# THE PROPER MOOD

&

## APPROACH

TO

### **SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM**

# AND

### **SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA**

#### THE PROPER MOOD AND STUDY OF SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM AND SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA

#### When someone leaves the world, we can never have them back. When the Supreme Lord left this earth approximately 5000 years ago, what do we have left now?

The answer to the above question is given very wonderfully by Arjuna in the 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Canto, where he was lamenting the separation of himself from the Lord, who had wound up His eternal pastime and left Dwaraka for His eternal abode.

This is so relevant to us, because, Lord Krsna is not walking the earth now. So how do we keep Him always close to our hearts, in a life filled with anxieties, miseries and lamentation?

Against such a background Arjuna, a pure devotee of the Lord spoke these words; there are as if spoken for us only!

#### 1.15.27

deśa-kālārtha-yuktāni hṛt-tāpopaśamānica harantismarataścittam govindābhihitāni me

#### SYNONYMS

deśa — space; kāla — time; artha — importance; yuktāni — impregnated with; hrt — the heart; tāpa — burning; upaśamāni — extinguishing; ca — and; haranti — are attracting; smarataḥ — by remembering; cittam — mind; govinda — the Supreme Personality of pleasure; abhihitāni — narrated by; me — unto me.

#### TRANSLATION

Now I am attracted to those instructions imparted to me by the Personality of Godhead [Govinda] because they are impregnated with instructions for relieving the burning heart in all circumstances of time and space.

#### **EXCERPTS FROM PURPORT**

"...The merciful Lord left behind Him the great teachings of the Bhagavad-gītā so that one can take the instructions of the Lord even when He is not visible to material eyesight.."

"...All these subject matters are concisely discussed in the Bhagavad-gītā, and later the subject matters are elaborated in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for further enlightenment...."

"... The Bhagavad-gītā begins with the problems of life by discriminating the soul from the elements of matter and proves by all reason and argument that the soul is indestructible in all circumstances and that the outer covering of matter, the body and the mind, change for another term of material existence which is full of miseries. The Bhagavad-gītā is therefore meant for terminating all different types of miseries, and Arjuna took shelter of this great knowledge, which had been imparted to him during the Kurukṣetra battle...

#### 1.15.28

sūtauvāca evamcintayatojisņoņ krsņa-pāda-saroruham sauhārdenātigādhena śāntāsīdvimalāmatiņ

#### SYNONYMS

sūtahuvāca — SūtaGosvāmī said; evam — thus; cintayatah — while thinking of the instructions; jiṣṇoḥ — of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; kṛṣṇa-pāda — the feet of Kṛṣṇa; saroruham — resembling lotuses; sauhārdena — by deep friendship; ati-gāḍhena — in great intimacy; śāntā — pacified; āsīt — itso became; vimalā — without any tinge of material contamination; matih — mind.

#### TRANSLATION

SūtaGosvāmī said: Thus being deeply absorbed in thinking of the instructions of the Lord, which were imparted in the great intimacy of friendship, and in thinking of His lotus feet, Arjuna's mind became pacified and free from all material contamination.

#### **EXCERPTS FROM PURPORT**

"...Arjuna began to think of the Lord's instructions to him on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. Only those instructions began to eliminate the tinges of material contamination in the mind of Arjuna..."

#### 1.15.29

vāsudevāńghry-anudhyānaparibŗmhita-ramhasā bhaktyānirmathitāśeṣakaṣāya-dhiṣaṇo 'rjunaḥ

#### SYNONYMS

vāsudeva-ańghri — the lotus feet of the Lord; anudhyāna — by constant remembrance; paribŗḿhita — expanded; raḿhasā — with great velocity; bhaktyā — in devotion; nirmathita — subsided; aśeṣa — unlimited; kaṣāya — dint; dhiṣaṇaḥ — conception; arjunaḥ — Arjuna.

#### TRANSLATION

Arjuna's constant remembrance of the lotus feet of Lord ŚrīKṛṣṇa rapidly increased his devotion, and as a result all the trash in his thoughts subsided.

