

# Bhagavad Gita - Chapter Three

## Karma-Yoga

## Section-I - Renunciation or Work (1-2)

|| 3.1 ||

*arjuna uvāca*  
*jyāyasī cet karmaṇas te*  
*matā buddhir janārdana*  
*tat kiṁ karmaṇi ghore mām*  
*niyojayasi keśava*

Arjuna said: If it is Your opinion (*te matā*) that intelligence is superior to action (*karmaṇah buddhih jyāyasī cet*), O Janārdana (*janārdana*), then why do You engage me (*kiṁ mām niyojayasi*) in this terrible action (*tat ghore karmaṇi*). O Keśava (*keśava*)?

## SVCT

- In the third chapter, action offered to the Lord without personal desire is described.
- The discrimination necessary for a person desiring to conquer over lust and anger is shown.
- Having accepted the superiority of bhakti which is transcendental to the guṇas, over jñāna-yoga and niṣkāma-karma-yoga in previous statements, now, manifesting his own eagerness (for knowledge), Arjuna in a friendly manner censures the Lord who is encouraging him to fight according to his dharma.

## SVCT

- “If fixed intelligence (**buddhi**), bhakti, transcending the guṇas, is superior (**jyāyasī**), then why do You engage me in this terrible action in the form of war?
- O **Janārdana**, by Your order You are causing pain (**ardana**) to Your own associate (**jana**).
- It is also not possible to avoid following Your order, O **Keśava**, controller of even Brahmā and Śiva!” Ka means Brahmā, īśa means Śiva, and va means vayase, “You control.”

## Baladeva

- The superiority of intelligence directed to the ātmā over whatever is produced by intelligence directed towards action has been established.
- Concerning this Arjuna now asks a question.
- If you consider that intelligence (knowledge-buddhi) directed to the ātmā is superior to niṣkāma karma (karmaṇaḥ) whose goal is to produce ātmā jñāna, why do You engage me in terrible actions, bringing violence?

## Baladeva

- Why do You incite me with words commanding me to fight?
- That intelligence which gives rise to realization of ātmā produces detachment from the function of the senses.
- For that purpose one should employ sense control and other factors which are of the same nature, rather than dissimilar actions which engage all the senses.
- 
- Janārdana means one who is the object of entreaty for those desiring their ultimate benefit.
- Keśava means one who controls Brahma and Śiva.

## Baladeva

- Śiva says to Kṛṣṇa in the Hari Vaṁśa:

**ka iti brahmaṇo nāma īśo'ham sarva-dehinām  
āvām tavāṅga-sambhūtau tasmāt keśava-nāma-bhāg**

- Ka means Brahma, and Iśa refers to me, the lord of all embodied beings. Both of us arise from your body. Therefore you are called “Keśava.”

- You, whose instructions cannot be transgressed (since you control even Brahma and Śiva), Keśava, being requested by me, who desire the ultimate benefit, should clearly tell me what is most beneficial (Janardana).

## Srila Prabhupada

- The Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa has very elaborately described the constitution of the soul in the previous chapter, with a view to delivering His intimate friend Arjuna from the ocean of material grief.
- And the path of realization has been recommended: buddhi-yoga, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Sometimes Kṛṣṇa consciousness is misunderstood to be inertia, and one with such a misunderstanding often withdraws to a secluded place to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious by chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa.



## Srila Prabhupada

- But without being trained in the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it is not advisable to chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in a secluded place, where one may acquire only cheap adoration from the innocent public.
- Arjuna also thought of Kṛṣṇa consciousness or buddhi-yoga, or intelligence in spiritual advancement of knowledge, as something like retirement from active life and the practice of penance and austerity at a secluded place.
- In other words, he wanted to skillfully avoid the fighting by using Kṛṣṇa consciousness as an excuse.
- But as a sincere student, he placed the matter before his master and questioned Kṛṣṇa as to his best course of action.
- In answer, Lord Kṛṣṇa elaborately explained karma-yoga, or work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in this Third Chapter.

## Section-I - Renunciation or Work (1-2)

|| 3.2 ||

*vyāmiśreṇeva vākyaena  
buddhiṁ mohayasīva me  
tad ekaṁ vada niścitya  
yena śreyo 'ham āpnuyām*

You bewilder me (*me buddhiṁ mohayasīva*) with Your mixture of words (*vyāmiśreṇeva vākyaena*). Now speak clearly (*tad ekaṁ vada niścitya*) so that I may attain the highest benefit (*yena aham śreyah āpnuyām*).

## SVCT

- “O My friend Arjuna, it is true that bhakti, beyond the guṇas is supreme.
- But since that is obtained only by the mercy of My great pure devotees in an unexpected manner, it is not attained by the efforts of the individual.
- Therefore, I have given a blessing to you: be transcendental to the guṇas (**nistraiguṇya bhava**): be transcendental to the guṇas by transcendental bhakti.
- When this blessing matures, you will attain bhakti by such unexpected mercy of the pure devotee.
- As it is fitting to the present circumstances, directing you to engage in activity is also valid, using the words **karmaṇy evādhikāras te**: you are qualified for action.”

# SVCT

- “Then why do You not clearly tell me to engage in activity? You throw me into an ocean of doubt.
- You bewilder my intelligence by those words which are mixture of various meanings (**vyāmiśrena**).
- Though you have mentioned about action (**karmaṇy evādhikāras te**), you also speak of jñāna using the word yoga in such statements as the following:

yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya  
siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṁ yoga ucyate

BG 2.48

buddhi-yukto jahātīha ubhe sukṛta-duṣkṛte  
tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam

BG 2.50

## SVCT

- And you speak only of knowledge in such statements as *yadā te mohakalilam buddhir vyatitariṣyati*: when your intelligence has completely crossed the denseness of illusion... (BG 2.52).
- 
- The word *iva* indicates that “Your words are not actually filled with many meanings, and it is not Your desire to bewilder me, as You are merciful. Nor is it that I do not know the meaning, but you should speak this clearly.”
- 
- The deep sense is this: compared to karma in the mode of passion, karma in the mode of goodness is superior. Superior to that is *jñāna*, which is also *sattvic*.
- And *bhakti*, beyond the modes, is superior to that. If You say that *bhakti* is not possible for me, then instruct me on *jñāna* alone. Then I will be free from the bondage of *samsāra* and misery.

## SVCT

- The analysis of vyāmiśreṇa is **vi** for **viśeṣataḥ**, “particularly”; **ā** for “completely”; **miśra**, meaning mixture.
- Confusion arises in Arjuna’s mind because of the use of the word “**buddhi**” and “**śama**” which are associated with jñāna.
- In **karmaṇy evādhikāras te** the Lord also speaks about complete renunciation of the fruits.
- And by the end of chapter two Kṛṣṇa shows that niṣkāma-karma matures into jñāna. This is niṣkāma-karma-yoga, in its mature stage.

## Baladeva

- A statement concerning intellect directed towards both saṁkhya and karma yoga, concerning both stopping and engaging the senses, concerning both the goal of practice (sādhyā) and the practice (sādhana), is called a mixed statement (vyāmiśra).
- By that statement, You seem to bewilder my intelligence (mohayasi iva).
- In reality, You, the lord of all beings, and my friend as well, would not bewilder me.
- But I, because of faults in my intelligence, think like this.
- That is the implication of the word iva. Therefore make one statement, without mixture of the two elements.

## Baladeva

- The śrutis say:

**na karmaṇā na prajayā dhanena tyāgenaikenāmṛtatvam ānaśur  
pareṇa nākaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyām vibhrājate yad yatayo viṣanti**

Not by performance of duty, by progeny or wealth, but by renunciation, they attained that immortality which the sannyāsīs attain, which is beyond heaven and shines within the heart. Mahā Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad 86

**nāsty akṛtaḥ kṛtena**

The eternal person (akṛtaḥ) is not attained by actions. Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1.2.12

- By this I will gain the most beneficial process for me to be undertaken with conviction.



## Srila Prabhupada

- In the previous chapter, as a prelude to the Bhagavad-gītā, many different paths were explained, such as sāṅkhya-yoga, buddhi-yoga, control of the senses by intelligence, work without fruitive desire, and the position of the neophyte.
- This was all presented unsystematically.
- A more organized outline of the path would be necessary for action and understanding.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Arjuna, therefore, wanted to clear up these apparently confusing matters so that any common man could accept them without misinterpretation.
- Although Kṛṣṇa had no intention of confusing Arjuna by any jugglery of words, Arjuna could not follow the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—either by inertia or by active service.
- In other words, by his questions he is clearing the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for all students who seriously want to understand the mystery of the Bhagavad-gītā.

## Section-II - Niskama-karma Yoga (3-9)

|| 3.3 ||

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca  
loke 'smin dvi-vidhā niṣṭhā  
purā proktā mayānagha  
jñāna-yogena sāṅkhyānām  
karma-yogena yoginām*

The Lord said: I have spoken in the last chapter (*mayā purā proktā*) of two types of qualification (*dvi-vidhā niṣṭhā*) for people of this world (*asmin loke*). Those qualified for jñāna are known as practitioners of jñāna yoga (*jñāna-yogena sāṅkhyānām*), and those qualified for niṣkāma karma are known as practitioners of karma yoga (*karma-yogena yoginām*).

## SVCT

- For those engaged in knowledge (**sāṅkhyānām**), who have risen to the state of knowledge by purity of the heart, there is steadiness in jñāna-yoga. That is their limited field.
- They are known in this world for cultivation of knowledge. This is shown in verses such as the following:

**tāni sarvāṇi samyamya yukta āsīta mat-parah  
vaśe hi yasyendriyāṇi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā**

The yogī who is devoted to Me, after restraining all the senses, will remain seated, unresponsive to sense objects. He whose senses have thus been brought under control is sthita-prajña. BG 2.61

## SVCT

- For those who are not able to ascend to the platform of knowledge because of impurities of the heart, there is a means to ascend to that platform.
- They become fixed in niṣkāma-karma-yoga, activities without desire, offered to Me. They are known as those engaged in karma.
- Verses such as the following illustrate this yoga.

**sva-dharmam api cāvekṣa na vikampitum arhasi  
dharmyād dhi yuddhāc chreyo 'nyat kṣatriyasya na vidyate**

- Considering your own duties, you should not be fearful. There is nothing better for the warrior than to fight for the right cause. BG 2.31

## SVCT

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- The karmī and jñānī are different in name only.
- Actually the persons engaged in karma become pure hearted jñānīs by their actions.
- And the jñānīs become liberated by bhakti.
- This is the meaning of all My words.

## Baladeva

- After being asked, the Lord answers.
- O Arjuna of spotless intelligence (**anagha**), by your statement in verse one, though you know the main substance concerning the qualities of intelligence dedicated to action and to samkhya, which are of contrary natures, like darkness and light, why are you asking in doubt about being qualified for one of these?
- I, the Lord of all, have in the previous chapter (**purā**), described two types of steadiness (**niṣṭhā**), in two types of people (**loke**) according to the purity or impurity of their consciousness, in terms of their aspiration for liberation.

## Baladeva

- The word niṣṭha or steadiness is in the singular rather than dual to indicate that one steadiness only in the sense of both types of niṣṭhā having only one goal, that of realizing ātmā.
- There are not two niṣṭhās, with two different sādhanas and sādhyas, but rather one steadiness of two types, with the same goal.
- This will be explained later, in the fifth chapter, verse five with *ekam sāṅkhyam ca yogam ca*.



## Baladeva

- That one steadiness has two types: of the jñānīs engaged in jñāna yoga and of the yogīs engaged in karma yoga.
- The word **śāṁkhya** refers to jñāna or knowledge, and further indicates the person who possesses **sāṁkhya**.
- The steadiness of such jñānīs by the process of jñāna yoga (**sthita prajña**) has been mentioned in the second chapter starting with **prajahāti yadā kāmān** (BG2.55). That jñāna is yoga.
- Yoga means that process by which a person is joined with ātmā (yujyate). The process in this case is knowledge (jñāna).

## Baladeva

- What is said is this.
- One who desires liberation does not immediately achieve steadiness in jñāna along with its components such as stopping the senses, but rather first purifies the heart by karma yoga with prescribed actions.
- I have previously mentioned this in such statements as *eṣā te 'bhihitā sāṅkhye* (BG 2.39).

## Srila Prabhupada

- In the Second Chapter, verse 39, the Lord explained two kinds of procedures—namely sāṅkhya-yoga and karma-yoga, or buddhi-yoga.
- In this verse, the Lord explains the same more clearly.
- Sāṅkhya-yoga, or the analytical study of the nature of spirit and matter, is the subject matter for persons who are inclined to speculate and understand things by experimental knowledge and philosophy.
- The other class of men work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as it is explained in the 61st verse of the Second Chapter.
- The Lord has explained, also in the 39th verse, that by working by the principles of buddhi-yoga, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can be relieved from the bonds of action; and, furthermore, there is no flaw in the process.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The same principle is more clearly explained in the 61st verse—that this buddhi-yoga is to depend entirely on the Supreme (or more specifically, on Kṛṣṇa), and in this way all the senses can be brought under control very easily.
- Therefore, both the yogas are interdependent, as religion and philosophy.
- Religion without philosophy is sentiment, or sometimes fanaticism, while philosophy without religion is mental speculation.
- The ultimate goal is Kṛṣṇa, because the philosophers who are also sincerely searching after the Absolute Truth come in the end to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- This is also stated in the Bhagavad-gītā.
- The whole process is to understand the real position of the self in relation to the Superself.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The indirect process is philosophical speculation, by which, gradually, one may come to the point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; and the other process is directly connecting everything with Kṛṣṇa in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Of these two, the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is better because it does not depend on purifying the senses by a philosophical process.
- Kṛṣṇa consciousness is itself the purifying process, and by the direct method of devotional service it is simultaneously easy and sublime.

## Section-II - Niskama-karma Yoga (3-9)

|| 3.4 ||

*na karmaṇām anārambhān  
naiṣkarmyaṁ puruṣo 'śnute  
na ca sannyasanād eva  
siddhiṁ samadhigacchati*

Without performance of prescribed karmas (*karmaṇām anārambhān*), a person cannot attain purity (*puruṣaḥ naiṣkarmyaṁ na aśnute*). Just by renunciation of activities (*sannyasanād eva*), an impure person cannot attain perfection (*na ca siddhiṁ samadhigacchati*).

From text 4 to text 9, Kṛṣṇa describes the active nature of the soul. Inactivity is not an option.

One's activities must therefore be directed toward self-purification and self-realization, which are the purposes of performing prescribed duties.

## Baladeva

- One with an impure heart should perform prescribed activities for purification of the heart.
- This is explained in thirteen verses.
- A person with impure heart cannot attain steadiness in jñāna or detachment from action in the form of stopping the actions of all the senses (naiṣkarmyam), without performing prescribed actions (anārambhān) as part of the cultivation of jñāna.
- And he also does not attain liberation (siddhim) from renouncing those actions.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The renounced order of life can be accepted when one has been purified by the discharge of the prescribed form of duties which are laid down just to purify the hearts of materialistic men.
- Without purification, one cannot attain success by abruptly adopting the fourth order of life (sannyāsa).
- According to the empirical philosophers, simply by adopting sannyāsa, or retiring from fruitive activities, one at once becomes as good as Nārāyaṇa.
- But Lord Kṛṣṇa does not approve this principle.



## Srila Prabhupada

- Without purification of heart, sannyāsa is simply a disturbance to the social order.
- On the other hand, if someone takes to the transcendental service of the Lord, even without discharging his prescribed duties, whatever he may be able to advance in the cause is accepted by the Lord (buddhi-yoga).
- Sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt.
- Even a slight performance of such a principle enables one to overcome great difficulties.

## Section-II - Niskama-karma Yoga (3-9)

|| 3.5 ||

*na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api  
jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt  
kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma  
sarvaḥ prakṛtijair guṇaiḥ*

No one (*na hi kaścit*) can remain without doing activity (*jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt*) even for a moment (*kṣaṇam api*). All are forced to engage in action (*sarvaḥ avaśaḥ karma kāryate*) by the guṇas arising from prakṛti (*prakṛtijair guṇaiḥ*).

## Baladeva

- If a person with impure heart renounces prescribed activities, taking vedic karma samnyāsa, he reverts to material action, for such a person cannot remain inactive.
- He cannot remain for even a moment being inactive.
- “But samnyāsa is opposed to all activities.”
- The next line answers.
- “By the qualities such as desire and repulsion (guṇaiḥ) arising from his nature (prakṛti jaiḥ), [Note: Later it is explained that nature or svabhāva means the impressions fixed in the jīva from experiences in successive bodies.] all action will be done, beyond his will (avaśaḥ).”

