

OCEAN OF NECTAR

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1. THE YOGA LADDER

Bhagavad Gita is the essence of the Vedas. Previously, we had discussed about how it is the essence of the Vedas. There is a very beautiful verse in Gita Mahatmya, glorification of Srimad Bhagavad Gita and it says: *sarvopanishado gavo dogdha Gopalanandana parthovatsa sudheerbhoktha dugdham gitamrutam mahat*. All the Upanishads are compared to a cow, Krishna the cowherd boy milked that cow for the sake of the calf Arjuna. The milk that was received from that cow is the nectar of Bhagavad Gita. The real intelligent class of people relish this Bhagavad Gita. So, those of you who are coming from India, they know the glory of Bhagavad Gita. Now the importance of Bhagavad Gita is being appreciated all over the world. We in ISKCON have translated Srila Prabhupada's Bhagavad Gita as it is in more than forty languages. And we have distributed over twenty million Bhagavad Gitas all over the world. This shows how Bhagavad Gita is being appreciated all over the world and how Bhagavad Gita's glory is being spread all over the world. Actually, the way to perfect the human form of life is recognizing the importance of spiritual involvement. Spiritual life is the ultimate goal of human life. What do we mean by spiritual? There are two things that are existing side by side in this world: one is matter, this is the world of matter; matter is inert; matter is dead but we are living. Why are we alive although our bodies are made of matter? Why this body made of dead matter is alive? Because the soul is there in this body. This is the most important thing to recognise. It's a very simple consideration. In India, practically everyone knows the body is alive because of the presence of the soul. In every single culture actually they recognise that because when somebody dies even in English we say, "He passed away." The body is lying here but we say he passed away. Why? Who passed away? The answer to this question is very simple. The soul. The soul passed away and that is why the body is dead. The body to begin with is dead, made of dead matter but because of the presence of the soul the body was alive and conscious and as soon as the soul leaves the body, the body becomes dead.

So, this is the first lesson we receive from Bhagavad Gita. Krishna is giving us the proper understanding of the soul. The soul is non material, the soul is spiritual. Soul is not a product of matter. Soul is

THE YOGA LADDER



not a product of some material combination of matter some chemicals came together under certain temperature and pressure and then all of a sudden life evolved. No! That is not the right conclusion. The right understanding is that the presence of the soul makes the body alive and wherever there is life there is the soul. Whether its an insect, tree, reptile, bird, animal or human being, whoever is alive and wherever there is life there is soul. So, the informations about the soul has been provided in scriptures like Bhagavad Gita. In Bhagavad Gita, very systematically this knowledge has been imparted. Like in Bhagavad Gita we get to know the nature of the soul. The nature of the soul is *na jayate mriyate va kadacin* the soul is never born, soul never dies, so this is the nature of the soul. The soul is indestructable and imperishable. Gradually Krishna is giving more and more informations. The soul is part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The soul is the minute, insignificant, atomic part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and in this way a very beautiful example has been given: the Sun and the rays of the Sun. If the Sun is compared to the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is the source of all souls then the souls are like the rays that are coming from the Sun. Qualitatively the rays are similar to the Sun but quantitatively the soul is different from the Sun. In this way we get to understand the nature of the soul.

The soul is a part and parcel of Supreme Personality of Godhead therefore we have two considerations: jivatma and Paramatma, the minute soul and the Supreme Soul. So in this way the living entity's identity has been established in Bhagavad Gita. The the consideration is Bhagavad Gita is dealing with five different aspects: jivatma (living entity), Isvara (Supreme Personality of Godhead), Prakrti (material nature), Karma (activity, how a living entity should become involved in the material nature and what is the result of the living entity's involvement in the material nature) and Kala (time). So these are the five different aspects that have been discussed in Bhagavad Gita. Karma is a very important consideration. So Bhagavad Gita initially is dealing with karma, the action reaction principle. What happens when one becomes active in this material nature? When one becomes active in the material nature then his action generates reaction. He becomes responsible to that action. As you sow so shall you reap. We get this concept in the Bible also, as you sow so shall you reap. As you act accordingly you will get the result. We can even stretch it to Newton's law of motion to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. So to every action there is a reaction and the reaction will be accordingly. If you act in a right way the reaction will be beneficial or pleasing. When you act in a wrong way the reaction will be distressful, painful or miserable. Therefore the Vedas are giving instruction, "Don't act in a wrong way but act in a right way." What is the right action? The right action is first of all the action that will generate good reaction. What is the right action? Abide by the law. What is the wrong action? Break the law and if you break the law you are susceptible to punishment and if you properly follow the rules and regulations, the law then you will benefit and get the result accordingly. So these are common sense consideration, don't act in a wrong way, don't tell a lie, don't steal, don't hurt anybody, don't cause pain to others. Because if you do that there will be opposite reaction. You hurt somebody you will become susceptible to get hurt. You kill an animal the animal will kill you. That's the law, therefore don't cause pain to anyone else. How should one act? The final consideration Krishna is giving: BG 9.27

*yat karosi yad asnasi
yaj juhosi dadasi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya
tat kurusva mad-arpanam*

TRANSLATION

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform—do that, O son of Kunti, as an offering to Me.