#### **EXCERPTS FROM PURPORT**

"...Birth after birth the conditioned soul is entrapped with so many pleasing and displeasing elements, which are all false and temporary. They accumulate due to our reactions to material desires, **but when we get in touch with the transcendental** Lord in His variegated energies by devotional service, the naked forms of all material desires become manifest, and the intelligence of the living being is pacified in its true color. As soon as Arjuna turned his attention towards the instructions of the Lord, as they are inculcated in the Bhagavad-gītā, his true color of eternal association with the Lord became manifest, and thus he felt freed from all material contaminations..."

Why approach SrimadBhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita?

• We study SrimadBhagavatam and Srimad Bhagavad Gita because every word and sloka spoken by Lord Krsna and His pure devotees are pure and transcendental – i.e they are non-different from Lord.

#### 1.6.25

etāvaduktvopararāmatanmahad bhūtamnabho-lingamalingamīsvaram ahamcatasmaimahatāmmahīyase sīrsnāvanāmam vidadhe 'nukampitah

#### **SYNONYMS**

etāvat — thus; uktvā — spoken; upararāma — stopped; tat — that; mahat — great; bhūtam — wonderful; nabhaḥ-lińgam — personified by sound; alińgam — unseen by the eyes; īśvaram — the supreme authority; aham — I; ca — also; tasmai — unto Him; mahatām — the great; mahīyase — unto the glorified; śīrṣṇā — by the head; avanāmam — obeisances; vidadhe — executed; anukampitaḥ — being favored by Him.

#### TRANSLATION

Then that supreme authority, personified by sound and unseen by eyes, but most wonderful, stopped speaking. Feeling a sense of gratitude, I offered my obeisances unto Him, bowing my head.

#### PURPORT

That the Personality of Godhead was not seen but only heard does not make any difference. The Personality of Godhead produced the four Vedas by His breathing, and He is seen and realized through the transcendental sound of the Vedas. Similarly, the Bhagavad-gītā is the sound representation of the Lord, and there is no difference in identity. The conclusion is that the Lord can be seen and heard by persistent chanting of the transcendental sound.

• Because SrimadBhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita alone are the solutions and relief from all threatening and dangerous conditions of material existence

#### 4.30.35

yatredyantekathāmṛṣṭās tṛṣṇāyāḥpraśamoyataḥ nirvairamyatrabhūteṣu nodvegoyatrakaścana

#### SYNONYMS

yatra — where; īdyante — are worshiped or discussed; kathāḥ — words; mṛṣṭāḥ — pure; tṛṣṇāyāḥ — of material hankerings; praśamaḥ — satisfaction; yataḥ — by which; nirvairam — nonenviousness; yatra — where; bhūteṣu — among living entities; na — not; udvegaḥ — fear; yatra — where; kaścana — any.

#### TRANSLATION

Whenever pure topics of the transcendental world are discussed, the members of the audience forget all kinds of material hankerings, at least for the time being. Not only that, but they are no longer envious of one another, nor do they suffer from anxiety or fear.

- Because SrimadBhagavatam is sufficient to bring us back to Krsna
- Because we are with the Lord and serving Him when we are with SrimadBhagavatam and Srimad Bhagavad Gita
- Because SrimadBhagavatam covers everything you need to know in life

• We study the Bhaktivedanta purports of Srila Prabhupada because he is a pure devotee of the Lord, and therefore whatever he has written is more merciful than Lord Himself, because he is showing us the road to the Supreme Lord

#### HOW to study SrimadBhagavatam and Srimad Bhagavad Gita?

The answer is given in **7**ways:

- (a) tat srnvan by hearing
- (b) su- pathan- properly chanting
- (c) vicarana-parah who is serious about understanding
- (d) sraddhaya in earnestness (to hear)
- (e) nityam regularly
- (f) sva- cestitam seriously by one's own endeavour
- (g) Attentively and submissively hear

