purpose of the world except to fulfill lust. The lust between men and women alone is the cause of the world, being the motive for all action.
- Haitukam from hetu indicates some motive.
- Or the Jains say that the cause is one's own will—whatever one can imagine according to his reasoning power, he will say that is the cause of the world.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The demonic conclude that the world is a phantasmagoria. There is no cause and effect, no controller, no purpose: everything is unreal.
- They say that this cosmic manifestation arises due to chance material actions and reactions. They do not think that the world was created by God for a certain purpose.
- They have their own theory: that the world has come about in its own way and that there is no reason to believe that there is a God behind it.

## Srila Prabhupada

- For them there is no difference between spirit and matter, and they do not accept the Supreme Spirit.
- Everything is matter only, and the whole cosmos is supposed to be a mass of ignorance.
- According to them, everything is void, and whatever manifestation exists is due to our ignorance in perception.
- They take it for granted that all manifestation of diversity is a display of ignorance, just as in a dream we may create so many things which actually have no existence.
- Then when we are awake we shall see that everything is simply a dream.

## Srila Prabhupada

- But factually, although the demons say that life is a dream, they are very expert in enjoying this dream.
- And so, instead of acquiring knowledge, they become more and more implicated in their dreamland.
- They conclude that as a child is simply the result of sexual intercourse between man and woman, this world is born without any soul.
- For them it is only a combination of matter that has produced the living entities, and there is no question of the existence of the soul.
- As many living creatures come out from perspiration and from a dead body without any cause, the whole living world has come out of the material combinations of the cosmic manifestation.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Therefore material nature is the cause of this manifestation, and there is no other cause.
- They do not believe in the words of Kṛṣṇa in Bhagavad-gītā: mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram.
- "Under My direction the whole material world is moving."
- In other words, among the demons there is no perfect knowledge of the creation of the world; every one of them has some particular theory of his own.
- According to them, one interpretation of the scriptures is as good as another, for they do not believe in a standard understanding of the scriptural injunctions.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.9 ||

etām dr̥ṣṭim avaṣṭabhya  
naṣṭātmāno 'lpa-buddhayaḥ  
prabhavanty ugra-karmāṇaḥ  
kṣayāya jagato 'hitāḥ

Taking shelter of this viewpoint (**etām dr̥ṣṭim avaṣṭabhya**), being depraved (**naṣṭātmāno**), unintelligent (**alpa-buddhayaḥ**), performing violent actions (**ugra-karmāṇaḥ**), these men (**ahitāḥ**) are born to bring destruction to the world (**jagataḥ kṣayāya prabhavanty**).

Taking shelter of these viewpoints (**etām dr̥ṣṭim avaṣṭabhya**), not understanding ātmā (**naṣṭātmāno**), believing in worthless philosophies (**alpa-buddhayaḥ**), performing violent actions (**ugra-karmāṇaḥ**), and being hostile to the world (**jagato ahitāḥ**), these men deviate the world from spiritual truth (**kṣayāya prabhavanty**).

## SVCT

- Some of these asuras who speak in this way are lost souls (naṣṭātmaṇaḥ), some have little intelligence, some are violent, doing whatever they want, living hellish existence.
- This is described in eleven verses.
- Avaṣṭabhya means taking shelter of this conception.



## Baladeva

- Taking shelter of actions and philosophies to exemplify their respective views, they destroy the world.
- Dr̥ṣṭim is in the singular to indicate the whole class of demonic philosophies.
- Taking support (avaṣṭabhya) of their philosophies, these foolish people, with worthless opinions (alpa buddhayaḥ), devoid of understanding ātmā distinct from the body (naṣṭātmanaḥ), fixed in actions of violence, slander and insult (ugra karmānaḥ), being enemies of the world (jagataḥ ahitāḥ), deviate the world from spiritual truth (kṣayāya prabhavanti).

## Srila Prabhupada

- The demoniac are engaged in activities that will lead the world to destruction.
- The Lord states here that they are less intelligent.
- The materialists, who have no concept of God, think that they are advancing. But according to Bhagavad-gītā, they are unintelligent and devoid of all sense.
- They try to enjoy this material world to the utmost limit and therefore always engage in inventing something for sense gratification.
- Such materialistic inventions are considered to be advancement of human civilization, but the result is that people grow more and more violent and more and more cruel, cruel to animals and cruel to other human beings.