## Srila Prabhupada

- It is not a question of embodied life, but it is the nature of the soul to be always active. Without the presence of the spirit soul, the material body cannot move.
- The body is only a dead vehicle to be worked by the spirit soul, which is always active and cannot stop even for a moment.
- As such, the spirit soul has to be engaged in the good work of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; otherwise it will be engaged in occupations dictated by illusory energy.
- In contact with material energy, the spirit soul acquires material modes, and to purify the soul from such affinities it is necessary to engage in the prescribed duties enjoined in the śāstras.

## Srila Prabhupada

- But if the soul is engaged in his natural function of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whatever he is able to do is good for him.
- The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.17) affirms this: **tyaktvā svadharmam caraṇāmbujam harer**
- So the purificatory process is necessary for reaching this point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Therefore, sannyāsa, or any purificatory process, is to help reach the ultimate goal of becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious, without which everything is considered a failure.

## Section-II - Niskama-karma Yoga (3-9)

|| 3.6 ||

*karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya  
ya āste manasā smaran  
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā  
mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate*

He who, controlling the action of senses (*karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya*), remains remembering those objects of the senses (*yaḥ āste indriyārthān smaran*) in his mind (*manasā*), is bewildered (*vimūḍhātmā*), and is called a pretender (*sah mithyācāraḥ ucyate*).

## Baladeva

- “But it is seen that there are persons who have closed up their senses like the ear and are therefore devoid of actions of attraction and repulsion.”
- The samnyasī is a fool who, stopping his action senses like the voice, still remembers the objects of the senses such as sound, by a mind pretending to meditate. He is called an imposter.
- Because of remembering sense objects in the mind in spite of not extending the senses outward, which arises because of impurity in the mind through not performing niṣkāma karma, this ignorant person, attempting to control his attraction to material objects, does not attain jñāna, though he aspires for it.
- He is thus called a false performer, a pretender, having false control of his speech and other senses. He is a cheater.

## Srila Prabhupada

- There are many pretenders who refuse to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness but make a show of meditation, while actually dwelling within the mind upon sense enjoyment.
- Such pretenders may also speak on dry philosophy in order to bluff sophisticated followers, but according to this verse these are the greatest cheaters.
- For sense enjoyment one can act in any capacity of the social order, but if one follows the rules and regulations of his particular status, he can make gradual progress in purifying his existence.



## Srila Prabhupada

- But he who makes a show of being a yogī while actually searching for the objects of sense gratification must be called the greatest cheater, even though he sometimes speaks of philosophy.
- His knowledge has no value, because the effects of such a sinful man's knowledge are taken away by the illusory energy of the Lord.
- Such a pretender's mind is always impure, and therefore his show of yogic meditation has no value whatsoever.

## Section-II - Niskama-karma Yoga (3-9)

|| 3.7 ||

*yaḥ tu indriyāṇi manasā  
niyamārabhate 'rjuna  
karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogam  
asaktaḥ sa viśiṣyate*

He who (*yaḥ tu*), free from attachment (*asaktaḥ*), controlling the senses by the mind (*indriyāṇi manasā niyamya*), begins karma-yoga with his active senses (*karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogam ārabhate*), is superior (*sah viśiṣyate*).

**Verse Summary:** This verse describes the dutiful householder as being better situated than the mithyācāra sannyāsī.

## Baladeva

- On the other hand, the householder who performs his prescribed activities is better.
- That person is superior who, devoid of desire for the results (aśaktaḥ), performs the method (yoga) in the form of actions (karma) by the action senses, with regulation of those senses by the mind (manasā) which has the intention of realizing ātmā.
- He is better than a person acting on the platform of jñāna which is only to be achieved in the future.

## Section-II - Niskama-karma Yoga (3-9)

|| 3.8 ||

*niyataṁ kuru karma tvam  
karma jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ  
śarīra-yātrāpi ca te  
na prasiddhyed akarmaṇaḥ*

Perform your daily scriptural duties (*tvam kuru niyataṁ karma*). This is better than not acting (*karma jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ*). You cannot even maintain your body (*na te prasiddhyed śarīra-yātrāpi*) by non-action (*akarmaṇaḥ*).

## Baladeva

- Therefore, since you have impure heart, you must necessarily (niyatam) perform prescribed activities for purification of the heart.
- This means “Perform these prescribed activities without desire.”
- Performing activities is better than renouncing all actions out of enthusiasm, because this will gradually lead to attainment of jñāna, just as steps lead to the top of the stairs.
- This is because jñāna will not arise in the contaminated heart of that person who prematurely renounces all actions out of enthusiasm only.

## Baladeva

- Moreover by renouncing all actions, you cannot even maintain your material body (sarīra yātrā).
- Because he must maintain the body purified by sādhana as long as he lives, even the jñānī performs actions such as begging for food.
- But that begging is not to be done by you, a kṣatriya.
- Therefore you should earn wealth and taxes by your prescribed actions such as fighting and protecting the citizens, and accomplishing your bodily maintenance with that, you should search out your ātmā.

## Srila Prabhupada

- There are many pseudo meditators who misrepresent themselves as being great professional men of high parentage and who falsely pose that they have sacrificed everything for the sake of advancement in spiritual life.
- Lord Kṛṣṇa did not want Arjuna to become a pretender.
- Rather, the Lord desired that Arjuna perform his prescribed duties as set forth for kṣatriyas.
- Arjuna was a householder and a military general, and therefore it was better for him to remain as such and perform his religious duties as prescribed for the householder kṣatriya.
- Such activities gradually cleanse the heart of a mundane man and free him from material contamination.

## Srila Prabhupada

- So-called renunciation for the purpose of maintenance is never approved by the Lord, nor by any religious scripture.
- After all, one has to maintain one's body and soul together by some work.
- Work should not be given up capriciously, without purification of materialistic propensities.
- Anyone who is in the material world is certainly possessed of the impure propensity for lording it over material nature, or, in other words, for sense gratification.
- Such polluted propensities have to be cleared.
- Without doing so, through prescribed duties, one should never attempt to become a so-called transcendentalist, renouncing work and living at the cost of others.



## Surrender unto Me

- Kṛṣṇa is telling Arjuna, “Work for you, with your adhikāra for karma, is better than renunciation. You are not on the jñāna platform on which you can effectively renounce your prescribed duties.”
- Arjuna is concerned that by working, he will develop material attachments and desires.
- He, just prior to this great battle, especially fears the reactions that will follow such work.
- To differentiate ordinary work, which entangles one in the material world, from karma-yoga, work that carries one toward liberation, Kṛṣṇa speaks the next verse.

## Section-II - Niskama-karma Yoga (3-9)

|| 3.9 ||

*yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra  
loko 'yaṁ karma-bandhanaḥ  
tad-artham karma kaunteya  
mukta-saṅgaḥ samācara*

Without performing actions for the purpose of sacrifice (*yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra*), the people of the world are bound by their actions (*ayaṁ lokah karma-bandhanaḥ*). O son of Kuntī (*kaunteya*), perform actions for that purpose (*tad-artham karma samācara*), freed from attachment to results (*mukta-saṅgaḥ*).

## SVCT

- “The smṛti scriptures say that one is bound by actions: karmaṇā badhyate jantuḥ. ( Mahābhārata 12.241.7) Therefore, I will become bound by performing actions.”
- “No, action offered to the Supreme Lord does not bind one.” That is explained in this verse.
- “Dharma (scriptural duties) offered to Viṣṇu without personal desire is called yajña. Persons become bound by karma by any other actions for any other purpose. Therefore you should perform actions (karma - samācara) for the accomplishing such duties (tad-artham).”
- “But even if I perform actions which are offered to Viṣṇu, if I perform them with desires, then I will still become bound.”
- “One should become devoid of the desire for results (mukta-saṅgaḥ).”

- Thus the Lord spoke to Uddhava:

**sva-dharma-stho yajan yajñair anāśīḥ-kāma uddhava  
na yāti svarga-narakau yady anyan na samācaret  
asmiḥ loke vartamānaḥ sva-dharma-stho 'naghaḥ śuciḥ  
jñānam viśuddham āpnoti mad-bhaktim vā yadṛcchayā**

My dear Uddhava, a person who is situated in his prescribed duty, properly worshiping by Vedic sacrifices but not desiring the fruitive result of such worship, will not go to the heavenly planets; similarly, by not performing forbidden activities he will not go to hell.

One who is situated in his prescribed duty, free from sinful activities and cleansed of material contamination, in this very life obtains transcendental knowledge or, by fortune, devotional service unto Me. SB 11.20.10-11

## Srila Prabhupada

- Since one has to work even for the simple maintenance of the body, the prescribed duties for a particular social position and quality are so made that that purpose can be fulfilled.
- Yajña means Lord Viṣṇu or sacrificial performances.
- All sacrificial performances also are meant for the satisfaction of Lord Viṣṇu.
- The Vedas enjoin: yajño vai viṣṇuḥ.
- In other words, the same purpose is served whether one performs prescribed yajñas or directly serves Lord Viṣṇu.
- Kṛṣṇa consciousness is therefore performance of yajña as it is prescribed in this verse.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The varṇāśrama institution also aims at satisfying Lord Viṣṇu. Varnāśramācāravatā puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān/ viṣṇur ārādhyate [Cc. Madhya 8.58] (Viṣṇu Purāṇa 3.8.9).
- Therefore one has to work for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu.
- Any other work done in this material world will be a cause of bondage, for both good and evil work have their reactions, and any reaction binds the performer.
- Therefore, one has to work in Kṛṣṇa consciousness to satisfy Kṛṣṇa (or Viṣṇu); and while performing such activities one is in a liberated stage.
- This is the great art of doing work, and in the beginning this process requires very expert guidance.

## Srila Prabhupada

- One should therefore act very diligently, under the expert guidance of a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, or under the direct instruction of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself (under whom Arjuna had the opportunity to work).
- Nothing should be performed for sense gratification, but everything should be done for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa.
- This practice will not only save one from the reaction of work, but also gradually elevate one to transcendental loving service of the Lord, which alone can raise one to the kingdom of God.

## Section- III - From Karma Kanda To Karma-yoga (10-16)

|| 3.10 ||

*saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā  
purovāca prajāpatiḥ  
anena prasaviśyadhvam  
eṣa vo 'stv iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk*

Brahmā (*prajāpatiḥ*), having created the population along with sacrifice (*saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā*), long ago spoke (*purā uvāca*): May you prosper by this sacrifice (*anena prasaviśyadhvam*). May it fulfill all your material desires (*eṣa vah astu iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk*).

Viṣṇu (*prajāpatiḥ*), having created the population along with sacrifice (*saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā*) in the beginning, spoke (*purā uvāca*): May you increase yourself by this sacrifice (*anena prasaviśyadhvam*). May it fulfill you desire for liberation by supply bodily maintenance and knowledge of ātmā (*eṣa vah astu iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk*).



## SVCT

- Therefore, one with an impure heart should perform actions without desire, rather than give up action.
- Now, if you cannot be without desire in the actions, then you should still perform actions offered to Viṣṇu with desire, rather than give up actions completely.
- This is explained in seven verses.
- Long ago, along with yajña, Brahmā created the creatures qualified for offering to Viṣṇu and said, “Increase more and more the population by this dharma or yajña. May this yajña bestow all desired enjoyment (iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk).”
- By this he indicated that they had material desires.

## Baladeva

- This verse shows that it is wrong to maintain the body without offering sacrifice to Viṣṇu.
- Prajāpati refers to the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, as is seen from śruti states such as patim viśvasyātmeśvaram: he is the master of the universe, the lord of the soul. (Mahānārāyaṇa Upāniṣad 13.2)
- Also this is confirmed from smṛti states such as brahma prajānām patir acyuto'sāv: Brahman, the master of offspring, is Acyuta. (Viṣṇu Purāṇa) 1.15.57
- May this sacrifice offered to Me (eṣa) be the giver of the desired goal of liberation (iṣṭa kāma dhuk), through supplying unto you bodily maintenance and knowledge of ātmā which purifies the heart.”

## Srila Prabhupada

- The material creation by the Lord of creatures (Viṣṇu) is a chance offered to the conditioned souls to come back home—back to Godhead.
- All living entities within the material creation are conditioned by material nature because of their forgetfulness of their relationship to Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- The Vedic principles are to help us understand this eternal relation, as it is stated in the Bhagavad-gītā: vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah.
- The Lord says that the purpose of the Vedas is to understand Him. In the Vedic hymns it is said: patim viśvasyātmeśvaram.
- Therefore, the Lord of the living entities is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu.

## Srila Prabhupada

- In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam also (2.4.20) Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the Lord as pati in so many ways: (śriyaḥ patir yajña-patiḥ prajā-patir)
- The prajā-pati is Lord Viṣṇu, and He is the Lord of all living creatures, all worlds, and all beauties, and the protector of everyone.
- The Lord created this material world to enable the conditioned souls to learn how to perform yajñas (sacrifices) for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, so that while in the material world they can live very comfortably without anxiety and after finishing the present material body they can enter into the kingdom of God.
- That is the whole program for the conditioned soul.
- By performance of yajña, the conditioned souls gradually become Kṛṣṇa conscious and become godly in all respects.

## Srila Prabhupada

- In the Age of Kali, the saṅkīrtana-yajña (the chanting of the names of God) is recommended by the Vedic scriptures, and this transcendental system was introduced by Lord Caitanya for the deliverance of all men in this age.
- Saṅkīrtana-yajña and Kṛṣṇa consciousness go well together.
- Lord Kṛṣṇa in His devotional form (as Lord Caitanya) is mentioned in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.32) as follows, with special reference to the saṅkīrtana-yajña: (**kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam**)
- Other yajñas prescribed in the Vedic literatures are not easy to perform in this Age of Kali, but the saṅkīrtana-yajña is easy and sublime for all purposes, as recommended in Bhagavad-gītā also (9.14).

## Section- III - From Karma Kanda To Karma-yoga (10-16)

|| 3.11 ||

*devān bhāvayatānena  
te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ  
parasparam bhāvayantaḥ  
śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha*

“By that sacrifice (*anena*), please the devatās (*devān bhāvayatā*) and the devatās will please you (*te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ*). Being mutually pleased (*parasparam bhāvayantaḥ*), you will all attain the highest benefit (*śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha*).”

### SVCT

- This verse explains how the yajña yields all desires.
- Bhāva indicates affection in this verse.

## Baladeva

- Viṣṇu also said to the created beings, “Please the devatas headed by Indra, who are the limbs of My body, by offering oblations to them (anena). May the devas please you by bestowing benedictions.
- You and they, being mutually pleased with the pure food, will attain the highest benefit in the form of liberation (param śreyaḥ).”
- In this regard, pure food is one element or aṅga of cultivation of jñāna.
- The śruti says:

**āhāra-śuddhau sattva-śuddhiḥ sattva-śuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ smṛti-labdhe  
sarva-granthīnām vipramokṣaḥ**

By pure food one attains pure mind. By pure mind, the intelligence becomes fixed. With good intelligence, one is freed from all obstacles. Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.26.2

## Srila Prabhupada

- The demigods are empowered administrators of material affairs. The supply of air, light, water and all other benedictions for maintaining the body and soul of every living entity is entrusted to the demigods, who are innumerable assistants in different parts of the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- Their pleasures and displeasures are dependent on the performance of yajñas by the human being. Some of the yajñas are meant to satisfy particular demigods; but even in so doing, Lord Viṣṇu is worshiped in all yajñas as the chief beneficiary.
- It is stated also in the Bhagavad-gītā that Kṛṣṇa Himself is the beneficiary of all kinds of yajñas: bhoktāram yajña-tapasām. Therefore, ultimate satisfaction of the yajña-pati is the chief purpose of all yajñas.
- When these yajñas are perfectly performed, naturally the demigods in charge of the different departments of supply are pleased, and there is no scarcity in the supply of natural products.



## Srila Prabhupada

- Performance of yajñas has many side benefits, ultimately leading to liberation from material bondage.
- By performance of yajñas, all activities become purified, as it is stated in the Vedas: āhāra-śuddhau sattva-śuddhiḥ sattva-śuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ smṛti-lambhe sarvagrathīnām vipramokṣaḥ.
- By performance of yajña one's eatables become sanctified, and by eating sanctified foodstuffs one's very existence becomes purified; by the purification of existence finer tissues in the memory become sanctified, and when memory is sanctified one can think of the path of liberation, and all these combined together lead to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the great necessity of present-day society.