#### 12.13.18

#### śrīmad-bhāgavatampurāņamamalamyadvaiṣṇavānāmpriyam yasminpāramahamsyamekamamalamjñānamparamgīyate tatrajñāna-virāga-bhakti-sahitamnaiṣkarmyamāviskṛtam tacchṛṇvansu-paṭhanvicāraṇa-parobhaktyāvimucyennaraḥ

#### SYNONYMS

śrīmat-bhāgavatam — Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam; purāņam — the Purāṇa; amalam — perfectly pure; yat — which; vaiṣṇavānām — to the Vaiṣṇavas; priyam — most dear; yasmin — in which; pāramahaḿsyam — attainable by the topmost devotees; ekam — exclusve; amalam — perfectly pure; jñānam — knowledge; param — supreme; gīyate — is sung; tatra — there; jñāna-virāga-bhakti-sahitam — together with knowledge, renunciation and devotion; naiṣkarmyam — freedom from all material work; āviṣkrtam — is revealed; tat — that; śrṇvan — hearing; su-paṭhan — properly chanting; vicāraṇa-paraḥ — who is serious about understanding; bhaktyā — with devotion; vimucyet — becomes totally liberated; naraḥ — a person.

#### TRANSLATION

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the spotless Purāņa. It is most dear to the Vaiṣṇavas because it describes the pure and supreme knowledge of the paramahamsas . This Bhāgavatam reveals the means for becoming free from all material work, together with the processes of transcendental knowledge, renunciation and devotion. **Anyone who seriously tries to understand Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, who properly hears and chants it with devotion, becomes completely liberated.**  śrņvataḥśraddhayānityam grṇataścasva-ceṣṭitam kālenanātidīrgheṇa bhagavānviśatehrdi

#### **SYNONYMS**

śrnvatah — of those who hear; śraddhayā — in earnestness; nityam — regularly, always; grnatah — taking the matter; ca — also; sva-ceṣṭitam — seriously by one's own endeavor; kālena — duration; na — not; ati-dīrghena — very prolonged time; bhagavān — the Personality of Godhead ŚrīKṛṣṇa; viśate — becomes manifest; hṛdi — within one's heart.

#### TRANSLATION

Persons who hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**regularly** and are **always taking the matter very seriously** will have the Personality of Godhead ŚrīKṛṣṇa manifested in their hearts within a short time.

#### 1.1.2

dharmahprojjhita-kaitavo 'traparamonirmatsarāņāmsatām vedyamvāstavamatravastušivadamtāpa-trayonmūlanam śrīmad-bhāgavatemahā-muni-krtekimvāparairīšvarah sadyohrdyavarudhyate 'trakrtibhihśuśrūşubhistat-kṣaṇāt

#### **SYNONYMS**

dharmaḥ — religiosity; projjhita — completely rejected; kaitavaḥ — covered by fruitive intention; atra — herein; paramaḥ — the highest; nirmatsarāṇām — of the onehundred-percent purein heart; satām — devotees; vedyam — understandable; vāstavam — factual; atra — herein; vastu — substance; śivadam — well-being; tāpa-traya threefold miseries; unmūlanam — causing uprooting of; śrīmat — beautiful; bhāgavate — the BhāgavataPurāṇa; mahā-muni — the great sage (Vyāsadeva); kṛte — having compiled; kim — what is; vā — the need; paraiḥ — others; īśvaraḥ — the Supreme Lord; sadyaḥ — at once; hṛdi — within the heart; avarudhyate — become compact; atra herein; kṛtibhiḥ — by the pious men; śuśrūṣubhiḥ — by culture; tat-kṣaṇāt — without delay.

#### TRANSLATION

Completely rejecting all religious activities which are materially motivated, this BhāgavataPurāṇa propounds the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart. The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all. Such truth uproots the threefold miseries. This beautiful Bhāgavatam, compiled by the great sage Vyāsadeva [in his maturity], is sufficient in itself for God realization. What is the need of any other scripture? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of Bhāgavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart.

