

**I. Bhagavān is the shelter of His
mutually conflicting potencies:
LESSON 5, TEXT 12-14**

**IV. Bhagavān's
eternal attributes
constitute His
essential nature—
Māyā feels shy to
appear before
Bhagavān:
LESSON 8,
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**THEME 2:
BHAGAVĀN'S
POTENCIES**

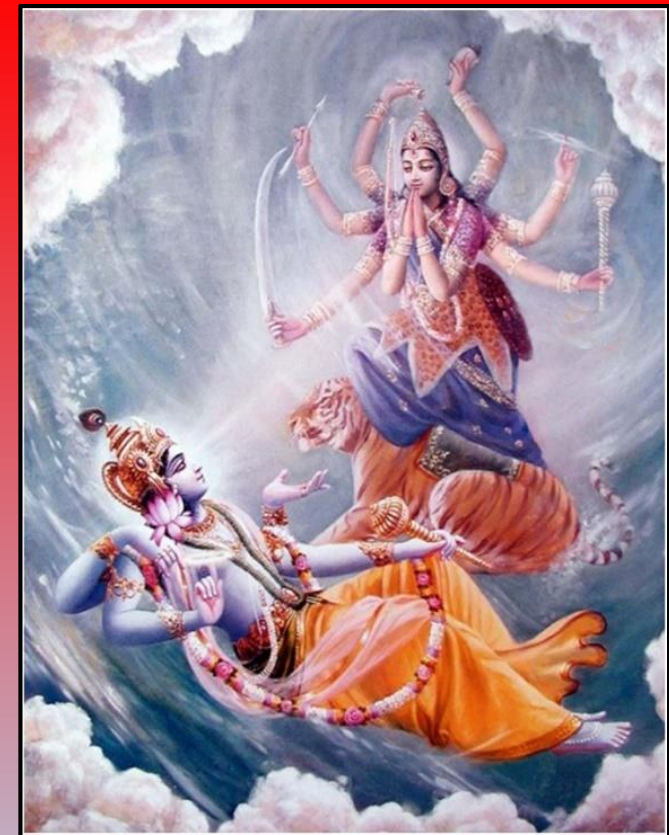
**II. Bhagavān has
both conscious
(*cit*) & inert (*acit*)
potencies, which
are inconceivable
and intrinsic:
LESSON 6, TEXTS
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**III. Bhagavān's external potency, *māyā*'s two divisions—
Jīva- & *guṇa-māyā*: LESSON 7, TEXT 18-23**



***Māyā-śakti* = The Lords power of illusion—Choose between**
← *Yogamāyā* v/s *Mahāmāyā* →
(internal v/s external potency)

TEXT 18: *Māyā*'s two divisions—*Jīva-* & *guṇa-māyā*



TEXT 21-23: *Māyā* is NOT illusory, rather real, gets activated, and controlled by Bhagavān's *cit-śakti*, or internal potency

LESSON

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LESSON 7, TEXT 18-23: Bhagavān's external potency

TEXT 19-20: Internal potency of the Lord is the source of all action

TEXT 18: *Māyā*'s two divisions—*Jīva-* & *guṇa-māyā*

ऋतेऽर्थं यत् प्रतीयेत न प्रतीयेत चात्मनि ।
तद्विद्यादात्मनो मायां यथाऽऽभासो यथा तमः ॥