## Section- III - From Karma Kanda To Karma-yoga (10-16)

|| 3.12 ||

*iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā  
dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ  
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo  
yo bhunkte stena eva saḥ*

The devatās (*devā*), pleased with the sacrifice (*yajña-bhāvitāḥ*), will bestow on you (*vaḥ dāsyante*) desired enjoyment (*iṣṭān bhogān*). He who enjoys what is given by the devatās (*yah tair dattān bhunkte*) without offering to them (*ebhyaḥ apradāya*) is indeed a thief (*stena eva saḥ*).

## SVCT

- To make this point clearer, he speaks of the fault of not performing this activity.
- He who enjoys what is given by the devatās, such as food through the rain, without giving anything to them through performance of the pañca-mahā-yajña and other rites, is a thief.
- **Note:** The five great sacrifices consist of sacrifice to Pitṛs, worship of devas, recitation of the Vedas, feeding humans, and feeding other living entities.

## Baladeva

- Clarifying this same point, the Lord then shows the fault in executing actions.
- “These previously created devatās who are my limbs will give you more and more desired objects dependent on sacrifice, objects suitable for those desiring liberation (iṣṭan bhogān).
- They will give rain which will produce food.
- He who enjoys for himself alone, not giving to the devatās through pañca mahā yajña a portion the objects which the devas originally bestowed for worship of the Lord, is a thief.
- Having stolen the devataṣ’ properties, he nourishes himself by that.
- As a thief is punished by the king, he deserves to be punished by Yamarāja. He is unsuitable for pursuing the real goal of human life.”

## Srila Prabhupada

- In the Vedas, there are different kinds of yajñas prescribed for different kinds of demigods, but all are ultimately offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- For one who cannot understand what the Personality of Godhead is, sacrifice to the demigods is recommended.
- According to the different material qualities of the persons concerned, different types of yajñas are recommended in the Vedas.
- Worship of different demigods is also on the same basis—namely, according to different qualities.

## Srila Prabhupada

- For example, the meat-eaters are recommended to worship the goddess Kālī, the ghastly form of material nature, and before the goddess the sacrifice of animals is recommended.
- But for those who are in the mode of goodness, the transcendental worship of Viṣṇu is recommended.
- But ultimately all yajñas are meant for gradual promotion to the transcendental position.
- For ordinary men, at least five yajñas, known as pañca-mahā-yajña, are necessary.

## Srila Prabhupada

- One should know, however, that all the necessities of life that the human society requires are supplied by the demigod agents of the Lord. No one can manufacture anything.
- Obviously, our life is dependent on supplies from the Lord.
- Even for our manufacturing enterprises, we require so many raw materials, all of which are supplied by the agents of the Lord, with the purpose that we should make proper use of them to keep ourselves fit and healthy for the purpose of self-realization, leading to the ultimate goal of life, namely, liberation from the material struggle for existence.
- This aim of life is attained by performance of yajñas.

## Srila Prabhupada

- If we forget the purpose of human life and simply take supplies from the agents of the Lord for sense gratification and become more and more entangled in material existence, which is not the purpose of creation, certainly we become thieves, and therefore we are punished by the laws of material nature.
- A society of thieves can never be happy, because they have no aim in life.
- The gross materialist thieves have no ultimate goal of life.
- They are simply directed to sense gratification; nor do they have knowledge of how to perform yajñas.
- Lord Caitanya, however, inaugurated the easiest performance of yajña, namely the saṅkīrtana-yajña, which can be performed by anyone in the world who accepts the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.



## Section- III - From Karma Kanda To Karma-yoga (10-16)

|| 3.13 ||

*yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo  
mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ  
bhuñjate te tv aghaṁ pāpā  
ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt*

Those respectable people (*santah*) who eat the remnants of sacrifice (*yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ*) are free from all sins (*mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ*). Those sinful persons (*pāpā*) who cook for themselves (*ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt*) suffer from sin (*te tu aghaṁ bhuñjate*).

## SVCT

- Those who eat the food remnants of yajñas such as the vaiśvadeva-yajña become freed from all sins caused by the five types of violence to living entities.
- **Note:** Usually at noon time small quantities of food are supposed to be offered to various devatās and to Agni.
- The five violent actions (pañca-sūnā) are described in the smṛti:

**kaṇḍanī peṣaṇī cullī udakumbhī ca mārjanī  
pañca-sūnā gr̥hasthasya tābhiḥ svargaṃ na vindati**

The gr̥hastha does not enjoy Svarga by commission of the five violent actions towards other living entities caused by using the mortar, grinding stone, the stove, the broom and water pot. Viṣṇu Smṛti 59.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The devotees of the Supreme Lord, or the persons who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are called santas, and they are always in love with the Lord as it is described in the Brahma-saṁhitā (5.38):  
premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti.
- The santas, being always in a compact of love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda (the giver of all pleasures), or Mukunda (the giver of liberation), or Kṛṣṇa (the all-attractive person), cannot accept anything without first offering it to the Supreme Person.
- Therefore, such devotees always perform yajñas in different modes of devotional service, such as śravaṇam, kīrtanam, smaraṇam, arcanam [SB 7.5.23], etc., and these performances of yajñas keep them always aloof from all kinds of contamination of sinful association in the material world.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Others, who prepare food for self or sense gratification, are not only thieves but also the eaters of all kinds of sins.
- How can a person be happy if he is both a thief and sinful?
- It is not possible.
- Therefore, in order for people to become happy in all respects, they must be taught to perform the easy process of saṅkīrtana-yajña, in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Otherwise, there can be no peace or happiness in the world.

## Section- III - From Karma Kanda To Karma-yoga (10-16)

|| 3.14 ||

*annād bhavanti bhūtāni  
parjanyaād anna-sambhavaḥ  
yajñād bhavati parjanyo  
yajñaḥ karma-samudbhavaḥ*

All creatures arise from food (*annād bhavanti bhūtāni*). Food arises from rain (*parjanyaād anna-sambhavaḥ*). Rain arises from sacrifice (*yajñād bhavati parjanyo*). Sacrifice arises from prescribed actions (*yajñaḥ karma-samudbhavaḥ*).

## Surrender unto me

- Kṛṣṇa herein warns Arjuna that even in the forest, all food is nurtured by rain coming from the demigods.
- Therefore he cannot avoid his obligation to perform the sacrifices born of his prescribed duty.

## SVCT

- One should perform the yajña because it causes the cyclic movement in the universe. From food living entities exist.
- Food is the cause of the bodies of the entities, and from food arises the health of the bodies of the living entities with transformation into semen and blood.
- The cause of food is rain. By the rain, food is produced.
- The cause of rain is the yajña.
- By people performing yajña the clouds produce sufficient rain.
- The cause of yajña is karma, prescribed action. The yajña is produced from the actions of the priest and the patron.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The Supreme Lord, who is known as the yajña-puruṣa, or the personal beneficiary of all sacrifices, is the master of all the demigods, who serve Him as the different limbs of the body serve the whole.
- Demigods like Indra, Candra and Varuṇa are appointed officers who manage material affairs, and the Vedas direct sacrifices to satisfy these demigods so that they may be pleased to supply air, light and water sufficiently to produce food grains.
- When Lord Kṛṣṇa is worshiped, the demigods, who are different limbs of the Lord, are also automatically worshiped; therefore there is no separate need to worship the demigods.
- For this reason, the devotees of the Lord, who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, offer food to Kṛṣṇa and then eat—a process which nourishes the body spiritually.



## Srila Prabhupada

- By such action not only are past sinful reactions in the body vanquished, but the body becomes immunized to all contamination of material nature.
- When there is an epidemic disease, an antiseptic vaccine protects a person from the attack of such an epidemic.
- Similarly, food offered to Lord Viṣṇu and then taken by us makes us sufficiently resistant to material affection, and one who is accustomed to this practice is called a devotee of the Lord.
- Therefore, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, who eats only food offered to Kṛṣṇa, can counteract all reactions of past material infections, which are impediments to the progress of self-realization.

## Srila Prabhupada

- On the other hand, one who does not do so continues to increase the volume of sinful action, and this prepares the next body to resemble hogs and dogs, to suffer the resultant reactions of all sins.
- The material world is full of contaminations, and one who is immunized by accepting prasādam of the Lord (food offered to Viṣṇu) is saved from the attack, whereas one who does not do so becomes subjected to contamination.
- Human beings who are accustomed to eating meat and flesh must also depend on the production of vegetation in order to eat the animals.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Therefore, ultimately, we have to depend on the production of the field and not on the production of big factories.
- The field production is due to sufficient rain from the sky, and such rains are controlled by demigods like Indra, sun, moon, etc., and they are all servants of the Lord.
- The Lord can be satisfied by sacrifices; therefore, one who cannot perform them will find himself in scarcity—that is the law of nature.
- Yajña, specifically the saṅkīrtana-yajña prescribed for this age, must therefore be performed to save us at least from scarcity of food supply.

## Section- III - From Karma Kanda To Karma-yoga (10-16)

|| 3.15 ||

*karma brahmodbhavam viddhi  
brahmākṣara-samudbhavam  
tasmāt sarva-gataṁ brahma  
nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam*

Action arises from the Vedas (*karma brahmodbhavam viddhi*). The Vedas arise from the Brahman (*brahma akṣara-samudbhavam*). Therefore this all-pervading Brahman (*tasmāt sarva-gataṁ brahma*) is eternally situated in the sacrifice (*nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam*).

## Baladeva

- Know that action, the performance of the priests, arises from the Vedas (brahma); know that the Vedas are the source of their actions.
- Know that the Brahman in the form of the Vedas appears from the Supreme Lord (akṣara).
- The śruti says: The breathing of that great being is the Ṛg, Yajur, and Sāma and Atharva Vedas. Brhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.4.10
- Since this sacrifice maintains the Lord's created beings and is therefore very dear to the Lord, therefore (tasmāt) the Lord (brahma), being all pervading (sarva gatam), is at all times (nityam) situated in sacrifice.
- This means that by that sacrifice one can attain Him.
- **Note:** This clause gives the reason for the Lord being situated in sacrifice. The conclusion is that by sacrifice one maintains the body and also attains the Lord.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Yajñārtha-karma, or the necessity of work for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa only, is more expressly stated in this verse.
- If we have to work for the satisfaction of the yajña-puruṣa, Viṣṇu, then we must find out the direction of work in Brahma, or the transcendental Vedas.
- Anything performed without the direction of the Vedas is called vikarma, or unauthorized or sinful work.
- Such directions in the Vedas are directly manifested from the breathing of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

## Srila Prabhupada

- We should always remember that the conditioned souls in material nature are all eager for material enjoyment.
- But the Vedic directions are so made that one can satisfy one's perverted desires, then return to Godhead, having finished his so-called enjoyment.
- It is a chance for the conditioned souls to attain liberation; therefore the conditioned souls must try to follow the process of yajña by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious.
- Even those who have not followed the Vedic injunctions may adopt the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that will take the place of performance of Vedic yajñas, or karmas.

## Section- III - From Karma Kanda To Karma-yoga (10-16)

|| 3.16 ||

*evam pravartitam cakram  
nānuvartayatīha yaḥ  
aghāyur indriyārāmo  
mogham pārtha sa jīvati*

He who does not follow (*yaḥ na anuvartayati*) the movements of this cycle (*evam pravartitam cakram*), and instead leads a life of sin (*aghāyur*), enjoying his senses (*indriyārāmo*), lives in vain (*sah mogham jīvati*).



## SVCT

- This verse speaks of the sin involved in not performing the sacrifice.
- He who does not partake of the instituted cycle moving from beginning to end—from yajña to rain; from rain to food; from food to nourishment of men; from men to performance of yajña; from yajña to rain—he who does not institute the cycle by performance of yajña—leads a life full of sin.
- Note: The cycle is as follows: Supreme Lord, Vedas, action, sacrifice, rain, food, and production of living entities.
- The new living entities then study the Vedas arising from the Lord, perform action, and sacrifice (with the Lord present within) again.

# SVCT

- At the same time as fulfilling ones material needs by sacrifice one can attain the Lord.
- Rāmānuja takes brahman as the body and akṣara as the soul, which is necessary for the body to function.
- Then the cycle is: soul in the body, action, sacrifice, rain, food, nourishment of the body with a soul (bhutāni); then action, sacrifice etc.
- Madhva takes brahman as the Lord and akṣara as the Vedas. Vedas reveal the Lord, the Lord inspires prescribed action, then sacrifice, rain, food, nourishment of bodies, study of Vedas, revelation of the Lord, inspiration to action etc.
- Who will not sink to hell?

## Srila Prabhupada

- The mammonist philosophy of "work very hard and enjoy sense gratification" is condemned herein by the Lord.
- Therefore, for those who want to enjoy this material world, the above-mentioned cycle of performing yajñas is absolutely necessary.
- One who does not follow such regulations is living a very risky life, being condemned more and more.
- By nature's law, this human form of life is specifically meant for self-realization, in either of the three ways—namely karma-yoga, jñāna-yoga, or bhakti-yoga.
- There is no necessity of rigidly following the performances of the prescribed yajñas for the transcendentalists who are above vice and virtue; but those who are engaged in sense gratification require purification by the above mentioned cycle of yajña performances.

## Srila Prabhupada

- There are different kinds of activities.
- Those who are not Kṛṣṇa conscious are certainly engaged in sensory consciousness; therefore they need to execute pious work.
- The yajña system is planned in such a way that sensory conscious persons may satisfy their desires without becoming entangled in the reaction of sense-gratificatory work.
- The prosperity of the world depends not on our own efforts but on the background arrangement of the Supreme Lord, directly carried out by the demigods.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Therefore, the yajñas are directly aimed at the particular demigods mentioned in the Vedas.
- Indirectly, it is the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, because when one masters the performance of yajñas one is sure to become Kṛṣṇa conscious.
- But if by performing yajñas one does not become Kṛṣṇa conscious, such principles are counted as only moral codes.
- One should not, therefore, limit his progress only to the point of moral codes, but should transcend them, to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.17 ||

*yas tv ātma-ratir eva syād  
ātma-tr̥ptaś ca mānavah  
ātmany eva ca santuṣṭas  
tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate*

The human (*mānavah*) who is attracted to the ātmā (*yaḥ tu ātma-ratir eva syād*), satisfied in the ātmā (*ātma-tr̥ptah*), and completely satisfied with ātmā alone (*ātmany eva ca santuṣṭah*), has nothing to do in regard to fulfilling desires (*tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate*).

## SVCT

- It has now been stated that if you cannot be without desires, you can perform actions with desires.
- But he who reaches the stage of jñāna because of purity of heart never performs actions out of desire. That is expressed in two verses.
- Because he is enjoying in the self, is blissful by realization of the bliss of the ātmā, he does not engage at all in the pleasure of material objects.
- Being engaged only in the ātmā (ātmāny eva), he does not perform any actions related to the external objects (tasya kāryam na vidyate).

## Srila Prabhupada

- A person who is fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, and is fully satisfied by his acts in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, no longer has any duty to perform.
- Due to his being Kṛṣṇa conscious, all impiety within is instantly cleansed, an effect of many, many thousands of yajña performances.
- By such clearing of consciousness, one becomes fully confident of his eternal position in relationship with the Supreme.
- His duty thus becomes self-illuminated by the grace of the Lord, and therefore he no longer has any obligations to the Vedic injunctions.
- Such a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is no longer interested in material activities and no longer takes pleasure in material arrangements like wine, women and similar infatuations.



## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.18 ||

*naiva tasya kṛtenārtho  
nākṛteneha kaścana  
na cāsya sarva-bhūteṣu  
kaścīd artha-vyapāśrayaḥ*

He does not gain (*na eva arthaḥ*) by performance of action (*tasya kṛtena*), nor lose by not performing action (*na akṛtena iha kaścana*). For him (*asya*), nothing in this world (*na kaścīd sarva-bhūteṣu*) is worthy of pursuing for fulfilling his desires (*artha-vyapāśrayaḥ*).

## SVCT

- By performance of action there is no accrual of desired results.
- And by not performing the action there is no loss, because nothing in the whole universe, from Brahmā down to the inanimate objects, is a worthy object of shelter for fulfilling his goals.

## Baladeva

- There is no result (arthah) by his performance of prescribed actions (kr̥tena) for the purpose of realizing the ātmā, and he incurs no obstacles for seeing ātmā, by non-performance of prescribed actions (akr̥tena) for seeing the ātmā, because by his nature he sees the ātmā already.
- It is not that he should fear obstacles from the devatas by neglecting prescribed actions (including devatā worship), and then attempt to please them by performing prescribed actions which entails worshipping them.
- The śrutis describe the devatās as being opposed to knowledge of ātmā.