śrņvataḥśraddhayānityam grṇataścasva-ceṣṭitam kālenanātidīrgheṇa bhagavānviśatehrdi

#### **SYNONYMS**

śrnvatah — of those who hear; śraddhayā — in earnestness; nityam — regularly, always; grnatah — taking the matter; ca — also; sva-ceṣṭitam — seriously by one's own endeavor; kālena — duration; na — not; ati-dīrghena — very prolonged time; bhagavān — the Personality of Godhead ŚrīKṛṣṇa; viśate — becomes manifest; hṛdi — within one's heart.

#### TRANSLATION

Persons who hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam regularly and are always taking the matter very seriously will have the Personality of Godhead ŚrīKṛṣṇa manifested in their hearts within a short time.

#### PURPORT

Cheap devotees or materialistic devotees of the Lord are very much desirous to see the Lord personally without meeting the requisite qualifications. Such third-grade devotees should know well that material attachment and seeing the Lord face to face cannot go together. It is not such a mechanical process that the professional Bhāgavatam reciters can do the job on behalf of the third-grade materialistic pseudodevotee. The professional men are useless in this connection because they are neither self-realized nor interested in the liberation of the audience. They are simply interested in maintaining the material establishment of family attachment and earning some material benefits out of the profession. MahārājaParīkşit had no more than seven days to live, but for others MahārājaParīkşit personally recommends that one hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam regularly, nityam, always by one's own effort and with serious devotion also. That will help one to see the Lord ŚrīKṛṣṇa manifested in one's heart within no time.

The pseudo-devotee, however, is very anxious to see the Lord according to his whims, not making any serious effort to hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam regularly and without detachment from material benefit. That is not the way recommended by an authority like MahārājaParīkṣit, who heard and benefited by hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

#### Practical way to Study SrimadBhagavatam: Sample Verse 2.8.4

- a. <u>First, be serious about chanting the verse properly</u>
  - verse is non-different from Krsna and His Names would you like your name pronounced wrongly?
  - It is a mindset that verses are difficult to pronounce truth is we are careless and not attentive enough
  - Improper pronounciation changes meaning of the verse would Krsna like that?
- b. <u>Second, study the synonyms of each Sanskrit word carefully with the</u> <u>corresponding English meaning</u>
  - Srila Prabhupada did not include the synonyms whimsically or to make SrimadBhagavatam look scholarly
  - The synonyms heighten and deepen our appreciation of the meaning of the verse and its instruction give an example
- c. <u>Third, without looking at the English translation, try to understand the gist of the</u> <u>meaning of the verse ONLY through the synonym</u>

- this helps us to extract the meaning instead of waiting to be spoon fed – this is what SrimadBhagavatam means by "sva-cestitam" – endeavour and "vicarana – parah"

- d. Fourthly, now read and study the English translation
  - by now, if we have studied the synonyms carefully and tried to piece together the meaning, by the time we come to the translation, we would have retained a larger portion of the meaning of the verse, and quite possibly know the Sanskrit and English deeper
  - when reading and studying the translation, we must be in mind 2 things:
- what is the Lord instructing us in the verse, in summary?
- How can Lord's instruction be applied in our individual lives, based on our individual experience?
  - e. <u>Fifthly, study Srila Prabhupada's purport carefully</u>
    - be prepared to read and re-read at least 3 times carefully

- do not be in a rush to finish the purports and verse the whole process can take about 30 minutes if fully concentrating
- Srila Prabhupada's purport will contain the practical answer to applying the verse in our daily lives and answer the doubts in our hearts
- But it will not be apparent until we read re-read and write down the main points that touch our hearts in the purport
- f. <u>Lastly, maintain a notebook systematically writing down Srila Prabhupada's main</u> points in purport and Lord's instructions
- g. Throughout the whole process, do not "think" BUT CONTEMPLATE AND INTROSPECT, CONSIDER AND MEDITATE, AND THE MIND WILLM EVENTUALLY REST ON THE VERSE - just be attentive and submissive i.e accept with faith – if there are doubts - refer back to purport – and Srila Prabhupada and Krsna will speak to you with the answer – or give it to you when you sincerely enquire from Guru or devotees!