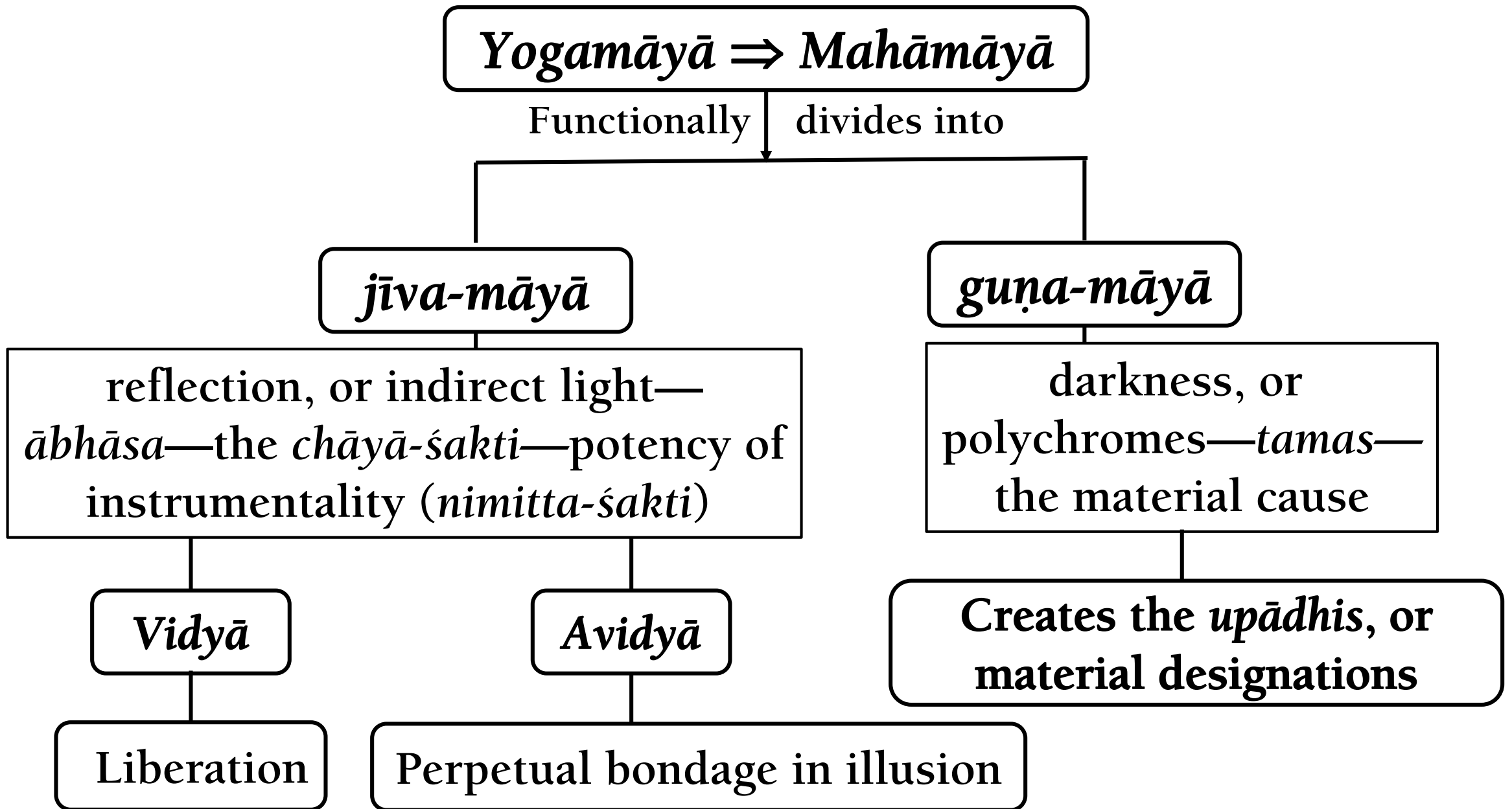
- The Supreme Lord explains *māyā* to Brahmā at the dawn of creation: “That which is perceived only when the underlying essential Reality (*artha*) is not perceived, but which is never perceived in the Self (*ātmani*), you should know to be My *māyā*, manifesting both as a reflection (*ābhāsa-jīva-māyā*) and as darkness (*tamas—guṇa-māyā*).”
- In essence, what the Lord is saying, “*Māyā* is that which is perceived when I am not seen, and is not perceived when I am seen. In other words, it is that which is perceived as external to Me.” [2.9.34]

- Basic characteristics of *Māyā*
 1. Does not exist within or w/out Bhagavān
 2. Exists outside Bhagavān
 3. She is perceived when Bhagavān is not perceived.
- *Māyā* = *aparā-śakti* (inferior) versus the *jīva* = *parā-śakti* (superior), and yet she bewilders the *jīva* ∴ *Māyā* is NOT an illusory potency (rather causes illusion into the Jiva), but real.
- *Māyā* is that “which is not perceived in the Self,” = It does not manifest independently w/out My support. Functionally, it has two divisions, *jīva-māyā* (reflection, or indirect light—*ābhāsa*—the *chāyā-śakti*) & *guṇa-māyā* (darkness, or polychromes—*tamas*).
- “Before creating anything, Brahmā created with the support of *māyā*, from the shadow (*chāyā*), 5 layers of ignorance, namely *tāmisra* (aversion), *andha-tāmisra* (tenacity of bodily existence), *tamas* (ignorance), *moha* (illusion), and *maha-moha* (attachment)” [3.20.18]