**tasmāt tad eṣām devānām na priyaṁ yad etan manuṣā vidur**

That ātmā which men know is not dear to the devatās. Bṛhad Araṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.10

## Baladeva

- For one who has gained vision of ātmā, the person in knowledge, no person among all beings (sarva bhuteṣu), among humans and devas, is a worthy object of service (vyapāśrayaḥ) for the purpose of removing obstacles to his attraction to ātmā (artha), by performance of prescribed actions.
- Before the manifestation of knowledge, the devas create obstacles (for non-performance of duty), but after a person has attained a taste of the ātmā, they do not create obstacles for his seeing ātmā, since the taste of ātmā is influential.
- It is also said:

**tasya ha na devās ca nābhūtyā īśate ātmā hy eṣāṁ sambhavati**

For only one who has realized ātmā, even the devas do not create obstacles, for the ātmā also becomes dear to them. Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.10

- Even the devas are not powerful enough to injure the taste for ātmā (bhūtyai) of one who has realized ātmā (tasya), because (hi) that ātmā also becomes dear to them.

## Srila Prabhupada

- A self-realized man is no longer obliged to perform any prescribed duty, save and except activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not inactivity either, as will be explained in the following verses.
- A Kṛṣṇa conscious man does not take shelter of any person—man or demigod.
- Whatever he does in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is sufficient in the discharge of his obligation.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.19 ||

*tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ  
kāryaṁ karma samācara  
asakto hy ācaran karma  
param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ*

Therefore (*tasmād*) always perform prescribed actions (*satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara*) without attachment (*asaktaḥ*). Performing action without attachment (*asakto hy ācaran karma*), a person attains liberation (*param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ*).

Therefore (*tasmād*) always perform prescribed actions as a duty (*satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara*), performing them without attachment to results (*asaktaḥ*). Performing action without attachment (*asakto hy ācaran karma*), a person sees the ātmā as it is (*param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ*).

## SVCT

- Therefore (tasmād) since you do not have qualification for rising to the platform of jñāna, and performing actions with desires is not suitable for you since you have spiritual intelligence, you should perform action without desire.
- That is explained in this verse.
- Therefore you should perform obligatory prescribed actions without attachment.
- By doing this you will attain liberation (param).

## Baladeva

- Since performing prescribed actions is useless for the person who has attained a vision of ātmā, therefore (tasmād) do these prescribed actions only as duty (kāryam).
- He who performs those actions without desire for results (asaktaḥ) sees that which is different from the body (param), the ātmā, as it truly exists.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The Supreme is the Personality of Godhead for the devotees, and liberation for the impersonalist.
- A person, therefore, acting for Kṛṣṇa, or in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, under proper guidance and without attachment to the result of the work, is certainly making progress toward the supreme goal of life.
- Arjuna is told that he should fight in the Battle of Kurukṣetra for the interest of Kṛṣṇa because Kṛṣṇa wanted him to fight.
- To be a good man or a nonviolent man is a personal attachment, but to act on behalf of the Supreme is to act without attachment for the result.
- That is perfect action of the highest degree, recommended by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.



## Srila Prabhupada

- Vedic rituals, like prescribed sacrifices, are performed for purification of impious activities that were performed in the field of sense gratification.
- But action in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is transcendental to the reactions of good or evil work.
- A Kṛṣṇa conscious person has no attachment for the result but acts on behalf of Kṛṣṇa alone.
- He engages in all kinds of activities, but is completely nonattached.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

॥ 3.20 ॥

*karmaṇaiva hi saṁsiddhim  
āsthitā janakādayaḥ  
loka-saṅgraham evāpi  
sampaśyan kartum arhasi*

Just by performance of prescribed actions (*karmaṇā eva hi*), Janaka and others (*janakādayaḥ*) attained success (*saṁsiddhim āsthitā*). And just with the consideration of setting example for others (*loka-saṅgraham evāpi sampaśyan*), you should perform prescribed work (*kartum arhasi*).

By prescribed actions as well as hearing (*karmaṇā eva hi*), Janaka and others (*janakādayaḥ*) attained realization of ātmā (*saṁsiddhim āsthitā*). And just with the consideration of setting example for others (*loka-saṅgraham evāpi sampaśyan*), you should perform work (*kartum arhasi*).

## SVCT

- He gives proof of such actions in the first part of the verse.
- In the second part of the verse he says that if you think that you are qualified for jñāna, even then, you should perform action in order to teach the people.

## Baladeva

- In this verse the Lord gives proof of acting according to duty.
- Becoming pure in heart by means of prescribed action (karmanā eva), Janaka and others attained (ātshitāḥ) the perfection of seeing their own ātmā (samsiddhim).
- The word eva with karmanā, used to make distinction, indicating its excellence, rather than indicating complete separateness (as in the use of the word “only”). Thus prescribed actions of karma yoga do not exclude hearing and other devotional processes.
- Some say karma in this context has a more general meaning of hearing and other processes along with performance of sacrifice and other prescribed rites of karma, instead of prescribed duties.

## Baladeva

- “But you have said that when the saniṣṭha devotee attains vision of ātmā, there is no performance of action to see ātmā. Then why are you giving instructions to perform duties to Me who am fixed in seeing my ātmā and paramātmā (pari niṣṭhita devotee)?”
- “Yes, you are such a pari niṣṭhita devotee, but to teach the common people, I give you instructions to perform action.
- If both Arjuna and I perform prescribed actions, other people will also perform their prescribed duties.
- If I did not perform prescribed actions, ignorant people, following My example, would reject action and fall down.
- Protecting the people is the result of this type of action.”

## Srila Prabhupada

- Kings like Janaka were all self-realized souls; consequently they had no obligation to perform the prescribed duties in the Vedas.
- Nonetheless they performed all prescribed activities just to set examples for the people in general.
- Janaka was the father of Sītā and father-in-law of Lord Śrī Rāma.
- Being a great devotee of the Lord, he was transcendently situated, but because he was the king of Mithilā (a subdivision of Bihar province in India), he had to teach his subjects how to perform prescribed duties.
- Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the Lord's eternal friend, had no need to fight in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, but they fought to teach people in general that violence is also necessary in a situation where good arguments fail.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Before the Battle of Kurukṣetra, every effort was made to avoid the war, even by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but the other party was determined to fight.
- So for such a right cause, there is a necessity for fighting.
- Although one who is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness may not have any interest in the world, he still works to teach the public how to live and how to act.
- Experienced persons in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can act in such a way that others will follow, and this is explained in the following verse.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.21 ||

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas  
tat tad evetaro janaḥ  
sa yat pramāṇam kurute  
lokas tad anuvartate*

Whatever actions the superior performs (*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhah*), other persons will also perform (*tat tad eva itarah janaḥ*). What you do according to scriptural authority (*sa yat pramāṇam kurute*), others follow (*lokah tad anuvartate*).

## Baladeva

- This verse shows the method of instructing the population.
- Whatever action the greatest person performs, the others (itarah), even the low person, will follow.
- Whatever scripture (pramāṇam) the superior person considers in performing his actions (kurute), the lower persons will follow that.
- Thus the intention is that the best actions authorized by scripture should be performed by the inferior person desiring auspiciousness.
- And whimsical action performed by the superior or powerful person is rejected, because though it is performed by the superior, it is not approved by scripture.



## Srila Prabhupada

- People in general always require a leader who can teach the public by practical behavior.
- A leader cannot teach the public to stop smoking if he himself smokes.
- Lord Caitanya said that a teacher should behave properly before he begins teaching.
- One who teaches in that way is called ācārya, or the ideal teacher.
- Therefore, a teacher must follow the principles of śāstra (scripture) to teach the common man. The teacher cannot manufacture rules against the principles of revealed scriptures.
- The revealed scriptures, like Manu-saṁhitā and similar others, are considered the standard books to be followed by human society.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Thus the leader's teaching should be based on the principles of such standard śāstras.
- One who desires to improve himself must follow the standard rules as they are practiced by the great teachers.
- The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam also affirms that one should follow in the footsteps of great devotees, and that is the way of progress on the path of spiritual realization.
- The king or the executive head of a state, the father and the schoolteacher are all considered to be natural leaders of the innocent people in general.
- All such natural leaders have a great responsibility to their dependents; therefore they must be conversant with standard books of moral and spiritual codes.

## Surrender unto me

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

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

॥ 3.22 ॥

*na me pārthāsti kartavyam  
triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana  
nānavāptam avāptavyam  
varta eva ca karmaṇi*

For Me (*me*), O son of Pṛthā (*pārtha*), there is nothing (*na kiñcana asti*) in the three worlds (*triṣu lokeṣu*) that has to be done (*kartavyam*), that has not been attained (*na anavāptam*), or which must be attained (*avāptavyam*). But I also perform duties (*varta eva ca karmaṇi*).

O son of Pṛthā (*pārtha*), there is no work prescribed for Me (*na me kiñcana kartavyam asti*) within all the three planetary systems (*triṣu lokeṣu*). Nor am I in want of anything (*na anavāptam*), nor have I a need to obtain anything (*avāptavyam*)—and yet I am engaged in prescribed duties (*varta eva ca karmaṇi*).

## BVB

- Though the superior person is indifferent to the results of action, he should perform actions prescribed by scripture to teach the populace.
- Making himself an example of this, the Lord speaks in three verses.
- I, the Lord of all, dedicated to truth, whose every wish is automatically fulfilled, who is filled with bliss, have no duties to perform.
- Actions must be performed by those desiring results. I, who am the basis of all results, the embodiment of the highest result, am not dependent on action.
- The Lord then illustrates this: in all the three worlds, whatever result is to be obtained by action is already attained by Me, since everything is actually Mine. Still, I also perform prescribed actions.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in the Vedic literatures as follows:

**tam īśvarāṇām paramam maheśvaram tam devatānām paramam ca daivatam  
patim patīnām paramam parastād vidāma devam bhuvaneśam īḍyam**

**na tasya kāryam karaṇam ca vidyate na tat-samaś cābhyadhikaś ca dṛśyate  
parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate svābhāvīkī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca**

"The Supreme Lord is the controller of all other controllers, and He is the greatest of all the diverse planetary leaders. Everyone is under His control. All entities are delegated with particular power only by the Supreme Lord; they are not supreme themselves. He is also worshipable by all demigods and is the supreme director of all directors. Therefore, He is transcendental to all kinds of material leaders and controllers and is worshipable by all. There is no one greater than Him, and He is the supreme cause of all causes.

"He does not possess a bodily form like that of an ordinary living entity. There is no difference between His body and His soul. He is absolute. All His senses are transcendental. Any one of His senses can perform the action of any other sense. Therefore, no one is greater than Him or equal to Him. His potencies are multifarious, and thus His deeds are automatically performed as a natural sequence." (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.7-8)

## Srila Prabhupada

- Since everything is in full opulence in the Personality of Godhead and is existing in full truth, there is no duty for the Supreme Personality of Godhead to perform.
- One who must receive the results of work has some designated duty, but one who has nothing to achieve within the three planetary systems certainly has no duty.
- And yet Lord Kṛṣṇa is engaged on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra as the leader of the kṣatriyas because the kṣatriyas are duty-bound to give protection to the distressed.
- Although He is above all the regulations of the revealed scriptures, He does not do anything that violates the revealed scriptures.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

॥ 3.23 ॥

*yadi hy ahaṁ na varteyaṁ  
jātu karmaṇy atandritaḥ  
mama vartmānuvartante  
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

If I were not to engage (*yadi hy ahaṁ na varteyaṁ*) in work attentively (*karmaṇy atandritaḥ*) at any time (*jātu*), men would follow My example (*manuṣyāḥ mama vartma anuvartante*) in all respects (*sarvaśaḥ*).



## BVB

- If I, the Lord of all, who, though complete in all respects, have appearing in the Yadu family, were ever (**jātu**) to fail to perform attentively (**atandritaḥ**) actions prescribed in the scriptures, men, taking My example, would follow My path, since I am the leader.
- They would reject the conduct prescribed in their family, and would thereby be destroyed.

## Srila Prabhupada

- In order to keep the balance of social tranquillity for progress in spiritual life, there are traditional family usages meant for every civilized man.
- Although such rules and regulations are for the conditioned souls and not Lord Kṛṣṇa, because He descended to establish the principles of religion He followed the prescribed rules.
- Otherwise, common men would follow in His footsteps, because He is the greatest authority.
- From the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is understood that Lord Kṛṣṇa was performing all the religious duties at home and out of home, as required of a householder.

## Surrender unto me

- One might argue that some of Kṛṣṇa's actions on the battlefield and His behavior in Vṛndāvana with the gopīs do not conform to the recommended śāstric path.
- That is true.
- Although Kṛṣṇa generally does not transgress scriptural injunctions, He occasionally does so to please His devotees and to exhibit His supreme, independent position.
- If, therefore, a discrepancy exists between Kṛṣṇa's words and His actions, His words should be followed.
- No one should imitate Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and act in opposition to śāstra.
- Kṛṣṇa continues speaking about Himself.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

॥ 3.24 ॥

*utsīdeyur ime lokā  
na kuryām karma cet aham  
saṅkarasya ca kartā syām  
upahanyām imāḥ prajāḥ*

If I were not to work (*na kuryām karma cet aham*), all people would be destroyed (*utsīdeyur ime lokā*). I would be the cause of mixed castes (*saṅkarasya ca kartā syām*), and would pollute the descendants (*upahanyām imāḥ prajāḥ*).

## Baladeva

- Then what would happen?
- If I, the supreme among all, were not to perform actions according to scripture, the people would break the laws (utsīdeyuh—be destroyed).
- I would be responsible for producing mixed castes resulting from the destruction of law.
- I, the protector of the populace, prajā pati, would cause contamination of the populace (upahanyām), by the mixture of castes.
- The śruti says:

**eṣa setur vidharaṇa eṣām lokānām asambhedāya**

I am the restraining law in order that the populace is not disturbed.  
Chāndogya Upaniṣad 4.4.22

- Though I am well known as the foundation of people's respect for law as the śruti says, I would become the cause of breaking their respect for law.

## Baladeva

- Though the Lord teaches in this way, we also see that the Lord sometimes acts independent of the law, desiring the happiness of his devotee.
- Such actions however are not to be performed by those inferior to the Lord, since they have no instructions to do so from the establisher of law, and they are supposed to be obedient to His order.
- Śukadeva states the same:

**īśvarāṇām vacaḥ satyaṁ tathaiivācaritaṁ kvacit  
teṣāṁ yat sva-vaco-yuktaṁ buddhimāṁs tat samācaret**

The statements of the Lord's empowered servants are always true, and the acts they perform are exemplary when consistent with those statements. Therefore one who is intelligent should carry out their instructions. SB 10.33.31

## Baladeva

**naitat samācarej jātu manasāpi hy anīśvaraḥ  
vinaśyaty ācaran maudhyād yathārudro' bdhi-jaṁ viṣam**

One who is not a great controller should never imitate the behavior of ruling personalities, even mentally. If out of foolishness an ordinary person does imitate such behavior, he will simply destroy himself, just as a person who is not Rudra would destroy himself if he tried to drink an ocean of poison. SB 10.33.30

## Srila Prabhupada

- Varṇa-saṅkara is unwanted population which disturbs the peace of the general society.
- In order to check this social disturbance, there are prescribed rules and regulations by which the population can automatically become peaceful and organized for spiritual progress in life.
- When Lord Kṛṣṇa descends, naturally He deals with such rules and regulations in order to maintain the prestige and necessity of such important performances.
- The Lord is the father of all living entities, and if the living entities are misguided, indirectly the responsibility goes to the Lord.
- Therefore, whenever there is general disregard of regulative principles, the Lord Himself descends and corrects the society.