## Srila Prabhupada

- They have no idea how to behave toward one another.
- Animal killing is very prominent amongst demoniac people.
- Such people are considered the enemies of the world because ultimately they will invent or create something which will bring destruction to all.
- Indirectly, this verse anticipates the invention of nuclear weapons, of which the whole world is today very proud. At any moment war may take place, and these atomic weapons may create havoc.
- Such things are created solely for the destruction of the world, and this is indicated here. Due to godlessness, such weapons are invented in human society; they are not meant for the peace and prosperity of the world.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.10 ||

kāmam āśritya duṣpūram  
dambha-māna-madānvitāḥ  
mohād gr̥hītvāsad-grāhān  
pravartante 'śuci-vratāḥ

Taking shelter of insatiable lust (**duṣpūram kāmam āśritya**), filled with false pretense, pride and passion (**dambha-māna-madānvitāḥ**), with impure vows (**aśuci-vratāḥ**), they engage in all sorts of false doctrines (**asad-grāhād pravartante**) out of bewilderment (**mohād**).

Taking shelter of insatiable desire for sense objects (**duṣpūram kāmam āśritya**), filled with false religiosity, desire for self-worship and false importance (**dambha-māna-madānvitāḥ**), with impure vows (**aśuci-vratāḥ**), they become attached to all sorts of temporary things (**asad-grāhād pravartante**) out of bewilderment (**mohād**).

## Baladeva

- This verse describes their evil tendencies and conduct.
- Taking shelter of thirst for sense enjoyment (duṣpūram kāmam), accepting material objects as all in all (asad grāhān gr̥hītvā), out of illusion, not from scriptural direction (mohāt), having impure vows (aśuci vratāḥ), they engage in activities (pravartate).
- Asad grāhān means wicked crocodiles as well as material properties.
- They become attached to attractive things like money, property, and women, produced from imaginary devatās, their mantras, and their worship, which destroy spiritual life, but which are difficult to restrain, like ferocious crocodiles.

## Baladeva

- “Impure vows” means they indulge in so-called religious vows which include eating meat, taking liquor, and visiting the crematorium.
- Dambha means that they act for being known as religious even though they are irreligious.
- Māna means that they proclaim themselves to be worshippingable, though they are not worthy of respect.
- Mada means that they project themselves the most elevated of persons though they have no good qualities.
- They are endowed with these qualities.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The demoniac mentality is described here.
- The demons have no satiation for their lust. They will go on increasing and increasing their insatiable desires for material enjoyment.
- Although they are always full of anxieties on account of accepting nonpermanent things, they still continue to engage in such activities out of illusion.
- They have no knowledge and cannot tell that they are heading the wrong way.
- Accepting nonpermanent things, such demoniac people create their own God, create their own hymns and chant accordingly.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The result is that they become more and more attracted to two things—sex enjoyment and accumulation of material wealth.
- The word *aśuci-vratāḥ*, "unclean vows," is very significant in this connection.
- Such demoniac people are only attracted by wine, women, gambling and meat-eating; those are their *aśuci*, unclean habits.
- Induced by pride and false prestige, they create some principles of religion which are not approved by the Vedic injunctions.
- Although such demoniac people are most abominable in the world, by artificial means the world creates a false honor for them.
- Although they are gliding toward hell, they consider themselves very much advanced.



## Section-II The Demoniatic Nature (7-20)

|| 16.11 ||

cintām aparimeyām ca  
pralayāntām upāśritāḥ  
kāmapabhoga-paramā  
etāvad iti niścītāḥ

Taking shelter of unlimited thoughts and worries (**cintām aparimeyām ca upāśritāḥ**) of what they should obtain till the point of death (**pralayāntām**), they are convinced that the goal is only to enjoy sense objects to the utmost (**kāma upabhoga-paramā etāvad iti niścītāḥ**).

## SVCT

- Until death (pralayāntām) they take shelter of unlimited thoughts.
- They are convinced that the only purport of scripture (etāvan iti niścītāḥ) is to let the senses enjoy sense objects, and why worry about it?

## Baladeva

- Engaged in unlimited thinking of objects to be attained up to the point of death, their only goal in this life is to immerse themselves in sense objects (kāma upabhoga paramā), firmly believing (niścītāḥ) that this is all there is (etāvat), and there is no question of happiness in another life after death (etāvad niścītāḥ).

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.12 ||

āśā-pāśa-śatair baddhāḥ  
kāma-krodha-parāyaṇāḥ  
īhante kāma-bhogārtham  
anyāyenārtha-sañcayān

Bound by hundreds of shackles of desire (**āśā-pāśa-śatair baddhāḥ**), surrendered to lust and anger (**kāma-krodha-parāyaṇāḥ**), they strive to amass heaps of wealth (**artha-sañcayān īhante**) through illegal means (**anyāyena**) in order to enjoy sense objects (**kāma-bhogārtham**).