#### **CONCLUSION:**

#### **1**. The greatness and glory of Bhagavatam – Transcendental Knowledge

2.3.12

jñānamyadāpratinivrtta-guņormi-cakram ātma-prasādautayatraguņesvasangaņ kaivalya-sammata-pathastvathabhakti-yogaņ konirvrtohari-kathāsuratimnakuryāt

#### SYNONYMS

jňānam — knowledge; yat — that which; ā — up to the limit of; pratinivr,tta — completely withdrawn; guṇa-ūrmi — the waves of the material modes; cakram — whirlpool; ātma-prasādaḥ — self-satisfaction; uta — moreover; yatra — where there is; guṇeṣu — in the modes of nature; asańgaḥ — no attachment; kaivalya — transcendental; sammata — approved; pathaḥ — path; tu — but; atha — therefore; bhakti-yogaḥ — devotional service; kaḥ — who; nirvr,taḥ — absorbed in; hari-kathāsu — in the transcendental topics of the Lord; ratim — attraction; na — shall not; kuryāt — do.

#### TRANSLATION

Transcendental knowledge in relation with the Supreme Lord Hari is knowledge resulting in the complete suspension of the waves and whirlpools of the material modes. Such knowledge is self-satisfying due to its being free from material attachment, and being transcendental it is approved by authorities. Who could fail to be attracted?

#### 2. Krsna – the great wanderer in the Vedic hymns!

5.18.26

antarbahiścākhila-loka-pālakair adrṣṭa-rūpovicarasyuru-svanaḥ saīśvarastvamyaidamvaśe 'nayan nāmnāyathādārumayīmnaraḥstriyam

#### **SYNONYMS**

antah — within; bahih — without; ca — also; akhila-loka-pālakaih — by the leaders of the different planets, societies, kingdoms and so on; adrṣṭa-rūpah — not seen; vicarasi — You wander; uru — very great; svanah — whose sounds (Vedic mantras); sah — He; īśvarah — the supreme controller; tvam — You; yah — who; idam — this; vaśe — under control; anayat — has brought; nāmnā — by different names like brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra; yathā — exactly like; dārumayīm — made of wood; naraḥ — aman; striyam — a doll.

#### TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, just as a puppeteer controls his dancing dolls and a husband controls his wife, Your Lordship controls all the living entities in the universe , such as the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras. Although You are in everyone's heart as the supreme witness and commander and are outside everyone as well, the so-called leaders of societies, communities and countries cannot realize You. **Only those who hear the vibration of the Vedic mantras can appreciate You.** 

**Quotations from HH MahavishnuGosvami on SrimadBhagavatam:** 

- a. Contaminated intelligence means personified anxiety. An due to anxiety we get diseased. The moment we are with Bhagavatam, we are completely out of anxiety.
- b. Please don't use Bhagavatam for your personal name and fame, and ego, to satisfy your senses. Don't hide your agenda under bhakti. We use bhakti to carry out our material plans. That is the embarrassment.
- c. Respect Bhagavatam, and everything else will fall into place. People may demand respect but your first duty is always to Bhagavatam. Apply Bhagavatam to your duties and everyone will be pleased.
- d. Never neglect Bhagavatam, or Bhagavatamwll neglect you.
- e. The more we do service, the more we will be attracted to Bhagavatam. The eagerness to hear about Krsna is the 1<sup>st</sup> qualification to chant His Names.
- f. SrimadBhagavatam in 1 hand and duster in the other!
- g. When attachment is there, then Bhagavatam never sticks in your head. The potency is gained when we renounce. Don't renounce to show, renounce to come to Bhagavatam.
- h. When we are overworked in study of Bhagavatam, then mind becomes our servant.
- i. Obediance is the greatest remembrance of Krsna. If you don't obey, then you cannot remember Him for a single second. You have to abide by the instruction of Bhagavatam, otherwise everything is a show.