## Srila Prabhupada

- We should, however, note carefully that although we have to follow in the footsteps of the Lord, we still have to remember that we cannot imitate Him.
- Following and imitating are not on the same level.
- We cannot imitate the Lord by lifting Govardhana Hill, as the Lord did in His childhood. It is impossible for any human being.
- We have to follow His instructions, but we may not imitate Him at any time.
- We should always consider the position of the īśvaras, or those who can actually control the movements of the sun and moon, as superior.
- Without such power, one cannot imitate the īśvaras, who are superpowerful.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Lord Śiva drank poison to the extent of swallowing an ocean, but if any common man tries to drink even a fragment of such poison, he will be killed.
- There are many pseudo devotees of Lord Śiva who want to indulge in smoking gañjā (marijuana) and similar intoxicating drugs, forgetting that by so imitating the acts of Lord Śiva they are calling death very near.
- Similarly, there are some pseudo devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa who prefer to imitate the Lord in His rāsa-līlā, or dance of love, forgetting their inability to lift Govardhana Hill.
- It is best, therefore, that one not try to imitate the powerful, but simply follow their instructions; nor should one try to occupy their posts without qualification.
- There are so many "incarnations" of God without the power of the Supreme Godhead.

## Surrender unto me

- Arjuna said in the First Chapter, “If I fight, I’ll be the cause of the women being left unprotected, and that will result in unwanted population, varṇa-saṅkara.”
- Here Kṛṣṇa counters that argument and again defeats Arjuna’s reasoning by indirectly saying, “If you neglect your duty and decline to fight, then you will be the cause of varṇa-saṅkara.”
- Kṛṣṇa will next compare the attached worker and the detached worker.
- Then He will describe how a detached man of knowledge should relate to one in ignorance. That description continues until text 32.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.25 ||

*saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṁso  
yathā kurvanti bhārata  
kuryād vidvāṁs tathāsaktaś  
cikīrṣur loka-saṅgraham*

Just as the ignorant (*yathā avidvāṁsah*) work with attachment (*saktāḥ karmaṇy kurvanti*), O Bhārata (*bhārata*), the wise (*tathā vidvān*), desirous to teach the people (*loka-saṅgraham cikīrṣuh*), should perform work without attachment (*asaktah karmaṇy kuryād*).

## Baladeva

- Though you are established in knowledge as pariniṣṭhita bhakta, perform your duties according to the Vedas for the benefit of the people. That is the import of this verse.
- Just as ignorant people perform actions with desire for results (saktāḥ), those in knowledge should perform the same actions, but without desire for results (asaktāḥ).

## Srila Prabhupada

- A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and a person not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are differentiated by different desires.
- A Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not do anything which is not conducive to development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- He may even act exactly like the ignorant person, who is too much attached to material activities, but one is engaged in such activities for the satisfaction of his sense gratification, whereas the other is engaged for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa.
- Therefore, the Kṛṣṇa conscious person is required to show the people how to act and how to engage the results of action for the purpose of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.26 ||

*na buddhi-bhedam janayed  
ajñānām karma-saṅginām  
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi  
vidvān yuktaḥ samācaran*

The wise man (*vidvān*) should not disturb the intelligence (*na buddhi-bhedam janayed*) of the ignorant attached to results of work (*ajñānām karma-saṅginām*). Engaging in all work himself with detachment (*samācaran yuktaḥ*), he should engage them in activity (*sarva-karmāṇi joṣayet*).

## SVCT

- You should not disturb the minds of those attached to action because of their impure hearts by saying “This karma is despicable! Give up action and become successful like me by the practice of jñāna.”
- Instead you should engage them in action (joṣayet) by saying “Perform action without desire and become successful.” Doing those actions, you set an example for others.
- “But according to the Bhāgavatam, this is contrary to the statement of the Lord:

**svayaṁ niḥśreyasaṁ vidvān na vakty ajñāya karma hi  
na rāti rogiṇo 'pathyaṁ vāñchato 'pi bhiṣaktamaḥ**

One who knows the highest good (**svayaṁ niḥśreyasaṁ vidvān**) will never instruct a foolish person (**na vakty ajñāya**) to engage in material enjoyment (**karma hi**), just as an experienced physician (**bhiṣaktamaḥ**) does not give his patient (**na rogiṇo rāti**) food injurious to his health (**apathyaṁ**), even if the patient desires it (**vāñchatah api**). SB 6.9.50



## SVCT

- True, but this is in relation to instructions given about bhakti.
- It is not contradictory to giving instructions in this way about jñāna.
- Jñāna is dependent on purity of the heart, and purity of the heart is dependent on action without desire.
- But bhakti is by nature very strong, and is not dependent even on the purity of the heart.
- If it is possible for you to produce faith in bhakti in other person, then you may disturb the minds of those attached to action, for those who have faith in bhakti have no obligation for performing karma.

# SVCT

- This should be understood from such statements as the following:

**tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvatā  
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate**

One should continue to perform the Vedic ritualistic activities (**tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta**) until one actually becomes detached from material sense gratification (**na nirvidyeta yāvatā**) and develops faith for hearing and chanting about Me (**mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate**). SB 11.20.9

- dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān mām bhajeta sa tu sattamaḥ (11.11.32)
- sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja (BG 18.66)
- tyaktvā sva-dharmam (SB 1.5.17)

## Baladeva

- Moreover, the person in knowledge, desiring the benefit of the people, should act with attention.
- Though a person may be fixed in knowledge (vidvān—pariniṣṭhita bhakta), he should not disturb the intelligence of the ignorant, who partake of the stupidity of faith in karma (karma saṅginām).
- He should not disturb the minds of those fixed in karma by saying “What is the use of these duties? Attain success just by jñāna like me.”
- Rather, engaging himself in all prescribed actions attentively, performing all the components or aṅgas till completion (samācaran), he should engage the ignorant with affection in all their duties prescribed by scripture (sarva karmāṇi joṣayet).
- If he disturbs their intelligence, then they will lose faith in performing duties and also will not attain jñāna. They will thus lose on both fronts.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyaḥ.
- That is the end of all Vedic rituals.
- All rituals, all performances of sacrifices, and everything that is put into the Vedas, including all direction for material activities, are meant for understanding Kṛṣṇa, who is the ultimate goal of life.
- But because the conditioned souls do not know anything beyond sense gratification, they study the Vedas to that end.
- But through fruitive activities and sense gratification regulated by the Vedic rituals one is gradually elevated to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Therefore a realized soul in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not disturb others in their activities or understanding, but he should act by showing how the results of all work can be dedicated to the service of Kṛṣṇa.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The learned Kṛṣṇa conscious person may act in such a way that the ignorant person working for sense gratification may learn how to act and how to behave.
- Although the ignorant man is not to be disturbed in his activities, a slightly developed Kṛṣṇa conscious person may directly be engaged in the service of the Lord without waiting for other Vedic formulas.
- For this fortunate man there is no need to follow the Vedic rituals, because by direct Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can have all the results one would otherwise derive from following one's prescribed duties.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

॥ 3.27 ॥

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni  
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ  
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā  
kartāham iti manyate*

The person bewildered by pride (*ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā*) thinks (*manyate*) that he is the doer (*kartā aham iti*) of actions (*karmāṇi*) which are being done completely (*sarvaśaḥ kriyamāṇāni*) by the body, senses and prāṇas made of prakṛti (*prakṛteḥ guṇaiḥ*).

## SVCT

- The doubt may arise: how to distinguish the person in knowledge (vidvān) from the ignorant person, if the man in knowledge also performs actions.
- Two verses explain the difference.
- The ignorant person thinks that he is the performer of all the actions, which are actually performed completely by the material senses, which in turn are the products of the guṇas (prakṛteḥ guṇaih).

## Baladeva

- Though one should be tolerant of those persons absorbed in karma, the difference between the person in knowledge and the person in ignorance is expressed in two verses.
- The person bewildered by false ego thinks that he is the doer of activities.
- The actions are described.
- He thinks he is the doer of all actions (karmāṇi) whether non-prescribed or prescribed by the Vedas, which are in fact performed by the products (guṇaiḥ) of the Lord's māyā (prakṛteḥ), in the form of the body, senses and prāṇas, impelled into action by the Lord.



## Baladeva

- The following should be understood by determining the intention of the statement.
- The jīvātmā, with a body made of knowledge (saṁvit), has a sense of 'I' and is actually the doer.
- But overcome with impressions (vāsanā) of enjoying material sense objects from beginningless time, he is embraced by prakṛti, who is situated next to him, who is the cause of his pleasure.
- Through false ego, a product of prakṛti, he becomes bewildered, devoid of knowledge of the self, thinking himself to be a material body.
- He then thinks that the activities which are accomplished by the Lord and the material body, senses and life airs, are being done only by himself.

## Baladeva

- **Note:** As a human being, the free will and responsibility of the jīva never disappears, in spite of karma and desire.
- However his actions can only be performed along with prakṛti in the form of the body, senses, prāṇas and the consent of the Lord.
- How the jīva can conquer over the influence of karma and svabhāva is discussed at the end of the chapter.
- The doership of the ātmā is only made possible by the body, senses and life airs, and by the paramātmā, who is the activator of all things.
- The jīva is not the only factor.
- That the jīva thinks that he is the only doer is a result of bewilderment from false ego.
- This is understood from three verses in the eighteenth chapter starting with adhiṣṭhānaṁ tathā karthā . (BG 18.14)

## Baladeva

- The verse *kārya-kāraṇa-kartṛtve hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate* (BG 13.18) describes *prakṛti* as the doer through the body and senses, but it is not possible to consider that *prakṛti* is the only doer because one must accept that *prakṛti* comes into action only by contact with the Lord.
- Therefore it will be explained later that the doership of the Lord can never be rejected.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Two persons, one in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the other in material consciousness, working on the same level, may appear to be working on the same platform, but there is a wide gulf of difference in their respective positions.
- The person in material consciousness is convinced by false ego that he is the doer of everything.
- He does not know that the mechanism of the body is produced by material nature, which works under the supervision of the Supreme Lord.
- The materialistic person has no knowledge that ultimately he is under the control of Kṛṣṇa.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The person in false ego takes all credit for doing everything independently, and that is the symptom of his nescience.
- He does not know that this gross and subtle body is the creation of material nature, under the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and as such his bodily and mental activities should be engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- The ignorant man forgets that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is known as Hṛṣīkeśa, or the master of the senses of the material body, for due to his long misuse of the senses in sense gratification, he is factually bewildered by the false ego, which makes him forget his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

## Surrender unto me :

- This verse is one of several in the Gītā that discuss the doer (kartā).
- Here Kṛṣṇa explains that while the foolish conditioned soul thinks himself the doer (the one accomplishing his work), the work is actually being carried out by the three modes of material nature (guṇas).
- Śrīla Prabhupāda, however, refers to an ultimate doer in his purport: “The materialistic person has no knowledge that ultimately he is under the control of Kṛṣṇa.” That topic will be discussed again in Chapter Four.
- Kṛṣṇa next explains the difference between the attached worker and the devotional worker.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.28 ||

*tattva-vit tu mahā-bāho  
guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ  
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta  
iti matvā na sajjate*

But the wise person, who knows (*tattva-vit tu*) that he is different from the senses and their actions (*guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ*), O Mighty-armed (*mahā-bāho*), is not attached to the sense objects (*na sajjate*), understanding (*matvā*) that only the senses are engaged with the sense objects (*guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta iti*).

## SVCT

- The intelligent person, however, knows the truth (tattva-vit) about the divisions of guṇas and actions (guṇa-karma-vibhagayoḥ).
- The divisions of the guṇas are sattva, rajas and tamas.
- The divisions of action are according the effects of the guṇas: devatā (sattva), senses (rajas), and sense objects (tamas).
- One who knows the nature of these two is called tattva vit.
- The senses such as the eye (guṇāḥ) administered by their devatās are engaged with the sense objects such as form (guṇeṣu).
- The intelligent person is not attached, knowing this.
- He thinks, “I am not at all the senses, nor the sense objects. There is no relation between me and the senses or the sense objects at all.”



## Baladeva

- The person in knowledge is not like this.
- He knows (tattva vit) that he is different from the guṇas or senses, and from the actions performed by the senses (guṇa karma vibhāgayoḥ).
- That means that he knows he is not a body made of senses (guṇa) and the actions they perform (karma), after considering their difference (vibhaga) from his true self.
- He knows the real nature of things (tattva vit), that he is not a material body made of senses or their actions, by considering their respective differences.

## Baladeva

- He knows that the senses (guṇā), inspired by the devatās, reveal the sense objects (guṇeṣu), and knows that he is different from these sense objects, because of his being the bliss of spiritual consciousness.
- He does not identify with them by similarity.
- Knowing that he is not agent of manifesting those sense objects, he consequently has no attachment to them. However, he is attached to the ātmā.
- In this verse also, it should be understood that the jīva is also the doer, when it is mentioned “understanding that only the sense are engaged with the sense objects.”
- The jīva does the understanding.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The knower of the Absolute Truth is convinced of his awkward position in material association.
- He knows that he is part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and that his position should not be in the material creation.
- He knows his real identity as part and parcel of the Supreme, who is eternal bliss and knowledge, and he realizes that somehow or other he is entrapped in the material conception of life.
- In his pure state of existence he is meant to dovetail his activities in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

## Srila Prabhupada

- He therefore engages himself in the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and becomes naturally unattached to the activities of the material senses, which are all circumstantial and temporary.
- He knows that his material condition of life is under the supreme control of the Lord; consequently he is not disturbed by all kinds of material reactions, which he considers to be the mercy of the Lord.
- According to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, one who knows the Absolute Truth in three different features—namely Brahman, Paramātmā, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead—is called tattva-vit, for he knows also his own factual position in relationship with the Supreme.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.29 ||

*prakṛter guṇa-sammūḍhāḥ  
sajjante guṇa-karmasu  
tān akṛtsna-vido mandān  
kṛtsna-vin na vicālayet*

Those bewildered by the senses made of prakṛti (*prakṛter guṇa-sammūḍhāḥ*) are attached to the sense objects (*sajjante guṇa-karmasu*). One who knows everything (*kṛtsna-vit*) does not disturb (*na vicālayet*) those foolish persons (*tān mandān*) who do not know (*akṛtsna-vidah*).

## SVCT

- One who knows everything does not disturb those foolish persons who do not know.
- If the jīvas are separate from the senses and the sense objects, without relationship to them, then why is it seen that people are attached to the sense objects? This verse answers.
- By absorption in the senses made of matter, jīvas become bewildered.
- Just like a man possessed by a ghost thinks himself a ghost, the jīvas absorbed in the senses made of matter think themselves to be the senses.
- Then they become attached to the sense objects (guṇa-karmaṣu).

## SVCT

- The man who knows all (kṛtsnavit) does not disturb those who are ignorant.
- He does not attempt to make them realize that they, as jīvas, are different from the senses, that they are not the senses.
- Instead he engages them in action without desire, which will remove the absorption in the senses.
- One does not cure a man possessed of a ghost even by instructing him even a hundred times, “You are a man, not a ghost!”
- Instead one cures him by use of mantras, jewels and medicines which will remove that affliction.

## Baladeva

- This verse concludes the ideas presented in verse 26.
- Those who are bewildered by false ego (guṇa saṁmūḍhāḥ), which is a product of prakṛti, those who think the body to be the self, in the manner of a person possessed by a ghost, become attached to the actions of the body and senses (guṇa karmaṣu).
- One who has full knowledge of ātmā (kṛtsna vit) does not disturb those of little intelligence (akṛtsna vidah), who are lazy in understanding ātmā (mandān).
- He should not desire to make such persons understand the truth by saying “You are not actions of the body and senses. You are the bliss of pure consciousness.”
- Rather, following their taste for action, through engaging them in a succession of Vedic duties, he should desire to arouse their interest in the ātmā.



## Srila Prabhupada

- Persons who are unknowledgeable falsely identify with gross material consciousness and are full of material designations.
- This body is a gift of the material nature, and one who is too much attached to the bodily consciousness is called manda, or a lazy person without understanding of spirit soul.
- Ignorant men think of the body as the self; they accept bodily connections with others as kinsmanship, the land in which the body is obtained is their object of worship, and they consider the formalities of religious rituals to be ends in themselves.
- Social work, nationalism and altruism are some of the activities for such materially designated persons.
- Under the spell of such designations, they are always busy in the material field; for them spiritual realization is a myth, and so they are not interested.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Those who are enlightened in spiritual life, however, should not try to agitate such materially engrossed persons.
- Better to prosecute one's own spiritual activities silently.
- Such bewildered persons may be engaged in such primary moral principles of life as nonviolence and similar materially benevolent work.
- Men who are ignorant cannot appreciate activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa advises us not to disturb them and simply waste valuable time.
- But the devotees of the Lord are more kind than the Lord because they understand the purpose of the Lord.
- Consequently they undertake all kinds of risks, even to the point of approaching ignorant men to try to engage them in the acts of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which are absolutely necessary for the human being.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

॥ 3.30 ॥

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi  
sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā  
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā  
yudhyasva vigata-jvarah*

Offering all activities to Me (*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi sannyasya*), being fixed in the soul (*adhyātma-cetasā*), being without possessiveness or desire (*nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā*), devoid of fever (*vigata-jvarah*), fight (*yudhyasva*).