## Srila Prabhupada

- The demoniac accept that the enjoyment of the senses is the ultimate goal of life, and this concept they maintain until death.
- They do not believe in life after death, and they do not believe that one takes on different types of bodies according to one's karma, or activities in this world.
- Their plans for life are never finished, and they go on preparing plan after plan, all of which are never finished.
- We have personal experience of a person of such demoniac mentality who, even at the point of death, was requesting the physician to prolong his life for four years more because his plans were not yet complete.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Such foolish people do not know that a physician cannot prolong life even for a moment.
- When the notice is there, there is no consideration of the man's desire.
- The laws of nature do not allow a second beyond what one is destined to enjoy.
- The demoniac person, who has no faith in God or the Supersoul within himself, performs all kinds of sinful activities simply for sense gratification.
- He does not know that there is a witness sitting within his heart.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The Supersoul is observing the activities of the individual soul.
- As it is stated in the Upaniṣads, there are two birds sitting in one tree; one is acting and enjoying or suffering the fruits of the branches, and the other is witnessing.
- But one who is demoniac has no knowledge of Vedic scripture, nor has he any faith; therefore he feels free to do anything for sense enjoyment, regardless of the consequences.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.13 ||

**idam adya mayā labdham  
imaṁ prāpsyē manoratham  
idam astīdam api me  
bhaviṣyati punar dhanam**

I have gained this object today (**idam adya mayā labdham**). Next I will obtain this other object that I desire (**imaṁ prāpsyē manoratham**). This is mine now (**idam asti**). This wealth will also be mine in the future (**idam dhanam api me punar bhaviṣyati**).

## Baladeva

- Describing their conduct in pursuit of wealth in which they use fanciful words, the Lord says they will go to hell in four verses.
- I have obtained today this field (idam), these animals and children by the strength of my intelligence (mayā).
- I will obtain this other object dear to my mind (manoratham) by my strength.
- This wealth, being obtained by my strength alone, now belongs to me (idam asti).
- Next year, this wealth I am longing for will also become mine, just by my strength. He does not acknowledge that it is by karma or the mercy of the Lord that he acquires these things.



## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.14 ||

asau mayā hataḥ śatrur  
haniṣye cāparān api  
īśvaro 'ham ahaṁ bhogī  
siddho 'ham balavān sukhī

I have killed my enemy (asau śatrur mayā hataḥ). I will kill others also (haniṣye ca aparān api). I am the lord. I am the enjoyer (īśvaro 'ham ahaṁ bhogī). I am strong and happy (siddho 'ham balavān sukhī).

## Baladeva

- Having proclaimed his thirst for wealth, in this verse he declares his evil mentality.
- I have killed this enemy called Yajñadatta by my superior strength. I alone will kill other enemies also and others (ca)—not even desiring their wives or wealth.
- No one except me should live. (The word ca indicates this.)
- Some say that the will of the Lord and fate are the cause of victory, but I alone am the lord, being fully independent, for, by myself, I accomplish all enjoyment (bhogī siddhaḥ).
- If someone makes a God, let him take me as God rather than anyone else, because no one else is available except me.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.15 ||

āḍhyo 'bhijanavān asmi  
ko 'nyo 'sti sadṛśo mayā  
yakṣye dāsyāmi modiṣya  
ity ajñāna-vimohitāḥ

I am wealthy and high born (**āḍhyo abhijanavān asmi**). Who is equal to me (**ko anyo asti sadṛśo mayā**)? I shall enjoy women and defile them (**yakṣye dāsyāmi**). I will enjoy (**modiṣya**). In this way, they are bewildered by ignorance (**ity ajñāna-vimohitāḥ**).

## Baladeva

- “But I can see others who are equal to you in wealth and family. Why should you be God?”
- I am wealthy (āḍhyaḥ), through my own efforts, and have good family (abhijanavān).
- There is no one similar to me on any grounds.
- No one is equal to me: I alone am God.
- By my own strength, I will associate with heavenly women (yakṣye). I will defile them (dāsyāmi). I will enjoy with them (modiṣye).
- In this way, being bewildered by ignorance, such persons fall to hell. The completion of the sentence is the next verse.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.16 ||

aneka-citta-vibhrāntā  
moha-jāla-samāvṛtāḥ  
prasaktāḥ kāma-bhogeṣu  
patanti narake 'śucau

Misled by many thoughts (**aneka-citta-vibhrāntā**), covered by a net of illusion (**moha-jāla-samāvṛtāḥ**), extremely attached to enjoying objects (**prasaktāḥ kāma-bhogeṣu**), they fall into an unclean hell (**patanti narake aśucau**).