- *Jīva-māyā*, the feature of *māyā* that covers the *Jīva*'s true nature, or *svarūpa*: The term *nimittāṁsa*, or being instrumental in covering the *Jīva* with ignorance.
- **However, it is not sufficient to cover consciousness:** To intensify its perpetual bondage in illusion, *māyā* must also provide a material body, senses and sense objects for the *Jīva*'s enjoyment \Rightarrow *Guṇa-māyā*
This is because all this paraphernalia is a transformation of the modes of material nature \Rightarrow *upādāna*, or material aspect because it supplies the material ingredients \therefore the attack of *māyā* is 2-fold—internal & external, which complement and strengthen each other.
- **Analogy:** A man goes to a nightclub \Rightarrow intoxicated (covers his intelligence like *Jīva-māyā*) \Rightarrow allured by the sense objects, such as young, seductively dressed woman (*guṇa-māyā*) \Rightarrow illusion complete

- *Māyā*, although the energy of Bhagavān, is external to, or apart from His internal nature
 - Analogies: i) She is like a skin of a snake just before it is shed \Rightarrow dependent and supported by the snake and grows from its body, yet is inert and external to it. The defects of this shed skin do not reflect in the being of the snake \Rightarrow it is neither one (the snake sheds it and still exists as before) with nor different (because it cannot grow independent of the snake) from the snake; ii) One's finger nails
- *Māyā* = *Yoga-Māyā*—Bhagavān's internal potency. *Mahā-māyā* (operates prior to liberation to lure conditioned souls—takes him away from the Lord) to distinguish from *yoga-māyā* (operates post-liberation—aids in facilitating transcendental pastimes of the Lord with His eternal associates)

- The AT, Lord Kṛṣṇa, refutes ⇒
 - Māyāvāda philosophy that both Īśvara and *jīva* are products of *māyā* and at the absolute level, there is only formless, unqualified Brahman ⇒ *Māyā* is under His support and it is beginningless ⇒ The Lord is the support of both *vidyā* and *avidyā* features of *māyā*.
 - Śākta philosophy postulates Śakti or Devī (*mahā-māyā*) to be the supreme controller, who divides into *puruṣa* & *prakṛti* ⇒ *Devī-Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is in the mode of ignorance as opposed to *SB* being in the transcendental mode ⇒ *Māyā* cannot even face the Lord ⇒ Besides, the names of Devī or Bhagavatī refers to the consort of Bhagavān (the Goddess of internal potency)



TEXT 19-20: Internal potency of the Lord is the source of all action

- Spoken by Nārada Muni to King Citraketu (6.16.23-24)

यन्न स्पृशन्ति न विदुर्मनोबुद्धीन्द्रियासवः
अन्तर्बहिश्च विततं व्योमवत्तन्नतोऽस्म्यहम्
देहेन्द्रियप्राणमनोधियोऽमी
यदंशविद्धाः प्रचरन्ति कर्मसु
नैवान्यदा लौहमिवाप्रतप्तं
स्थानेषु तद् द्रष्टृपदेशमेति

“The Supreme Brahman emanates from the SPG and expands like the sky. Although untouched by anything material, it exists within and without. Nonetheless, the mind, intelligence, senses and living force can neither touch Him nor know Him. I offer unto Him my respectful obeisances.”

“As iron has the power to burn when made red-hot in the association of fire, so the body, senses, living force, mind and intelligence, although merely lumps of matter, can function in their activities when infused with a particle of consciousness by the SPG. As iron cannot burn unless heated by fire, the bodily senses cannot act unless favored by the Supreme Brahman.”

- Now JīvaG explains more explicitly how action in the material world ultimately emanates from Bhagavān's internal potency.
- Cites 6.16.23-24 with Śrīdhara Svāmī's commentary along with support from Upaniṣads, which explains that...
 - A. Both the working and knowledge-gathering senses are unable to perceive the Lord. This is because they lack the capacity to know Him, despite He is all-pervading like the sky.
 - B. The body and senses are inert by nature (cannot perceive anything), being products of *guṇa-māyā*. But when the *jīva* extends consciousness into the inert body and senses including the mind, they can function and perceive their respective sense objects. During an unconscious state in deep sleep, the senses don't perceive their respective objects (sleep is an image of death!)
- The senses acquire their functional capacity from the *jīva*, who is dependent upon God. Nevertheless, even when surcharged by the *jīva* potency, they cannot approach Him. (Analogy: Burning power of an iron rod is derived by being placed in fire, but cannot exceed the source).