## SVCT

- Therefore, offering (sannyasya) all works to Me, by consciousness fixed in the ātmā rather than in material objects, being without desires for the results, being niṣkāma (nirāśih), devoid of possessiveness in all respects (nirmamaḥ), fight.

## Baladeva

- Because of this, you, a pariniṣṭhita bhakta, with knowledge concerning your nature as ātmā (adhyātma cetasā), offering (samnyasya) all actions to Me, the Supreme Lord, just as a servant offers everything to a king, fight.
- You should be devoid of the concept of being the doer: as a servant dependent on the king performs actions according to the king's order, you should perform your actions according to My order, with a desire to teach the people.

## Baladeva

- Devoid of desires for personal results, thinking that you do this only by the order of your master (nirāśīḥ), devoid of possessiveness (nirmamaḥ) such as “the results of my actions are for me ,” having given up the anguish arising from thoughts of killing friends (vigata jvārah), Arjuna should fight, because that is his duty as a kṣatriya.
- This means that those desiring liberation should follow the actions prescribed for them according to their āśrama.
- Note: This means that the varṇa duties are performed, but subject to āśrama rules. Arjuna could claim he was a kṣatriya vanaprastha and renounce fighting. But he is a gṛhastha, and therefore must perform his occupational duty of fighting.

## Srila Prabhupada

- This verse clearly indicates the purpose of the Bhagavad-gītā.
- The Lord instructs that one has to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious to discharge duties, as if in military discipline.
- Such an injunction may make things a little difficult; nevertheless duties must be carried out, with dependence on Kṛṣṇa, because that is the constitutional position of the living entity.
- The living entity cannot be happy independent of the cooperation of the Supreme Lord, because the eternal constitutional position of the living entity is to become subordinate to the desires of the Lord.
- Arjuna was therefore ordered by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to fight as if the Lord were his military commander.
- The Supreme Lord is the soul of all souls; therefore, one who depends solely and wholly on the Supreme Soul without personal consideration, or in other words, one who is fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, is called adhyātmacetas.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Nirāśīḥ means that one has to act on the order of the master but should not expect fruitive results.
- The cashier may count millions of dollars for his employer, but he does not claim a cent for himself.
- Similarly, one has to realize that nothing in the world belongs to any individual person, but that everything belongs to the Supreme Lord.
- That is the real purport of mayi, or "unto Me."
- And when one acts in such Kṛṣṇa consciousness, certainly he does not claim proprietorship over anything.
- This consciousness is called nirmama, or "nothing is mine."

## Srila Prabhupada

- And if there is any reluctance to execute such a stern order, which is without consideration of so-called kinsmen in the bodily relationship, that reluctance should be thrown off; in this way one may become vigata-jvara, or without feverish mentality or lethargy.
- Everyone, according to his quality and position, has a particular type of work to discharge, and all such duties may be discharged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as described above.
- That will lead one to the path of liberation.



## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.31 ||

*ye me matam idaṁ nityam  
anutiṣṭhanti mānavāḥ  
śraddhāvanto 'nasūyanto  
mucyante te 'pi karmabhiḥ*

Only those who (*ye mānavāḥ*) always follow (*nityam anutiṣṭhanti*) my teaching (*me idaṁ matam*) with faith (*śraddhāvanto*) and without envy (*anasūyanto*) are free from the bondage of actions (*te karmabhiḥ mucyante*).

## Baladeva

- This verse, speaking of the result for those who following the Lord's teaching, the secret of the Vedas, indicates the supreme position of this teaching.
- Only (api) those men who always (nityam) follow My teaching, (another meaning: who following the teaching of the Vedas with no beginning because the śrutis are eternal), with firm faith (śraddhāvantah), without having the feeling that it is a fault for one interested in liberation to participate in useless material actions which are only a waste of time (anusūyanto), are free from bondage of action.
- Api has the sense of limitation (only) in this verse.

## Baladeva

- Another meaning is as follows.
- Those who follow My teachings, and even those who cannot follow but have faith and also do not disrespect the teachings—even they can be free of the bondage of action.
- Even though at the present time they cannot follow, by faith in the teachings and lack of envy, their obstacles decrease. A little later, performing the instructions, they become free.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The injunction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the essence of all Vedic wisdom and therefore is eternally true without exception.
- As the Vedas are eternal, so this truth of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is also eternal.
- One should have firm faith in this injunction, without envying the Lord.
- There are many philosophers who write comments on the Bhagavad-gītā but have no faith in Kṛṣṇa.

## Srila Prabhupada

- They will never be liberated from the bondage of fruitive action.
- But an ordinary man with firm faith in the eternal injunctions of the Lord, even though unable to execute such orders, becomes liberated from the bondage of the law of karma.
- In the beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one may not fully discharge the injunctions of the Lord, but because one is not resentful of this principle and works sincerely without consideration of defeat and hopelessness, he will surely be promoted to the stage of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

॥ 3.32 ॥

*ye tv etad abhyasūyanto  
nānutiṣṭhanti me matam  
sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhāṁs tān  
viddhi naṣṭān acetasaḥ*

But know (*viddhi*) that those who (*ye tu*), devoid of all knowledge (*sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhān*), devoid of proper consciousness (*acetasaḥ*), and hostile to this teaching (*etad me matam abhyasūyantaḥ*), do not follow it (*nānutiṣṭhanti*), are lost (*naṣṭān*).

## Baladeva

- This verse speaks of the fault of not following the instruction.
- Know that those who do not perform actions in this way are devoid of proper discrimination (acetasaḥ); they are ignorant of (vimūḍhān) the knowledge (jñāna) that all these prescribed actions (sarva) are directed towards spirit.
- Know that they are lost (naṣṭān).

## Srila Prabhupada

- The flaw of not being Kṛṣṇa conscious is clearly stated herein.
- As there is punishment for disobedience to the order of the supreme executive head, so there is certainly punishment for disobedience to the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- A disobedient person, however great he may be, is ignorant of his own self, and of the Supreme Brahman, Paramātmā and the Personality of Godhead, due to a vacant heart.
- Therefore there is no hope of perfection of life for him.



## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

॥ 3.33 ॥

*sadr̥śam ceṣṭate svasyāḥ  
prakṛter jñānavān api  
prakṛtiṁ yānti bhūtāni  
nigrahaḥ kiṁ kariṣyati*

Even the man of knowledge (*jñānavān api*) acts (*ceṣṭate*) according to his nature (*svasyāḥ prakṛter sadr̥śam*). All living entities act according to their natures (*prakṛtiṁ yānti bhūtāni*). What can instructions of karma and jñāna do for the most fallen (*nigrahaḥ kiṁ kariṣyati*)?

Even the man in knowledge of scripture (*jñānavān api*) acts (*ceṣṭate*) according to his desires (*svasyāḥ prakṛter sadr̥śam*). All men act according to their desires (*prakṛtiṁ yānti bhūtāni*). What can instruction or threat of punishment accomplish (*nigrahaḥ kiṁ kariṣyati*)?

## SVCT

- “Would they not be afraid of not following Your instructions, the instructions of the Supreme Lord, or the instructions of a king?”
- “No, they are not afraid.”
- “Those who engage their senses for enjoyment, even if they are intelligent, cannot consider the orders of the king, the Supreme Lord. This is because of their nature.”
- The Lord explains this in this verse.
- If the person of knowledge engages in sin, he will receive hellish punishment, just as a king punishes.
- And he will also bear infamy.
- Still, even the person of discrimination performs actions which yield a burden of suffering, following his previous sinful habits.

## SVCT

- Therefore all follow after their natures.
- The instructions of scripture (nigrahaḥ) made by Me or the king, in the form of niṣkāma-karma-yoga, are able to purify and enlighten the impure hearted, and in the form of jñāna-yoga, are able to purify and enlighten the pure hearted.
- But neither can purify the extremely impure (nigrahaḥ kim kariṣyati).
- However, bhakti-yoga arising from My unpredictable mercy can deliver even those most sinful persons.

## SVCT

- As the Skanda Purāṇa says:

**aho dhanyo 'si devarṣe  
kṛpayā yasya te kṣaṇāt  
nīco 'py utpulako lebhe  
lubdhako ratim ucyate**

My dear friend Nārada Muni (**aho**), you are glorified as the sage among the demigods (**devarṣe dhanyo asi**). By your mercy (**te kṛpayā**), even a lowborn person like this hunter (**nīcah lubdhakah apy**) immediately became ecstatic (**kṣaṇāt utpulako lebhe**). This is called bhāva or rati (**ratim ucyate**).

## Baladeva

- ‘The scriptures say that there is punishment for those who do not follow the instructions of You, the Lord of all beings. Do they not have fear of You?’
- Even a person who knows the punishment stated in the scriptures (jñānavān) acts according to (sadṛśam) his evil nature (svasyāḥ prakṛteḥ)—his sinful impressions which have been present since beginningless time.
- What then to speak of the person who does not even know about the punishment?
- All people (bhūtāni) follow (yanti) their sinful vāsanās (prakṛtim), even though those desires cause of destruction of the very goals they pursue—artha, dharma, kāma and mokṣa.

## Baladeva

- For a person devoid of association of saintly persons, even if he has knowledge of scripture, what can punishment accomplish?
- He will not be able to destroy the strong influence of those bad vāsanās.
- However, by saintly association, he destroys the bad vāsanās even if they are very strong.

**ato duḥsaṅgam utsrjya satsu sajjeta buddhimān  
santa evāsyā chindanti mano-vyasaṅgam uktibhiḥ**

- An intelligent person (**buddhimān**) should therefore reject all bad association (**ato duḥsaṅgam utsrjya**) and instead take up the association of saintly devotees (**satsu sajjeta**), whose words (**asya eva uktibhiḥ**) cut off (**chindanti**) the excessive attachment of one's mind (**mano-vyasaṅgam**). SB 11.26.26

## Srila Prabhupada

- Unless one is situated on the transcendental platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he cannot get free from the influence of the modes of material nature, as it is confirmed by the Lord in the Seventh Chapter (7.14).
- Therefore, even for the most highly educated person on the mundane plane, it is impossible to get out of the entanglement of māyā simply by theoretical knowledge, or by separating the soul from the body.
- There are many so-called spiritualists who outwardly pose as advanced in the science but inwardly or privately are completely under particular modes of nature which they are unable to surpass.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Academically, one may be very learned, but because of his long association with material nature, he is in bondage.
- Kṛṣṇa consciousness helps one to get out of the material entanglement, even though one may be engaged in his prescribed duties in terms of material existence.
- Therefore, without being fully in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one should not give up his occupational duties.
- No one should suddenly give up his prescribed duties and become a so-called yogī or transcendentalist artificially.
- It is better to be situated in one's position and to try to attain Kṛṣṇa consciousness under superior training.
- Thus one may be freed from the clutches of Kṛṣṇa's māyā.



## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.34 ||

*indriyasyendriyasyārthe  
rāga-dveṣau vyavasthitau  
tayor na vaśam āgacchet  
tau hy asya paripanthinau*

Attachment and repulsion are firmly fixed (*rāga-dveṣau vyavasthitau*) in each of the sense objects (*indriyasya indriyasyārthe*). One should not come under control of attachment and repulsion (*tayor na vaśam āgacchet*). They are the two obstacles (*tau hy asya paripanthinau*).

## SVCT

- Since the rules and restrictions of scripture do not have effect upon those of evil nature, one should limit the senses, if one is not under the influence of sinful nature arising from past sinful habits. That is described in this verse.
- The word indriya is repeated to indicate each of the sense objects of each of the senses.
- Attachment (rāga) for what is forbidden by scripture, such as giving gifts to other's wives, or seeing or touching their bodies; or repulsion (dveṣa) for what is prescribed by scripture, such as distributing gifts to, serving, seeing and touching the guru, the brāhmaṇa, the holy places and visitors, are firmly fixed (viśeṣena avasthitau) in all the sense objects (form, smell, taste, touch and sound).
- One should not be under the control (vaśam) of attachment and repulsion.

## SVCT

- Another meaning is this.
- Attachment means seeing a woman (object of the eye) and hatred for those that obstruct that enjoyment.
- Therefore, the mind is attracted to what helps one attain one's goals.
- The mind is attracted to tasty, tender rice as it is favorable for one's goals, and the mind has dislike of tasteless hard rice, as it is against one's goals.
- One has attachment to hearing and seeing one's own sons, but dislikes seeing or hearing the sons of one's enemies.
- One should not fall under the control of such attachment and repulsion.

## Baladeva

- “If the actions of men were under the control of their sinful natures, then the positive and negative injunctions of scripture would be useless.”
- Repetition of the word *indriyasya* (of the sense) indicates all the senses—the knowledge senses such as the ear, and its sense object sound, and the action senses such as the voice and its sense object, words.
- Attraction and hatred (*raga dveṣau*) pleasure or discomfort to the individual, are fixed firmly (*vyavasthitau*), not in an unsettled way, in all these sense objects (*indriyasya arthe*).
- Even if they are prescribed by scripture, such things as talking to saintly persons, serving them or going to holy places, becomes the object of hatred, seen as unfavorable or disagreeable to the individual.

## Baladeva

- But even though living entities have the tendency to follow these feelings of desire and hatred, the person desiring the highest good should not fall under the control of desire and hatred (tayoh), since (hi) they cause obstacles on his path (paripanthinau).
- They are like thieves standing in front of (pari) the traveler on the road (panthin).
- What is stated is this.
- Impressions (vāsanā) which have operated since beginningless time, give rise to such things as desire to speak to others' wives, even though it is forbidden in the scriptures.
- Accompanying the desire arises knowledge of the positive features of doing so, and absence of knowledge of anything negative in doing so. This desire makes men act.

## Baladeva

- In a similar way, hatred may develop concerning speaking to saintly persons, which is prescribed in the scriptures.
- This hatred manifests along with knowledge that speaking to saintly persons is undesirable, and lack of knowledge anything desirable in it. Thus he will avoid that situation.
- The scriptures, which direct one to associate with the saintly persons, will turn one away from, and make one detest what is forbidden, even though it is pleasurable to the mind, by making one understand the undesirable consequences of the forbidden act.
- And they will also make one have attraction for and engage in acts prescribed by scripture by making one understand their favorable results, even though these may be unpleasant for the mind.
- Thus the positive and negative injunctions of scripture are not useless.

# Baladeva

- [Note: *Vāsanās* or *saṃskāras*, impressions are means by which experiences of previous lives stay with the *jīva* life after life.
- Under certain conditions, the impressions activate, creating memory of previous like or dislike.
- Desires appear, and thus the *jīva* acts.
- Though *vāsanās* or impressions are powerful to instigate the *jīva* to action, they do not make the *jīva* powerless to make his choices.
- Free will of the *jīva* exists along with his experience of *vāsanās*.
- This enables the *jīva* to choose the advice of scripture over his material desires.]

## Srila Prabhupada

- Those who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are naturally reluctant to engage in material sense gratification.
- But those who are not in such consciousness should follow the rules and regulations of the revealed scriptures.
- Unrestricted sense enjoyment is the cause of material encagement, but one who follows the rules and regulations of the revealed scriptures does not become entangled by the sense objects.
- For example, sex enjoyment is a necessity for the conditioned soul, and sex enjoyment is allowed under the license of marriage ties. According to scriptural injunctions, one is forbidden to engage in sex relationships with any women other than one's wife.
- All other women are to be considered as one's mother. But in spite of such injunctions, a man is still inclined to have sex relationships with other women.



## Srila Prabhupada

- These propensities are to be curbed; otherwise they will be stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization.
- As long as the material body is there, the necessities of the material body are allowed, but under rules and regulations.
- And yet, we should not rely upon the control of such allowances.
- One has to follow those rules and regulations, unattached to them, because practice of sense gratification under regulations may also lead one to go astray—as much as there is always the chance of an accident, even on the royal roads.
- Although they may be very carefully maintained, no one can guarantee that there will be no danger even on the safest road.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The sense enjoyment spirit has been current a very long, long time, owing to material association.
- Therefore, in spite of regulated sense enjoyment, there is every chance of falling down; therefore any attachment for regulated sense enjoyment must also be avoided by all means.
- But attachment to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or acting always in the loving service of Kṛṣṇa, detaches one from all kinds of sensory activities.
- Therefore, no one should try to be detached from Kṛṣṇa consciousness at any stage of life.
- The whole purpose of detachment from all kinds of sense attachment is ultimately to become situated on the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Section-IV - Niskama-karma-yoga to set Correct Example (17-35)

|| 3.35 ||

*śreyān sva-dharmo viguṇaḥ  
para-dharmāt sv-anuṣṭhitāt  
sva-dharme nidhanaṁ śreyaḥ  
para-dharmo bhayāvahaḥ*

It is better to perform ones own duties even if in a faulty way (*śreyān sva-dharmo viguṇaḥ*), than to perform others' duties albeit very well (*para-dharmāt sv-anuṣṭhitāt*). Destruction in the course one's duties is beneficial (*sva-dharme nidhanaṁ śreyaḥ*). Performing others' duties is full of danger (*para-dharmo bhayāvahaḥ*).