## Baladeva

- Mind agitated by objects which they are endeavoring to obtain for a long time (*aneka citta vibhrāntā*), surrounded by a net made of illusion, like fish in a net, from which they cannot escape, dying while being strongly attached to enjoyment of senses objects, they fall to hell, to impure places like *Vaitaraṇī*.
- [Note: This is a river in hell filled with blood, bones and pus.]

## Srila Prabhupada

- The demoniac man knows no limit to his desire to acquire money. That is unlimited.
- He thinks only of how much assessment he has just now and schemes to engage that stock of wealth further and further.
- For that reason, he does not hesitate to act in any sinful way and so deals in the black market for illegal gratification.
- He is enamored by the possessions he has already, such as land, family, house and bank balance, and he is always planning to improve them.
- He believes in his own strength, and he does not know that whatever he is gaining is due to his past good deeds.

## Srila Prabhupada

- He is given an opportunity to accumulate such things, but he has no conception of past causes.
- He simply thinks that all his mass of wealth is due to his own endeavor.
- A demoniac person believes in the strength of his personal work, not in the law of karma.
- According to the law of karma, a man takes his birth in a high family, or becomes rich, or very well educated, or very beautiful because of good work in the past.
- The demoniac think that all these things are accidental and due to the strength of one's personal ability.



# Srila Prabhupada

- They do not sense any arrangement behind all the varieties of people, beauty and education.
- Anyone who comes into competition with such a demoniac man is his enemy.
- There are many demoniac people, and each is enemy to the others. This enmity becomes more and more deep—between persons, then between families, then between societies, and at last between nations.
- Therefore there is constant strife, war and enmity all over the world.
- Each demoniac person thinks that he can live at the sacrifice of all others.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Generally, a demoniac person thinks of himself as the Supreme God, and a demoniac preacher tells his followers: "Why are you seeking God elsewhere? You are all yourselves God! Whatever you like, you can do. Don't believe in God. Throw away God. God is dead."
- These are the demoniac's preachings.
- Although the demoniac person sees others equally rich and influential, or even more so, he thinks that no one is richer than he and that no one is more influential than he.
- As far as promotion to the higher planetary system is concerned, he does not believe in performing yajñas, or sacrifices.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Demons think that they will manufacture their own process of yajña and prepare some machine by which they will be able to reach any higher planet.
- The best example of such a demoniac man was Rāvaṇa. He offered a program to the people by which he would prepare a staircase so that anyone could reach the heavenly planets without performing sacrifices, such as are prescribed in the Vedas.
- Similarly, in the present age such demoniac men are striving to reach the higher planetary systems by mechanical arrangements.

## Srila Prabhupada

- These are examples of bewilderment.
- The result is that, without their knowledge, they are gliding toward hell.
- Here the Sanskrit word moha-jāla is very significant.
- Jāla means "net"; like fish caught in a net, they have no way to come out.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.17 ||

ātma-sambhāvitāḥ stabdhā  
dhana-māna-madānvitāḥ  
yajante nāma-yajñais te  
dambhenāvidhi-pūrvakam

Respected by the unintelligent (**ātma-sambhāvitāḥ**), unsubmitive (**stabdhā**), filled with the intoxication of pride in their wealth (**dhana-māna-madānvitāḥ**), they perform worship for show only (**te dambhena yajante**), through false yajña (**nāma-yajñaih**), without following scriptural rules (**avidhi-pūrvakam**).

## Baladeva

- Recognized as preeminent (ātma sambhāvitāḥ) by themselves alone, not by knowers of scripture, lacking humility (stabdhā), filled with pride in wealth, filled with pride (mada) at being respected as paramahansa or a great mendicant, worthy of all worship, or greatly learned in worship, they worship devatās they themselves concoct, by rules of worship which is worship in name alone, dressing up as renunciates, and pretending to be religious (dambhena) for the prosperity of their own house and family.
- All this is without following the Vedic rules (avidhi pūravakm).

## Srila Prabhupada

- Thinking themselves all in all, not caring for any authority or scripture, the demoniac sometimes perform so-called religious or sacrificial rites.
- And since they do not believe in authority, they are very impudent. This is due to illusion caused by accumulating some wealth and false prestige.
- Sometimes such demons take up the role of preacher, mislead the people, and become known as religious reformers or as incarnations of God.
- They make a show of performing sacrifices, or they worship the demigods, or manufacture their own God.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Common men advertise them as God and worship them, and by the foolish they are considered advanced in the principles of religion, or in the principles of spiritual knowledge.
- They take the dress of the renounced order of life and engage in all nonsense in that dress.
- Actually there are so many restrictions for one who has renounced this world. The demons, however, do not care for such restrictions. They think that whatever path one can create is one's own path; there is no such thing as a standard path one has to follow.
- The word avidhi-pūrvakam, meaning a disregard for the rules and regulations, is especially stressed here. These things are always due to ignorance and illusion.



## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.18 ||

ahaṅkāraṁ balaṁ darpaṁ  
kāmaṁ krodhaṁ ca saṁśritāḥ  
mām ātma-para-deheṣu  
pradviṣanto 'bhyasūyakāḥ

Surrendered (**saṁśritāḥ**) to ego, strength, arrogance (**ahaṅkāraṁ balaṁ darpaṁ**), lust, and anger (**kāmaṁ krodhaṁ ca**), they hate Me situated in their own and others' bodies (**mām ātma-para-deheṣu pradviṣantah**), and find fault in the qualities of the devotees (**abhyasūyakāḥ**).

Surrendered to ego, strength, arrogance, lust, and anger, they hate Me situated in their own and others' bodies, and find fault in the qualities of the Vedas and Me.

## SVCT

- They disrespect Me (pradviṣantaḥ), the Paramātmā, who am situated in their own and others bodies (ātma-para-deheṣu).
- Or they hate Me who am situated in the bodies of the devotees who are surrendered to Paramātmā (ātma-para-deheṣu mām).
- They hate Me, since they hate the devotees who have surrendered to Me.
- And they find fault in the qualities of the devotees (abhyasūyakāḥ).

## Baladeva

- They are completely disrespectful to the Vedas and the Supreme Lord delineated therein.
- They take shelter of false ego, strength, pride lust and anger, disrespecting Me, the Lord of all, situated as the controller and maintainer in all bodies including theirs, and as well, disrespecting the Vedas which describe Me.
- They ascribe faults to the qualities of the Vedas and Myself, by dishonest logic (abhyasūyakāḥ).
- Their false ego tells them “I alone do everything independently.”

## Baladeva

- Taking shelter of their strength, they think, “I alone am the victor.”
- Taking shelter of arrogance they say, “There is no one equal to me.”
- Taking shelter of lust, they say, “My desires are greater than all others’ combined.”
- Taking shelter of anger, they think, “I will kill my enemy.”

## Srila Prabhupada

- A demoniac person, being always against God's supremacy, does not like to believe in the scriptures.
- He is envious of both the scriptures and the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- This is caused by his so-called prestige and his accumulation of wealth and strength.
- He does not know that the present life is a preparation for the next life. Not knowing this, he is actually envious of his own self, as well as of others.
- He commits violence on other bodies and on his own. He does not care for the supreme control of the Personality of Godhead, because he has no knowledge.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Being envious of the scriptures and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he puts forward false arguments against the existence of God and denies the scriptural authority.
- He thinks himself independent and powerful in every action.
- He thinks that since no one can equal him in strength, power or wealth, he can act in any way and no one can stop him.
- If he has an enemy who might check the advancement of his sensual activities, he makes plans to cut him down by his own power.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.19 ||

tān ahaṁ dviṣataḥ krūrān  
saṁsāreṣu narādhamān  
kṣipāmy ajasram aśubhān  
āsurīṣv eva yoniṣu

I cast (**ahaṁ kṣipāmy**) those hateful, cruel (**tān dviṣataḥ krūrān**), and lowest of humans (**saṁsāreṣu narādhamān**), constantly doing evil (**ajasram aśubhān**), into repeated birth and death in the wombs of demons (**āsurīṣv eva yoniṣu**).

## Baladeva

- Because of their asura mentality they will not get liberation at all. This is explained in two verses.
- I, the Lord of all, who give results to all according to their karmas, throw them again and again (ajasram) into births as sinful persons (hunters) or mlecchas, involved with violence and thirst for enjoyment.



## Srila Prabhupada

- In this verse it is clearly indicated that the placing of a particular individual soul in a particular body is the prerogative of the supreme will.
- The demoniac person may not agree to accept the supremacy of the Lord, and it is a fact that he may act according to his own whims, but his next birth will depend upon the decision of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and not on himself.
- In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Third Canto, it is stated that an individual soul, after his death, is put into the womb of a mother where he gets a particular type of body under the supervision of superior power.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Therefore in the material existence we find so many species of life—animals, insects, men, and so on.
- All are arranged by the superior power. They are not accidental.
- As for the demoniac, it is clearly said here that they are perpetually put into the wombs of demons, and thus they continue to be envious, the lowest of mankind.
- Such demoniac species of men are held to be always full of lust, always violent and hateful and always unclean.
- The many kinds of hunters in the jungle are considered to belong to the demoniac species of life.