- ∴ Material senses cannot know Bhagavān
 - Q: If the *jīva* is a conscious seer, why can't he know God? Because of its limited capacity and being infinitesimal in size
- Bhagavān is the original Seer, and by His power *jīva* can also see
 - Although interdependence of the *jīva* (*ādhyātmika-puruṣa*), the body (*ādhybhautika-puruṣa*), and the presiding deities of the senses (*ādhydaivika-puruṣa*), Bhagavān is the support of everyone, including Himself—the absolute *āśraya-tattva* (TattvaS, texts 58-59)
 - One should not consider oneself the doer (Bg 3.27)
 - Five factors of action—the *jīva* is only one of them (Bg 18.14)
 - The seeing capacity of the seer is not lost even in deep sleep, but still cannot respond even upon being called. This is performed by the Supersoul.
 - It is by the power of Bhagavān that *prakṛti* and her products acquire the energy to execute their functions.

The *jīva* cannot even independently know the material *guṇas*—
He is dependent on Bhagavān for his power of cognition (20)

▪ Dakṣa's *Hamṣ-guhya* prayers offered to the Lord (6.4.25):

देहोऽसवोऽक्षा मनवो भूतमात्रा-
मात्मानमन्यं च विदुः परं यत् ।
सर्वं पुमान् वेद गुणांश्च तज्ज्ञो
न वेद सर्वज्ञमनन्तमीडे

Bhagavān's internal energy is the
fountainhead of all cognitions

“Because the body, the vital force, the external senses, the mind, and the gross & subtle elements are material, they cannot know their own nature, the nature of other senses, nor the nature of their controllers. But the living being can know all these, as well as the 3 qualities. Nevertheless, although he knows these, he is unable to know the omniscient and unlimited Supreme Being, whom I praise”

- The working and cognitive senses can know neither themselves nor the living being because by constitution they are inert instruments—assist the *jīva* its power of perception.
- Just as the senses, body and mind function by the *jīvātmā*, which in turn can only function by being energized by the Lord, but he cannot know God w/out His grace.
- The consciousness of the living being is not always in its normal state—it can be covered by *jīva-māyā* \Rightarrow he is bewildered and cannot properly understand even material nature.
- In citing an Upaniṣadic verse, JīvaG explains that the living being is forgetful of Kṛṣṇa and thinks of himself under illusion as an independent enjoyer and thus falls into duality. Upon taking up *ds*, he is freed of this illusion and abandons duality. The Lord's cognitive potency flows from Him to the living beings.

TEXT 21-23: *Māyā* is NOT illusory but real, gets activated, and controlled by Bhagavān's *cit-śakti*, or internal potency