## SVCT

- In this verse the Lord answers those who desire to perform the duties of others such as non-violence, because it is easy to execute and also not independent of dharma, and because of inability to fight the battle due to attachment and repulsion.
- One should boldly perform one's duties, even though they may have some slight fault.
- This is better than performing others' duties even if those duties are executed well and are full of good qualities.
- The reason is given.
- Destruction in the course of performing one's duties is better. Performing others' duties is dangerous.
- The Seventh Canto of Bhāgavatam speaks of performing others' duties, para dharma, as irreligion:

## SVCT

॥ 7.15.12 ॥

vidharmaḥ para-dharmaś ca  
ābhāsa upamā chalaḥ  
adharmā-śākhāḥ pañcemā  
dharma-jñō 'dharmavat tyajet

The knower of dharma (**dharma-jñāh**) should avoid (**adharmavat tyajet**) five forbidden types of adharma (**pañca imā adharmā-śākhāḥ**) known as **vidharma**, **para-dharma**, **ābhāsa-dharma**, **upamā-dharma** and **chala-dharma**.

## Baladeva

- “You have said that we should give up proclivities of desire and hatred arising from our natures, common to animals, and engage in dharma according to scripture.
- This tendency should disappear with purification of the heart through following the duties of dharma.
- Dharmas of both fighting and non-violence are stated in the scriptures.
- Because I cannot perform fighting devoid of desire and hatred, the dharma of non-violence with subsistence by gathering surplus grains is superior to fighting for me.”

## Baladeva

- Whatever dharma is prescribed by the Vedas in terms of varṇa and āśrama, performed incompletely, lacking some elements (viguṇaḥ) is better than executing a different dharma (para dharmāt) even though it is executed completely, with all parts (su anuṣṭhitāt).
- For instance, the natural dharma of the brāhmaṇa is non-violence, and that of the kṣatriya is fighting.
- One should not execute dharma beyond the sanction of the Vedas.
- Doing so is like performing the functions of the eye with a different organ.
- Jaimini says codanā-lakṣaṇo dharmah : dharma is characterized by rules.
- The reason why it is better is then stated.

## Baladeva

- It is better to die (nidhanam) in the execution of ones own dharma. This produces the best results, because there is no loss or sin in acting imperfectly, and because in the next life one will be able to execute that dharma properly.
- Performing a different dharma causes misfortune for the person (bhayāvahaḥ), by creating sin, since it is prohibited in scripture.
- In the case of Paraśurāma and Viśvāmitra however there is no deviation from scripture.
- Though born in brāhmaṇa (Paraśurāma) and kṣatriya (Viśvāmitra) families respectively, they performed activities according to their particular great qualities.
- Even then they were criticized and fell into problems.
- Also Droṇa and others brahmaṇas, practicing kṣatriya dharma, were criticized many times.



## Baladeva

- “I have heard that Daivarāti [Note: This is another name of King Janaka. In old age he renounced. Generally however, the kṣatriyas take vanaprastha rather than sannyāsa.] and other kṣatriyas renounced the world. Therefore why is non-violence considered the wrong dharma for me?”
- “By performing ones prescribed duties in the previous āśrama, one decreases desire, until one is qualified for renunciation.
- The person can then practice non-violence, because it then becomes his prescribed dharma.
- Thus it is suitable that one who is situated in ones own dharma can later do this.”

## Srila Prabhupada

- One should therefore discharge his prescribed duties in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness rather than those prescribed for others.
- Materially, prescribed duties are duties enjoined according to one's psychophysical condition, under the spell of the modes of material nature.
- Spiritual duties are as ordered by the spiritual master for the transcendental service of Kṛṣṇa.
- But whether material or spiritual, one should stick to his prescribed duties even up to death, rather than imitate another's prescribed duties.
- Duties on the spiritual platform and duties on the material platform may be different, but the principle of following the authorized direction is always good for the performer.
- When one is under the spell of the modes of material nature, one should follow the prescribed rules for his particular situation and should not imitate others.

## Srila Prabhupada

- For example, a brāhmaṇa, who is in the mode of goodness, is nonviolent, whereas a kṣatriya, who is in the mode of passion, is allowed to be violent.
- As such, for a kṣatriya it is better to be vanquished following the rules of violence than to imitate a brāhmaṇa who follows the principles of nonviolence.
- Everyone has to cleanse his heart by a gradual process, not abruptly.
- However, when one transcends the modes of material nature and is fully situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he can perform anything and everything under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master.
- In that complete stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the kṣatriya may act as a brāhmaṇa, or a brāhmaṇa may act as a kṣatriya.
- In the transcendental stage, the distinctions of the material world do not apply.

## Srila Prabhupada

- For example, Viśvāmitra was originally a kṣatriya, but later on he acted as a brāhmaṇa, whereas Paraśurāma was a brāhmaṇa but later on he acted as a kṣatriya. Being transcendently situated, they could do so; but as long as one is on the material platform, he must perform his duties according to the modes of material nature.
- At the same time, he must have a full sense of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Section-V – Beware of Lust and Anger (36-43)

|| 3.36 ||

*arjuna uvāca  
atha kena prayukto 'yaṁ  
pāpaṁ carati pūruṣaḥ  
anicchann api vārṣṇeya  
balād iva niyojitaḥ*

Arjuna said: O descendent of the Vṛṣṇis (*vārṣṇeya*), by what (*atha kena prayuktaḥ*) does man engage in sin (*ayaṁ pūruṣaḥ pāpaṁ carati*), though unwilling (*anicchann api*), as if by force (*balād iva niyojitaḥ*)?

## SVCT

- Referring to verse 34 about rāga and dveṣa, in this verse Arjuna asks about the attachment to the objects of the senses such as enjoyment with others' wives, even though it is forbidden by scripture.
- Though without desire to engage in sin because of knowledge of the rules and prohibitions of the scriptures (anicchan), by what influence (kena prayuktaḥ) does one engage in the act as if by force?
- This means that the desire for the object strongly arises under the influence of the object's stimuli.

## Baladeva

- In verse 34 the Lord indicated that desire (raga), such as speaking to others' wives, is firmly fixed in the senses and mind.
- Arjuna now asks a question concerning this.
- “O Kṛṣṇa born in the Vṛṣṇi dynasty, inspired by what thing (kena prayuktaḥ), does the jīva commit sin?
- Though he does not want to do it (anicchan), knowing that it is forbidden by the scriptures, he does it as if by force (balād iva).
- The desire to engage in sin is produced in the dependent person by being subjected to the desire of an instigator. Who is the instigator? Is it the Lord or the jīva's previous impressions (saṁskāra)?
- It cannot be the Lord who inspires a person to do sinful acts, since he is the merciful and only plays the role of the witness.
- Nor can it be impressions, since those are dull unconscious things.”

## Srila Prabhupada

- A living entity, as part and parcel of the Supreme, is originally spiritual, pure, and free from all material contaminations.
- Therefore, by nature he is not subject to the sins of the material world.
- But when he is in contact with the material nature, he acts in many sinful ways without hesitation, and sometimes even against his will.
- As such, Arjuna's question to Kṛṣṇa is very sanguine, as to the perverted nature of the living entities.
- Although the living entity sometimes does not want to act in sin, he is still forced to act.
- Sinful actions are not, however, impelled by the Supersoul within, but are due to another cause, as the Lord explains in the next verse.



## Section-V – Beware of Lust and Anger (36-43)

|| 3.37 ||

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca  
kāma eṣa krodha eṣa  
rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ  
mahāśano mahā-pāpmā  
viddhy enam iha vairiṇam*

The Lord said: It is lust and then anger (*kāma eṣa krodha eṣa*), arising from the mode of passion (*rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ*). Know this (*viddhy enam*) as the great devourer (*mahāśano*), the great ferocious one (*mahā-pāpmā*), the enemy (*vairiṇam*).

## SVCT

- Lust, composed of the desire for the sense objects, impels a man to sin.
- A man, being urged by lust, engages in sin.
- This lust, appearing in a different form, becomes visible as anger.
- This means that lust, being obstructed by someone, transforms into anger.
- Lust arises from the mode of passion, and from lust in mode of passion arises anger in the mode of ignorance.
- “But after the fulfillment of desire, the desire should be finished.”
- “No, this lust is a great devourer. It is impossible to satisfy the expectations of desire.”

## SVCT

- As the smṛti says,  
**yat pṛthivyām vrīhi-yavaṃ hiraṇyaṃ paśavaḥ striyaḥ  
nālam ekasya tat sarvam iti matvā śamaṃ vrajet**

Understanding that all that is available on earth in the form of food, gold, animals and women is not enough for one person, one should go about with peaceful mind. Mahābhārata, Anuśāśana Parvā, Ch.13 [Note: There is a similar verse in Bhāgavatam 9.19.13]

- “If it is not possible to make an alliance with lust by giving (dāna), then is it possible to bring under control by sāma and bheda?”
- “No, lust is a very great demon (mahā-pāpmā).”

## Baladeva

- The Lord speaks. “Desire (kāma) for sense objects like sound, caused by previous impressions (vāsanā), instigates the jīva to commit sin even though the jīva does not want to do it. Kāma is the instigator.”
- “But anger is also seen to be the instigator in such things as cursing. You have said this in verse 34 (raga and dveṣa).”
- “True, but anger is not different from kāma.
- This kāma, when obstructed by some living being, becomes anger, just as milk becomes yogurt by addition of acid culture.
- The victory of kāma and krodha are one.”

## Baladeva

- “How would you describe this kāma?”
- “It arises from the mode of rajas.
- This means that with the conquest of rajo guṇa by increase of sattva, kāma can be conquered.
- One cannot extinguish it by giving it what it wants (dāna): it is most voracious (mahāśanaḥ).
- Nor can one control it using kind words (sāma), or by division (bheda), for it is very evil (mahā papmā).
- Being very powerful, since it forces one to engage even in forbidden acts by making one lose ones sense of discrimination, know that it is an enemy even in giving in to its demands (iha).
- Because it is impossible to reach conciliation with kāma by the three methods dāna, sāma, and bheda, it should be destroyed by daṇḍa, which will later be described.

## Baladeva

- The Lord, residing within all actions, sets everything in motion everywhere, similar to the rain falling everywhere, but kāma (arising from vāsanās attached to the jīva) directly causes the actions, and thus is called the personification of sin (pāpmā) in verse 34.

## Srila Prabhupada

- When a living entity comes in contact with the material creation, his eternal love for Kṛṣṇa is transformed into lust, in association with the mode of passion.
- Or, in other words, the sense of love of God becomes transformed into lust, as milk in contact with sour tamarind is transformed into yogurt.
- Then again, when lust is unsatisfied, it turns into wrath; wrath is transformed into illusion, and illusion continues the material existence.
- Therefore, lust is the greatest enemy of the living entity, and it is lust only which induces the pure living entity to remain entangled in the material world.
- Wrath is the manifestation of the mode of ignorance; these modes exhibit themselves as wrath and other corollaries.
- If, therefore, the mode of passion, instead of being degraded into the mode of ignorance, is elevated to the mode of goodness by the prescribed method of living and acting, then one can be saved from the degradation of wrath by spiritual attachment.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The Supreme Personality of Godhead expanded Himself into many for His ever-increasing spiritual bliss, and the living entities are parts and parcels of this spiritual bliss.
- They also have partial independence, but by misuse of their independence, when the service attitude is transformed into the propensity for sense enjoyment, they come under the sway of lust.
- This material creation is created by the Lord to give facility to the conditioned souls to fulfill these lustful propensities, and when completely baffled by prolonged lustful activities, the living entities begin to inquire about their real position.
- This inquiry is the beginning of the Vedānta-sūtras, wherein it is said, athāto brahma jijñāsā: one should inquire into the Supreme.
- And the Supreme is defined in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam as janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś ca, or, "The origin of everything is the Supreme Brahman."



## Srila Prabhupada

- Therefore the origin of lust is also in the Supreme.
- If, therefore, lust is transformed into love for the Supreme, or transformed into Kṛṣṇa consciousness—or, in other words, desiring everything for Kṛṣṇa—then both lust and wrath can be spiritualized.
- Hanumān, the great servitor of Lord Rāma, exhibited his wrath by burning the golden city of Rāvaṇa, but by doing so he became the greatest devotee of the Lord.
- Here also, in Bhagavad-gītā, the Lord induces Arjuna to engage his wrath upon his enemies for the satisfaction of the Lord.
- Therefore, lust and wrath, when they are employed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, become our friends instead of our enemies.

## Section-V – Beware of Lust and Anger (36-43)

|| 3.38 ||

*dhūmenāvriyate vahnir  
yathādarśo malena ca  
yatholbenāvṛto garbhas  
tathā tenedam āvṛtam*

As fire is covered by smoke (*yathā dhūmena āvriyate vahnih*), the mirror by dust (*ādarśo malena ca*), or embryo by the womb (*yathā ulbena āvṛto garbhah*), so the universe is covered by lust (*tathā tena idam āvṛtam*).

As fire is covered by smoke (*yathā dhūmena āvriyate vahnih*), the mirror by dust (*ādarśo malena ca*), or embryo by the womb (*yathā ulbena āvṛto garbhah*), so knowledge is covered by lust (*tathā tena idam āvṛtam*).

## SVCT

- Lust is not just an enemy for some, but an enemy for all. This is explained with examples.
- The examples illustrate various degrees of lust: shallow, deep and very deep. The fire, though covered by smoke, still performs its function of burning.
- Because of the disappearance of its natural clarity, the mirror covered by dust does not carry out its function of reflecting images properly, though it is known as a mirror by its form (in spite of the dust covering it).
- The fetus covered by the womb cannot perform its functions of stretching its hands and feet. Its true form cannot be understood within that covering.
- When lust is shallow, it is possible to remember the spiritual goals. When lust is deep, it is not possible. When it is very deep, one becomes unconscious.
- In this way, the universe (idam) is covered by lust.

## Baladeva

- Examples of smoke, dust and womb are given to illustrate three stages of kāma's influence: slight, medium and intense.
- The fire covered by smoke is not bright, but is able to perform its function of heating to some degree.
- The mirror covered with dust cannot receive the reflection because of the disappearance of its clean surface.
- The embryo covered by the womb cannot stretch its legs, nor can it be perceived.
- In the same way, knowledge covered slightly by kāma can grasp something of truth.
- Knowledge covered moderately however cannot grasp the truth.
- Knowledge intensely covered by kāma cannot even function and cannot even be perceived (as knowledge).

## Srila Prabhupada

- There are three degrees of covering of the living entity by which his pure consciousness is obscured.
- This covering is but lust under different manifestations like smoke in the fire, dust on the mirror, and the womb about the embryo.
- When lust is compared to smoke, it is understood that the fire of the living spark can be a little perceived.
- In other words, when the living entity exhibits his Kṛṣṇa consciousness slightly, he may be likened to the fire covered by smoke.
- Although fire is necessary where there is smoke, there is no overt manifestation of fire in the early stage.

# Srila Prabhupada

- This stage is like the beginning of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- The dust on the mirror refers to a cleansing process of the mirror of the mind by so many spiritual methods.
- The best process is to chant the holy names of the Lord.
- The embryo covered by the womb is an analogy illustrating a helpless position, for the child in the womb is so helpless that he cannot even move.
- This stage of living condition can be compared to that of the trees.
- The trees are also living entities, but they have been put in such a condition of life by such a great exhibition of lust that they are almost void of all consciousness.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The covered mirror is compared to the birds and beasts, and the smoke-covered fire is compared to the human being.
- In the form of a human being, the living entity may revive a little Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and, if he makes further development, the fire of spiritual life can be kindled in the human form of life.
- By careful handling of the smoke in the fire, fire can be made to blaze.
- Therefore the human form of life is a chance for the living entity to escape the entanglement of material existence.
- In the human form of life, one can conquer the enemy, lust, by cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness under able guidance.