## Section-II The Demoniac Nature (7-20)

|| 16.20 ||

āsurīm yonim āpannā  
mūḍhā janmani janmani  
mām aprāpyaiva kaunteya  
tato yānty adhamām gatim

Taking birth as demons (**āsurīm yonim āpannā**) birth after birth (**janmani janmani**), these fools (**mūḍhā**), not attaining My mercy at all (**mām aprāpyaiva**), then go to the lowest status of life (**tato yānty adhamām gatim**), O son of Kuntī (**kaunteya**).

## SVCT

- Not attaining Me, the asuras attain low births.
- However, those asuras in the form of Kāmsa and others attained Me, Kṛṣṇa, who appeared at the end of Dvāpara-yuga in the twenty eighth cycle of Vaivasvata Manu's reign.
- Though hating Me, they attained Me in the form of liberation. Because I am an ocean of mercy, I give even such sinful asuras liberation, which is only attained by the perfection of bhakti and jñāna.
- The Personified Vedas say:

**nibhr̥ta-marun-mano'kṣa dṛḍha-yoga-yujo hr̥di yan  
munaya upāsate tad-arayo'pi yayuḥ smaraṇāt**

Simply by constantly thinking of Him, the enemies of the Lord attained the same Supreme Truth whom sages fixed in yoga worship by controlling their breath, mind and senses. SB 10.87.23

## SVCT

- This widens the scope of My supreme attractive position which I mentioned previously.
- But as the Bhagavatāmṛta Kārikā says:  
**mām kṛṣṇa-rūpiṇaṁ yāvan nāpnuvanti mama dviṣaḥ  
tāvad evādhamaṁ yoniṁ prāpnuvantīti hi sphuṭam**

In as much as those who hate Me do not attain Me in My form as Kṛṣṇa, it is clear that they attain the lowest births.

## Baladeva

- But those who become demons and kings obedient to demons by a curse, though showing externally hatred to the visible forms of Viṣṇu like Vāmana, Narasiṃha and Varāha, regarding them as enemies, are internally followers of the vedic path, and consider Him to be the Supreme Lord the controller of all, in control of time, beyond their material vision.
- Being killed by Vāmana and other incarnations, they give up the bodies of asuras .
- Those killed by Kṛṣṇa attain liberation. These persons are not opposers of the Vedas.

## Baladeva

- The śruti also says:

atha kapūya-caraṇā abhyāso ha yat te kapūyām yonim  
āpadyeran śva-yonim vā śūkara-yonim vā caṇḍāla-yonim vā

Those of bad conduct attain low births, such as dogs, pigs and caṇḍālas. **Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.10.7**

- “But because You have the quality having all Your desires fulfilled (satya saṅkalpatva), You can make them qualified, even if they are so unqualified.”

## Baladeva

- Anything is possible for the Lord, but though He could do this, He does not have that desire, since there is no good reason for Him to do that.
- Thus there is no fault of prejudice in the Lord.
- The author of the Vedānta says vaiṣyamyā-niarghṛṇye na: there is no prejudice or hatred in the Lord. (Vedānta Sūtras 2.1.35)
- Therefore these two verses are very appropriate.
- Those asuras described here who do not accept scripture are always shown to be inhabitants of hell.



## Baladeva

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- Therefore these two verses are very appropriate.
- Those asuras described here who do not accept scripture are always shown to be inhabitants of hell.

## Srila Prabhupada

- It is known that God is all-merciful, but here we find that God is never merciful to the demoniac.
- It is clearly stated that the demoniac people, life after life, are put into the wombs of similar demons, and, not achieving the mercy of the Supreme Lord, they go down and down, so that at last they achieve bodies like those of cats, dogs and hogs.
- It is clearly stated that such demons have practically no chance of receiving the mercy of God at any stage of later life.
- In the Vedas also it is stated that such persons gradually sink to become dogs and hogs. It may be then argued in this connection that God should not be advertised as all-merciful if He is not merciful to such demons.

## Srila Prabhupada

- In answer to this question, in the Vedānta-sūtra we find that the Supreme Lord has no hatred for anyone.
- The placing of the asuras, the demons, in the lowest status of life is simply another feature of His mercy.
- Sometimes the asuras are killed by the Supreme Lord, but this killing is also good for them, for in Vedic literature we find that anyone who is killed by the Supreme Lord becomes liberated.
- There are instances in history of many asuras-Rāvaṇa, Kaṁsa, Hiranyakaśipu—to whom the Lord appeared in various incarnations just to kill them. Therefore God's mercy is shown to the asuras if they are fortunate enough to be killed by Him.