"The study of Srimad Bhagavad Gita and SrimadBhagavatam must become our daily appointment with Krsna. We can take up this process only if Krishna gives His sanction for us. When Krishna is extra merciful, He drags us and forces us to hear about Him.We are all waitingfor His mercy. To attract His mercy, we must all conscientiously try to read SrimadBhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita. This is the real mercy of Krishna. Only people who are selected by Krishna can do these things. Apart from this nothing exists. If something is not there in SrimadBhagavatam it is all mental concoction. Hence bury your heads in Bhagavatam. Be selected by Krishna.It is in your hands.When we chant His names, we are selected by Him. He selects and gives us theappointment. Our special appointment is to be with SrimadBhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita. Pleasedon't miss the special appointment with the supreme specialist."

#### All glories to GranthrajSrimadBhagavatam !

#### FAQs:

#### **1.** When to read and study SrimadBhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita?

- Please organize your time around your study of Gita and Bhagavatam and not the other way around and Krsna will give you the time!
- Plan in such a way to put aside set and regular time not haphazard

#### 2. What qualifies me to read SrimadBhagavatam and Gita?

Srila Prabhupada writes in his unparalleled purport in **3.9.39**:

"By the mercy of the Lord, even a layman can compose prayers of the highest spiritual perfection. Such spiritual perfection is not limited by material qualifications but is developed by dint of *one's sincere endeavour* to render transcendental service. *Voluntary endeavour* is the only qualification for spiritual perfection. Material acquisitions of wealth or education are not considered."

### 3. How long will it take for me to study and complete SrimadBhagavatam and Gita?

You will never be able to complete the study of Bhagavatam and Gita! It will take us **forever** to study SrimadBhagavatam and Srimad Bhagavad Gita! This is because, like the Supreme Lord, His teachings and pastimes are eternal – so no matter how many times we hear them, or read or study about them, or take time over them – the effect is the same – i.e it increases our love and devotion to Him and His devotees

### **4.** Can I read and study SrimadBhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita on my own without any help?

Bhagavatam is non-different from the Lord. As you are sincere, in the beginning Lord will guide you through Srila Prabhupada, whose purports are non-different as if he himself is speaking to you.

As you read Bhagavatam, do not forget that you are not reading but hearing from words from the lips of a pure devotee – Srila Prabhupada. When we gain faith and see this perspective -Krsna through paramguru Srila Prabhupada will guide us to take shelter and guidance of devotees and eventually our spiritual masters.

So group discussion on SrimadBhagavatam must be there – in focus – no need for fancy formats and equipment – this is exhibition of our faith. At the same time – we have to flap our own wings – otherwise the formation is disturbed! That is our daily study.

# 5. I do not possess a natural inclination to study and read Bhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita – so can I do other forms of service and leave Bhagavatam and Gita? I am not a good reader, my English is poor and my pronounciation is bad etc.

Srila Prabhupada in his purport to **1.2.12** defines devotional service and gives the answer clearly:

"Devotional service, which is based on the foreground of full knowledge combined with detachment from material association and which is fixed by the aural reception of the Vedanta-sruti, is the only perfect method by which the seriously inquisitive student can realize the Absolute Truth."

### 6. Can I wait till a little later in time when my devotional service is stronger to start reading and studying?

No – please read the above purport again.

No – because Yamaraj is waiting to claim you and he has no mercy when your time is up!

#### 7. But I do not have time to read and study!

\* The Supreme Lord says in Bhagavad Gita **11.32**: "*Time I am, the great destroyer of the worlds, and I have come here to destroy all people. With the exception of you [the Pandavas], all the soldiers here on both sides will be slain."* 

- Krsna is Time if we pray sincerely to Him to give us Time to take shelter of Him by reading and studying Bhagavatam, why will He not oblige us? Krsna is Yogeswara Master of Mystics if He wants He can make 24 hours of our lives feel like 48 hours or 24 hours feel like 12 hours.
- The Devotees who endeavour to use time in Krsna's service by studying Bhagavatam they find that they have MORE time in their hands!

GranthrajSrimadBhagavatam Ki Jai! All glory to Sri Guru and Gauranga!