## Section-V – Beware of Lust and Anger (36-43)

|| 3.39 ||

*āvṛtaṁ jñānam etena  
jñānino nitya-vairiṇā  
kāma-rūpeṇa kaunteya  
duṣpūreṇānalena ca*

The knowledge of the knower (*jñāninaḥ jñānam*) is covered (*āvṛtaṁ*) by this eternal enemy (*etena nitya-vairiṇā*) in the form of lust (*kāma-rūpeṇa*), which is like an unsatisfied fire (*duṣpūreṇa analena*).



## SVCT

- This verse explains that lust is indeed ignorance of the jīva, for it covers the knowledge of the jīva.
- The phrase “eternal enemy” indicates that lust must by all means be killed.
- By this ignorance in the form of lust, compared to an unsatisfied fire, knowledge is covered.
- It is said:

**na jātu kāmahaḥ kāmānām upabhogena śāmyati  
haviṣā kṛṣṇa-vartmeva bhūya evābhivardhate**

As supplying butter to a fire does not diminish the fire but instead increases it more and more, the endeavor to stop lusty desires by continual enjoyment can never be successful. SB 9.19.14

## Srila Prabhupada

- It is said in the Manu-smṛiti that lust cannot be satisfied by any amount of sense enjoyment, just as fire is never extinguished by a constant supply of fuel.
- In the material world, the center of all activities is sex, and thus this material world is called maithunya-āgāra, or the shackles of sex life.
- In the ordinary prison house, criminals are kept within bars; similarly, the criminals who are disobedient to the laws of the Lord are shackled by sex life.
- Advancement of material civilization on the basis of sense gratification means increasing the duration of the material existence of a living entity.
- Therefore, this lust is the symbol of ignorance by which the living entity is kept within the material world.
- While one enjoys sense gratification, it may be that there is some feeling of happiness, but actually that so-called feeling of happiness is the ultimate enemy of the sense enjoyer.

## Section-V – Beware of Lust and Anger (36-43)

|| 3.40 ||

*indriyāṇi mano buddhir  
asyādhiṣṭhānam ucyate  
etair vimohayaty eṣa  
jñānam āvṛtya dehinam*

The senses, mind and intelligence (*indriyāṇi mano buddhih*) are the seats of this lust (*asya adhiṣṭhānam ucyate*). By these (*etaih*), lust, covering the knowledge of the soul (*jñānam āvṛtya dehinam*), bewilders the soul (*vimohayaty eṣa*).

## Baladeva

- Since the enemy lust has gained strongholds, it conquers easily. That is explained in this verse.
- The senses, mind and intelligence become the abodes of lust (adhiṣṭhānam); they become the huge fortified cities of lust, for manifesting kāma through enjoying the sense objects (for the sense), by decision (of the mind) and ascertainment (of the intelligence).
- The senses objects are the citizens of those cities.
- By material senses, mind and intelligence (etaiḥ), wandering here and there for sense objects, lust thus bewilders the jīva, which should know ātmā, but which possesses a body made of matter (dehinam).
- Bewilderment means that lust makes the jīva disinclined to knowing ātmā and inclined to enjoy sense objects.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The enemy has captured different strategic positions in the body of the conditioned soul, and therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is giving hints of those places, so that one who wants to conquer the enemy may know where he can be found.
- Mind is the center of all the activities of the senses, and thus when we hear about sense objects the mind generally becomes a reservoir of all ideas of sense gratification; and, as a result, the mind and the senses become the repositories of lust.
- Next, the intelligence department becomes the capital of such lustful propensities.
- Intelligence is the immediate next—door neighbor of the spirit soul.
- Lusty intelligence influences the spirit soul to acquire the false ego and identify itself with matter, and thus with the mind and senses.
- The spirit soul becomes addicted to enjoying the material senses and mistakes this as true happiness.

## Srila Prabhupada

- This false identification of the spirit soul is very nicely explained in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.84.13):

**yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke  
sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma ijya-dhīḥ  
yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile na karhicij  
janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ**

"A human being who identifies this body made of three elements with his self, who considers the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen, who considers the land of birth worshipable, and who goes to the place of pilgrimage simply to take a bath rather than meet men of transcendental knowledge there, is to be considered like an ass or a cow".

## Section-V – Beware of Lust and Anger (36-43)

|| 3.41 ||

*tasmāt tvam indriyāṅy ādau  
niyamya bharatarṣabha  
pāpmānaṁ prajahi hy enaṁ  
jñāna-vijñāna-nāśanam*

Therefore (*tasmāt*), in the beginning (*ādau*), controlling the senses (*indriyāṅy niyamya*), O best of the Bhāratas (*bharata rṣabha*), kill this demon (*enaṁ pāpmānaṁ prajahi*), which destroys scriptural knowledge and realization (*jñāna-vijñāna-nāśanam*).

## SVCT

- The rule is that, by conquering the shelters of enemy, the enemy can be conquered.
- The shelters of lust are the senses, the mind and intelligence, which are respectively increasing difficult to conquer.
- The senses may be difficult to control, but they are easier to conquer than the other items. Therefore, first the senses should be conquered; you should control the senses.
- Though the uncontrollable mind wants to steal others' wives or properties, one should not engage the senses, by carefully considering the situation of the functioning of the senses such as eyes, ear, hands or feet.
- Kill this ferocious lust (pāpmānam). This means that by restricting the senses, after some time the mind will become freed of lust.



## SVCT

- Note: Previously stopping the senses was not recommended, since the mind still will dwell on sense objects.
- Here Kṛṣṇa is stating that the senses should be controlled by proper engagement, but not stopped, and this will help control the mind from dwelling on enjoyment.
- Mind and intelligence should also be controlled by suitable engagement, but ultimately, if effort is not made to understand the ātmā and develop taste in the ātmā, all endeavors to control senses, mind and intellect will be futile.

## Baladeva

- This enemy in the form of lust by means of the senses inclined to material enjoyment covers the knowledge of the person striving for knowledge of ātmā who attempts to do so by stopping the actions of all the senses.
- Therefore, at the beginning of the dawning of knowledge (adau), after first regulating all the senses by engagement through niskāma karma yoga (niyamya), making them favorable to it, you, who possess a body, mind and senses made of matter, destroy (prajāhi) this evil enemy, lust.
- Do this because this lust covers up knowledge of scripture indicating ātmā distinct from the body (jñāna), and realization of that ātmā (vijñāna).

## Srila Prabhupada

- The Lord advised Arjuna to regulate the senses from the very beginning so that he could curb the greatest sinful enemy, lust, which destroys the urge for self-realization and specific knowledge of the self.
- Jñāna refers to knowledge of self as distinguished from non-self, or in other words, knowledge that the spirit soul is not the body.
- Vijñāna refers to specific knowledge of the spirit soul's constitutional position and his relationship to the Supreme Soul. It is explained thus in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.9.31):  

jñānaṁ parama-guhyaṁ me  
yad vijñāna-samanvitam  
sa-rahasyaṁ tad-aṅgaṁ ca  
gṛhāṇa gaditaṁ mayā

## Srila Prabhupada

- Bhagavad-gītā gives us that general and specific knowledge of the self.
- The living entities are parts and parcels of the Lord, and therefore they are simply meant to serve the Lord.
- This consciousness is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- So, from the very beginning of life one has to learn this Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thereby one may become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious and act accordingly.
- Lust is only the perverted reflection of the love of God which is natural for every living entity.
- But if one is educated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness from the very beginning, that natural love of God cannot deteriorate into lust.

## Srila Prabhupada

- When love of God deteriorates into lust, it is very difficult to return to the normal condition.
- Nonetheless, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so powerful that even a late beginner can become a lover of God by following the regulative principles of devotional service.
- So, from any stage of life, or from the time of understanding its urgency, one can begin regulating the senses in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service of the Lord, and turn the lust into love of Godhead—the highest perfectional stage of human life.

## Surrender Unto Me

- Of the senses, mind and intelligence, the senses are the grossest.
- Being gross, they are the easiest to control.
- Kṛṣṇa therefore recommends that we begin to bring lust under control by regulating the senses.
- This is automatically done through the vaidhi-bhakti process.
- While controlling our senses, however, we should not neglect our intelligence.

## Surrender Unto Me

- The intelligence, like a guard, is the next-door neighbor of the soul, and its business is to protect us from māyā.
- If the guard has been corrupted by lust, however, the situation is as dangerous as when a bodyguard is bribed by the enemy.
- Thus the materially contaminated intelligence, which works in the service of our enemy, should be neglected.
- We should instead accept the intelligence of guru, sādhu and śāstra.

## Section-V – Beware of Lust and Anger (36-43)

॥ 3.42 ॥

*indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur  
indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ  
manasas tu parā buddhir  
yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ*

It is said that the senses are supreme (*indriyāṇi parāṇy āhuh*). But superior to the senses is the mind (*indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ*). Superior to the mind is the intelligence (*manasas tu parā buddhih*). What is superior to the intelligence is the ātmā (*yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ*).



## SVCT

- One should not try to conquer over the mind and intelligence first, because of the impossibility.
- That is conveyed in this verse.
- The senses are considered superior, for they cannot be conquered even by warriors who conquer the ten directions.
- But the mind is superior to the senses as it is even stronger, not being destroyed during dreams when the senses do not function.
- But compared to the mind, the intelligence, with the form of vijñāna, is stronger.
- During deep sleep, even the mind does not function, but the intelligence remains undestroyed, being present in general form.

## SVCT

- But compared to the intelligence, that which is superior in strength, because it exists in you even when intelligence is destroyed by the practice of jñāna, is the famous jivātmā, which is the conqueror of lust.
- After conquering the senses, mind and intelligence, the jivātmā, which is the most powerful than all of them, can conquer lust.
- It is thus understood that is not an impossible task to conquer lust.

## Baladeva

- “You have shown that lust can be destroyed by controlling the senses through inclining them to niṣkāma karma yoga.
- This is like water held back by a closed dam.
- But at the time of performing activities related to the body (while not performing prescribed actions), with the freedom of action for the senses, lust will again revive, like water freed from a dam.”
- The Lord shows in two verses what he taught before in chapter two, that lust will be completely destroyed by realization of ātmā: raso’py asya param dṛṣṭvā (BG 2.59).

## Baladeva

- The wise say that the senses are superior to the body made of five gross elements.
- This is because they are the occupants of the body, they are more subtle, and are not destroyed when the gross body perishes.
- [Note: The senses, as well as being the visible material ones with which we are familiar, also exist in subtle form in the subtle body, and continue with the ātmā, after giving up this material body.]
- The mind is superior to the senses, because the mind sets the senses in motion during the waking state, and during sleep, the mind remains as a ruler, while the senses merge into it.

## Baladeva

- Intelligence is superior to the mind, because the intellect's function of determining truth (niścaya) brings about the mental function of decision (saṅkalpa).
- That which is superior to the intelligence is the jīvātmā residing in the body, whose very form is knowledge, which is realized as distinct from the body, senses, mind and intelligence, and which is the cause of complete destruction of lust.
- The Kaṭha Upaniṣad says:  
**indriyebhyaḥ parā hy arthā arthebhyaś ca param manah  
manasas tu parā buddhir buddher ātmā mahān paraḥ**  
Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.3.10

## Baladeva

- The meaning is as follows.
- The sense objects (arthā) are superior to, or more powerful than the senses because they are able to attract the senses.
- The mind is superior to the sense objects because it is the root of the actions of the senses for sense objects.
- The discerning and confirming intellect is superior to the mind which has doubt, because there must be verification of existence of enjoyment from the sense objects before action takes place.
- The jīva or ātmā, the enjoyer, is superior to the intellect, because it is the means of enjoyment or experience.

## Baladeva

- This ātmā is the master (mahān) of the body, senses and internal functions (antaḥ karaṇa).
- [Note: Thus kāma can be described as a cause of sinful action, but the jīva is the enjoyer of kāma. He is the cause of kāma and its destroyer. Jīva destroys kāma by developing a taste for ātmā and the Lord. Thus the lord is not the cause of sin, nor karma.]
- At the same time, the activities for bodily maintenance will be achieved for the realized soul due to the force of previous practice, (not impelled by a reappearance of lust), like the continued turning of a wheel after it is set in motion.

## Srila Prabhupada

- The senses are different outlets for the activities of lust. Lust is reserved within the body, but it is given vent through the senses.
- Therefore, the senses are superior to the body as a whole.
- These outlets are not in use when there is superior consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- In Kṛṣṇa consciousness the soul makes direct connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore the hierarchy of bodily functions, as described here, ultimately ends in the Supreme Soul.
- Bodily action means the functions of the senses, and stopping the senses means stopping all bodily actions.
- But since the mind is active, then even though the body may be silent and at rest, the mind will act—as it does during dreaming.
- But above the mind is the determination of the intelligence, and above the intelligence is the soul proper.



## Srila Prabhupada

- If, therefore, the soul is directly engaged with the Supreme, naturally all other subordinates, namely, the intelligence, mind and senses, will be automatically engaged.
- In the Kāṭha Upaniṣad there is a similar passage, in which it is said that the objects of sense gratification are superior to the senses, and mind is superior to the sense objects.
- If, therefore, the mind is directly engaged in the service of the Lord constantly, then there is no chance that the senses will become engaged in other ways.
- This mental attitude has already been explained. *param̃ dṛṣṭvā nivartate*. If the mind is engaged in the transcendental service of the Lord, there is no chance of its being engaged in the lower propensities.
- In the Kāṭha Upaniṣad the soul has been described as *mahān*, the great. Therefore the soul is above all—namely, the sense objects, the senses, the mind and the intelligence.

## Srila Prabhupada

- Therefore, directly understanding the constitutional position of the soul is the solution of the whole problem.
- With intelligence one has to seek out the constitutional position of the soul and then engage the mind always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That solves the whole problem.
- A neophyte spiritualist is generally advised to keep aloof from the objects of the senses. But aside from that, one has to strengthen the mind by use of intelligence.
- If by intelligence one engages one's mind in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by complete surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then, automatically, the mind becomes stronger, and even though the senses are very strong, like serpents, they will be no more effective than serpents with broken fangs.
- But even though the soul is the master of intelligence and mind, and the senses also, still, unless it is strengthened by association with Kṛṣṇa in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is every chance of falling down due to the agitated mind.

## Section-V – Beware of Lust and Anger (36-43)

|| 3.43 ||

*evam buddheḥ param buddhvā  
saṁstabhyātmānam ātmanā  
jahi śatruṁ mahā-bāho  
kāma-rūpaṁ durāsadam*

Thus, understanding that the soul is distinct from the intelligence (*evam buddheḥ param buddhvā*), fixing the mind in the soul by the fixed intelligence (*ātmānam ātmanā saṁstabhya*), destroy the enemy (*jahi śatruṁ*) in the form of lust (*kāma-rūpaṁ*), which difficult to conquer (*durāsadam*). O Mighty-armed Arjuna (*mahā-bāho*).

## Baladeva

- By My teaching (evam), realizing (buddhvā) that ātmā, possessing condensed bliss and knowledge, which is distinct from and superior to the intelligence (buddheḥ param), because it sets in motion all material things such as the body, making the mind (ātmānam) fixed in that ātmā of bliss and knowledge by such discerning intelligence (ātmanā), destroy the enemy in the form of lust, even though it is difficult to conquer (durāsadam).
- You are mighty-armed to conquer physically.
- Now you should conquer lust, O mighty-armed Arjuna.
- The third chapter explains that one should principally practice nişkāma karma yoga, and secondarily, jñāna yoga which arises from it, for gaining a vision of the ātmā.

## Srila Prabhupada

- This Third Chapter of the Bhagavad-gītā is conclusively directive to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by knowing oneself as the eternal servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without considering impersonal voidness the ultimate end.
- In the material existence of life, one is certainly influenced by propensities for lust and desire for dominating the resources of material nature.
- Desire for overlordship and for sense gratification is the greatest enemy of the conditioned soul; but by the strength of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can control the material senses, the mind and the intelligence.

## Srila Prabhupada

- One may not give up work and prescribed duties all of a sudden; but by gradually developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one can be situated in a transcendental position without being influenced by the material senses and the mind—by steady intelligence directed toward one's pure identity.
- This is the sum total of this chapter.
- In the immature stage of material existence, philosophical speculations and artificial attempts to control the senses by the so-called practice of yogic postures can never help a man toward spiritual life.
- He must be trained in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by higher intelligence.