# Section – III

The Choice: Escaping to  
the Supreme Destination  
(21-24)

## Section-III The Choice: Escaping to the Supreme Destination (21-24)

|| 16.21 ||

tri-vidham narakasyedam  
dvāram nāśanam ātmanaḥ  
kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas  
tasmād etat trayam tyajet

Lust, anger and greed (**kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas**), the three gates leading to hell (**narakasya tri-vidham dvāram**), destroy the self (**ātmanaḥ nāśanam**). Therefore one should give up these three (**tasmād etat trayam tyajet**).

## SVCT

- Thus the Lord has described the nature of the asura in detail.
- The Lord has also correctly said, “Do not worry, O Arjuna, you are born of the divine nature.” (BG 16.5)
- To confirm that this is true, He then says that there are indeed three inborn tendencies of the asuras in this verse.

## Baladeva

- “What should men do who, hearing that the demonic nature leads to hell, desire to avoid that nature?” This verse answers.
- If they avoid these three things—lust, anger and greed—they can avoid the demonic nature.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The beginning of demoniac life is described herein.
- One tries to satisfy his lust, and when he cannot, anger and greed arise.
- A sane man who does not want to glide down to the species of demoniac life must try to give up these three enemies, which can kill the self to such an extent that there will be no possibility of liberation from this material entanglement.

## Section-III The Choice: Escaping to the Supreme Destination (21-24)

|| 16.22 ||

etair vimuktaḥ kaunteya  
tamo-dvārais tribhir naraḥ  
ācaraty ātmanaḥ śreyas  
tato yāti parām gatim

The person (**naraḥ**) who is free from these three gates leading to darkness (**etair tribhir tamo-dvāraih vimuktaḥ**) acts in the best interest of the self (**ācaraty ātmanaḥ śreyas**), and then attains liberation (**tato yāti parām gatim**).



## Srila Prabhupada

- One should be very careful of these three enemies to human life: lust, anger and greed.
- The more a person is freed from lust, anger and greed, the more his existence becomes pure.
- Then he can follow the rules and regulations enjoined in the Vedic literature.
- By following the regulative principles of human life, one gradually raises himself to the platform of spiritual realization.
- If one is so fortunate, by such practice, to rise to the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then success is guaranteed for him.
- In the Vedic literature, the ways of action and reaction are prescribed to enable one to come to the stage of purification.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The whole method is based on giving up lust, greed and anger.
- By cultivating knowledge of this process, one can be elevated to the highest position of self-realization; this self-realization is perfected in devotional service.
- In that devotional service, the liberation of the conditioned soul is guaranteed.
- Therefore, according to the Vedic system, there are instituted the four orders of life and the four statuses of life, called the caste system and the spiritual order system.
- There are different rules and regulations for different castes or divisions of society, and if a person is able to follow them, he will be automatically raised to the highest platform of spiritual realization. Then he can have liberation without a doubt.

## Section-III The Choice: Escaping to the Supreme Destination (21-24)

|| 16.23 ||

yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsrjya  
vartate kāma-kārataḥ  
na sa siddhim avāpnoti  
na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim

He who giving up the rules of scripture (**yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsrjya**) acts according to his own whim (**vartate kāma-kārataḥ**) does not attain perfection (**na sa siddhim avāpnoti**), happiness, or the supreme goal (**na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim**).

## Baladeva

- One cannot give up the three gates to hell without practice of ones own dharma or aśrāma.
- And practicing ones own dharma can not be properly fulfilled without following scripture.
- Therefore the intelligent person should act according to scripture.
- He who acts according to his own preferences (kāma kārataḥ), and does not follow prescribed actions, and actually does what is forbidden by scripture, does not attain purification of heart (siddhim), necessary for attaining the goal of life. What then to speak of attaining peacefulness (sukham) or liberation (parām gatim)?

## Srila Prabhupada

- As described before, the śāstra-vidhi, or the direction of the śāstra, is given to the different castes and orders of human society.
- Everyone is expected to follow these rules and regulations.
- If one does not follow them and acts whimsically according to his lust, greed and desire, then he never will be perfect in his life.
- In other words, a man may theoretically know all these things, but if he does not apply them in his own life, then he is to be known as the lowest of mankind.
- In the human form of life, a living entity is expected to be sane and to follow the regulations given for elevating his life to the highest platform, but if he does not follow them, then he degrades himself.