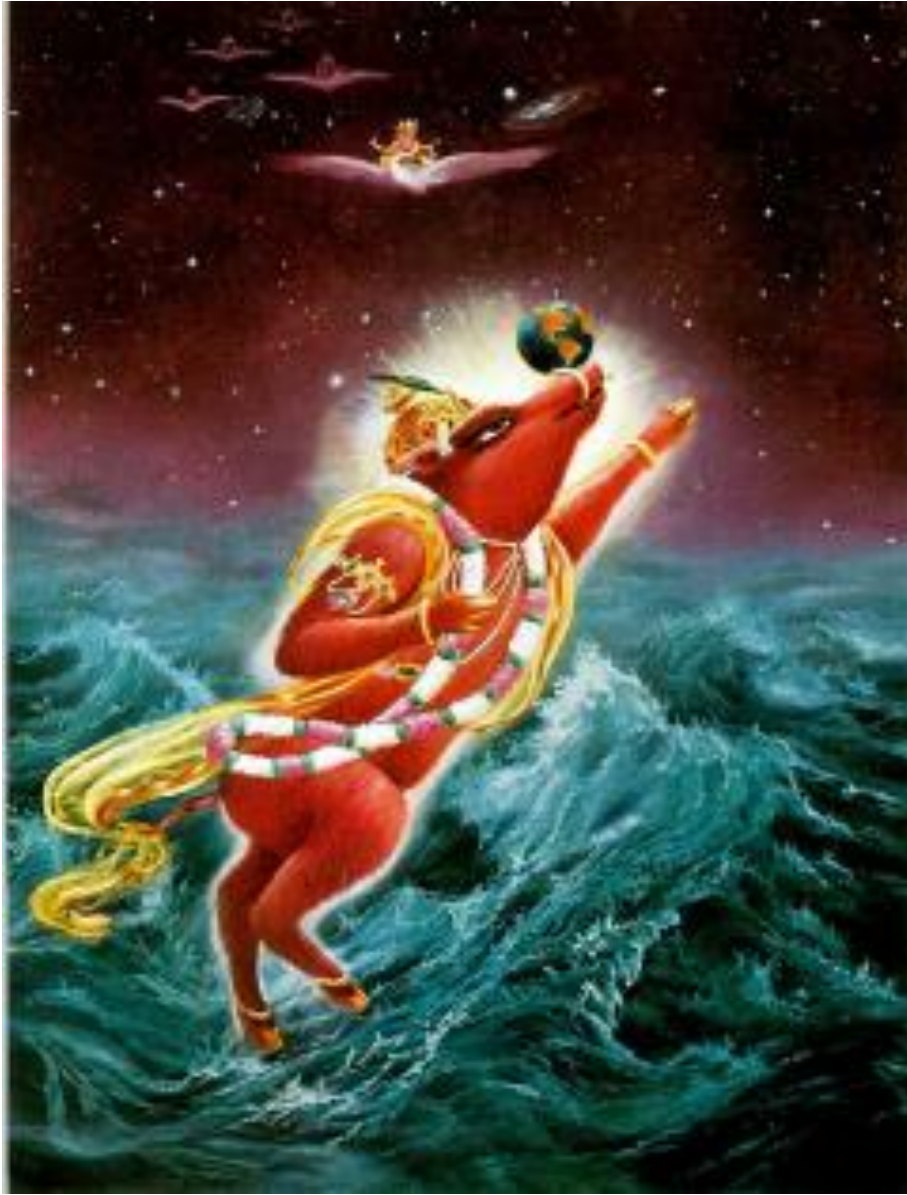
- The internal potency is further explained by describing Bhagavān's feature of controlling *māyā*: Prahlāda Mahārāja prays to Lord Nrsimhadeva (7.9.22)

स त्वं हि नित्यविजितात्मगुणः स्वधाम्ना
कालो वशीकृतविसृज्यविसर्गशक्तिः ।

- “O Supreme Lord, by Your effulgence You have eternally conquered the qualities of the ātmā. In Your form as Time, You keep material cause and effect under Your control.”

***Māyā* is under Bhagavān's control—Śrīdhara Svāmī's comments on this verse (21)**

- Prahlāda says that the Lord controls material nature
- *Sva-dhāmnā* (by Your effulgence) as the Lord's *cit* (conscious or internal) potency, because of which, time (*kāla*) activates *māyā*.
- Ātma here refers to the conditioned *jīva*, who is influenced by the 3 modes of material nature—नित्य-विजितात्मा-गुणः
- Bhagavān is affected by the 3 modes (text 10.3). Although He controls them, He impels them to act through His time potency, which regulates cause and effect.
- This function of time is described by Mother Devakī in her prayers to Kṛṣṇa (10.3.26).
- विसृज्य = material objects; विसर्ग = the means used to produce them



Māyā is activated by Bhagavān (22) The prayers of Mother Earth to Lord Varāhadeva (5.18.38)

करोति विश्वस्थितिसंयमोदयं
यस्येप्सितं नेप्सितमीक्षितुर्गुणैः
माया यथायो भ्रमते तदाश्रयं
ग्राव्णो नमस्ते गुणकर्मसाक्षिणे

“O Lord, You do not desire the creation, maintenance or annihilation of this material world, but You perform these activities for the conditioned souls by Your creative energy. Exactly as a piece of iron moves under the influence of a lodestone, inert matter moves when You glance over the total material energy.”

■ Śrīdhara Svāmī's comments

- Although *māyā* is inert, she carries out the functions of creation and so forth. Text 22 explains how through Mother Earth's prayers
- The Lord has no desire of His own, since He has His personal abode where He sports eternally with His loving devotees.
- Q1) Then why does He create the material world? A1) He desires it for the welfare of the *jīvas*. That is why He glances over *pradhāna*.
- Q2) Does the Lord enjoy watching the *jīva*'s suffering in the material world? A2) Śuka (10.87.2): a) For the *jīva*'s indulgence in sense enjoyment; b) take repeated birth in their pursuit to fulfill their material desires; c) become elevated in future lives; and, ultimately, to attain liberation, which is the true purpose of the cosmic manifestation. The Lord personally descends to teach this message to the conditioned souls. He also provides the Vedic instruction for their welfare.

- Q3) If so, why does He not offer equal opportunity to everyone? Why is it that some enjoy in heaven, while others suffer in hell? A3) The Lord awards results according to individual *karma*. He is not biased. He is not necessarily impersonal or indifferent, however, nor is He bound to deliver the karmic awards or punishments. He provides knowledge of how to become free from suffering, and He certainly favors His devotees, who are obedient and eager to receive His mercy.
- Q4) *Māyā* is inert, so how can she create the cosmos? A4) It is His potency, that activates inert *māyā*, who carries out the functions of creation (*udaya*), maintenance (*sthiti*) and dissolution (*samaya*) by her gunas of *rajas*, *sattva*, and *tamas*, respectively. He does so w/out personal contact with *māyā*; she is energized thru' proximity to Him, simply by His glance (*īkṣitu*), just as magnet moves inert piece of iron. She is impelled by Lord's internal potency and the Supersoul expansion.

Three-fold *māyā* is real—Arjuna’s prayers to Kṛṣṇa [23]

THE KEY VERSE

त्वमाद्यः पुरुषः साक्षादीश्वरः प्रकृतेः परः ।
मायां व्युदस्य चिच्छक्त्या कैवल्ये स्थित आत्मनि

- “You are directly the original person, the Supreme Lord, beyond the material energy. By dint of Your conscious potency, You have cast away the effect of *māyā* and are always situated in Your own Self, the state of absolute unity.” [1.7.23]
- Q1) If the Lord activates *māyā* \Rightarrow He comes in contact with her \Rightarrow How come He is liberated (*kaivalya*)? \Rightarrow Based on impersonal understanding, how it can be said that He enjoys bliss?

- A1) Instead of general translation of *kaivalya* as liberation, here its real import is “free from material contamination.” In this sense, *kaivalya* signifies absolute unity, but w/out denying the existence of Lord’s internal potency. He experiences bliss thru’ His internal potency, which is non-different from the Lord. Analogy: Bhagavān does not contact with *māyā*, but controls her as a magnet manipulates a piece of iron, w/out direct contact and w/out any influence of the iron upon the magnet. The Lord controls her thru’ His expansion, called the Puruṣa, or Paramātmā.
- Q2) If Bhagavān is transcendental and situated in pure bliss, how can He even experience *māyā* to thus control her?
 - A2) Arjuna responds by saying that He presides over *māyā*, having subdued her by His *cit-śakti* ⇒ Proves the existence of His internal potency.

- To further explain *kaivalya*, JīvaG cites the sage Dattātreyā (11.9.18)
 - He is superior to all existence, material & spiritual. He has internal potency; otherwise, there is no need to say that He enjoys supreme bliss.
 - At the time of creation, the Lord destabilizes the 3 modes of *māyā* (*pradhāna*) thru' His unadulterated internal potency (*kevalātmānubhāvena*—the influence of His *cit-śakti* described as His glance), and thus manifests the *mahat-tattva* (sūtra) \Rightarrow activates *māyā*
 - *Guṇa-māyā* = *pradhāna*; Jīva-*māyā* \Rightarrow 3 modes, the presiding deities of which are Bhū, Śrī and Durgā

- Light of a glow worm is insignificant relative to that of the sun \Rightarrow illustrates how the internal energy is superior to the intermediary and external energies (10.13.45)
- *Vaikuṇṭha* is free from any contact with *māyā*.
- The external energy has two division—*Jīva-māyā* & *Guṇa-māyā*
- Each of which have 3 subdivisions according to 3 modes of material nature.
- *Māyā* is real; there is nothing illusory regarding her existence