## Srila Prabhupada

- But even if he follows the rules and regulations and moral principles and ultimately does not come to the stage of understanding the Supreme Lord, then all his knowledge becomes spoiled.
- And even if he accepts the existence of God, if he does not engage himself in the service of the Lord his attempts are spoiled.
- Therefore one should gradually raise himself to the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service; it is then and there that he can attain the highest perfectional stage, not otherwise.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The word *kāma-kārataḥ* is very significant. A person who knowingly violates the rules acts in lust.
- He knows that this is forbidden, but still he acts. This is called acting whimsically. He knows that this should be done, but still he does not do it; therefore he is called whimsical.
- Such persons are destined to be condemned by the Supreme Lord.
- Such persons cannot have the perfection which is meant for the human life. The human life is especially meant for purifying one's existence, and one who does not follow the rules and regulations cannot purify himself, nor can he attain the real stage of happiness.

## Section-III The Choice: Escaping to the Supreme Destination (21-24)

|| 16.24 ||

tasmāc chāstram pramāṇam te  
kāryākārya-vyavasthitau  
jñātvā śāstra-vidhānoktam  
karma kartum ihārhasi

Therefore scripture is the authority (**tasmāt śāstram pramāṇam**) in determining what to do and what not to do (**kārya-akārya-vyavasthitau**). Understanding what is stated in the scripture (**jñātvā śāstra-vidhānoktam**), you should perform actions in this world (**karma kartum iha arhasi**).



## Baladeva

- Since the tendency for lust, anger and greed which are contrary to scripture deviate one from the goal of life, scripture in the form of the Vedas, which is perfect, not being written by man, is the authority in matters of what to do and what not to do (pramāṇam).
- The statements composed by men who are subject to faults such as error are not authority.
- Thus the positive and negative injunctions of scripture to do or not do certain things (vidhāna uktam) are stated using the potential mood (you should do this) or with the suffix tavya after a verb (which also means “should do”).

## Baladeva

- Knowing about the prescribed and forbidden actions, you should perform prescribed actions such as fighting and sacrifices in this world of karma (iha), for teaching people, avoiding the forbidden actions.
- Those fixed in understanding the meaning of the Vedas go to svarga and eternal liberation.
- Those who reject the Vedas go to hell.
- This is the conclusion of the sixteenth chapter.

## Srila Prabhupada

- As stated in the Fifteenth Chapter, all the rules and regulations of the Vedas are meant for knowing Kṛṣṇa.
- If one understands Kṛṣṇa from the Bhagavad-gītā and becomes situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, engaging himself in devotional service, he has reached the highest perfection of knowledge offered by the Vedic literature.
- Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu made this process very easy: He asked people simply to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare and to engage in the devotional service of the Lord and eat the remnants of foodstuff offered to the Deity.

## Srila Prabhupada

- One who is directly engaged in all these devotional activities is to be understood as having studied all Vedic literature. He has come to the conclusion perfectly.
- Of course, for the ordinary persons who are not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness or who are not engaged in devotional service, what is to be done and what is not to be done must be decided by the injunctions of the Vedas.
- One should act accordingly, without argument. That is called following the principles of śāstra, or scripture.
- Śāstra is without the four principal defects that are visible in the conditioned soul: imperfect senses, the propensity for cheating, certainty of committing mistakes, and certainty of being illusioned.

## Srila Prabhupada

- These four principal defects in conditioned life disqualify one from putting forth rules and regulations. Therefore, the rules and regulations as described in the śāstra—being above these defects—are accepted without alteration by all great saints, ācāryas and great souls.
- In India there are many parties of spiritual understanding, generally classified as two: the impersonalist and the personalist.
- Both of them, however, lead their lives according to the principles of the Vedas.
- Without following the principles of the scriptures, one cannot elevate himself to the perfectional stage.
- One who actually, therefore, understands the purport of the śāstras is considered fortunate.

## Srila Prabhupada

- In human society, aversion to the principles of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of all falldowns. That is the greatest offense of human life.
- Therefore, *māyā*, the material energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is always giving us trouble in the shape of the threefold miseries.
- This material energy is constituted of the three modes of material nature.
- One has to raise himself at least to the mode of goodness before the path to understanding the Supreme Lord can be opened.
- Without raising oneself to the standard of the mode of goodness, one remains in ignorance and passion, which are the cause of demoniac life.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Those in the modes of passion and ignorance deride the scriptures, deride the holy man, and deride the proper understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- They disobey the instructions of the spiritual master, and they do not care for the regulations of the scriptures.
- In spite of hearing the glories of devotional service, they are not attracted.
- Thus they manufacture their own way of elevation. These are some of the defects of human society which lead to the demoniac status of life.
- If, however, one is able to be guided by a proper and bona fide spiritual master, who can lead one to the path of elevation, to the higher stage, then one's life becomes successful.