yat karosi yad asnasi whatever you do, *yaj juhosi dadasi yat* even whatever you eat. We eat it is preferable that we offer the food to Krishna first and then it becomes His Prasad *yad asnasi* then you eat that Prasad. So that's the right way to act. *yaj juhosi* you perform sacrifices yajna, do it for Krishna. *dadasi yat* you give in charity, give in charity for the purpose of promoting or helping Krishna Consciousness. *yat tapasyasi* whatever austerities you perform and *tat kurusva mad-arpanam* do all that for My sake. Simple advise Krishna is giving. Why? Because if we act for our own sake then we will be responsible for that reaction but if we act on behalf of Krishna then

Krishna will take the reactions. An example: A soldier on behalf of the King fights the battle and kills many many enemies and when he comes back after the battle the King rewards him. The same soldier kills one person on his own the same King who rewarded him for killing so many enemies the same King punishes him. Why? Because the other action was on behalf of the King whereas this action was out of his own volition. Because he acted on his own for his own sake therefore he is responsible to the reaction, whereas when he acted on behalf of the King then the King actually takes the reaction. Similarly, when we act on behalf of the King of Kings, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whatever we do He actually frees us from the reaction, not only frees us from the reaction but He rewards us. In simple words when we act on behalf of Krishna, Krishna rewards us.

Come to think of it, in all religion that same understanding has been given. "Oh Lord give us our daily bread", the Christians are praying, as a Christian we are praying that because you are recognising that the bread is coming as the mercy of the Lord and we are expressing our gratitude. Amen. "Oh Lord You are being so kind to me that You are giving me everything I need. You are giving me the food to eat, You are giving the water to drink, You are giving the oxygen to breath." These are all the arrangements of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Otherwise consider who can make such an arrangement? We are taking oxygen and giving out carbon dioxide. If this process continued the whole atmosphere would have been filled with carbon dioxide but did it ever happen? No. Why not? Because the trees and plants are taking carbon dioxide and giving back oxygen. Now tell me can this be an accidental phenomena? No. This is the arrangement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He made this arrangement. While He made us, He made the trees and plants and our sustenance is depending on the trees and plants. We need food, who is providing the food? Trees and plants. You may say ok, what about those who eat animals? Well the animals are sustained by eating the grass or other vegetables so ultimately it all goes back to that source. Trees and plants are the arrangement of the Lord to provide for everything that we need. Similarly, He is arranging our breathing process, the arrangement is through trees and plants, we are giving out carbon dioxide, trees and plants are taking the carbon dioxide and giving us back the oxygen. So in this way we can see how beautifully the Lord has made all the arrangements. It's simply a matter of becoming aware of it and in order to become aware, the informations have to be provided. Unfortunately, these informations are not been provided in schools, colleges and universities therefore we have to take up the responsibility to distribute this knowledge.

ISKCON, The International Society for Krishna Consciousness that was founded by His Divine Grace A. C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada most probably you know about Srila Prabhupada. At the age of seventy He left Vrindavan as a sanyasi and came to America to distribute this knowledge. In 1965, He came to America at the age of seventy and He was penniless He didn't have any money. His only purpose was He felt the need to give this knowledge for the benefit of mankind and the young American girls and boys responded. They saw the importance of this knowledge they saw that this really makes sense. Never ever had they heard of such clear understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and our relationship with Him. So it made sense and they responded to that so much so that they completely committed themselves to this mission. These young American boys and girls went to different corners of the world assisting Srila Prabhupada to distribute this knowledge. And as a result of that in ten years time this Krishna Consciousness movement which is actually the essential manifestation of the Vedic wisdom, this knowledge has spread all over the world. People are benefitting so many thousands and thousands of people all over the world are recognizing the importance of this knowledge.

So, in Bhagavad Gita, initially Krishna is dealing with Karma Yoga. Bhagavad Gita basically deals with three aspects, three types of yoga: Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. The word Yoga means the way to become connected to the Lord. The process of becoming connected and there are three ways we can become connected: Karma yoga by offering our karma to Him; Jnana yoga by understanding the spiritual reality, our spiritual identity and our spiritual relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So when this Jnana or knowledge is received then one recognizes the importance of being engaged in developing his loving relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that is called Prema Bhakti or Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti, the word is coming from the root word bhaj, bhaj means to serve. What kind of service? When we express our love through some action that is called bhajan. When that action is directed to the Supreme Personality

of Godhead then it is called Bhakti. So when one becomes situated in proper spiritual understanding then he automatically develops his loving relationship with the Lord and becomes engaged in serving Him. Real love is expressed through service. Mother loves the child, how many times does the mother say I love you, I love you, I love you? But twenty four hours a day the mother is engaged in serving the child. Although she may not tell the child I love you but all her heart's feelings are projected to the child through the actions and that is the real manifestation of love. So, we have to develop our loving relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Again, we can also go back to Christianity, what is the first principle of Christianity, what is the first principle that Jesus established? Love thy father, love thy God with all thy heart and soul. Love thy father, He is our Supreme father because we all came from Him. So, we naturally have to love Him and through that love our existence becomes fulfilled. Similarly, when you go to the Vedic concept we are coming to the same principle. *Krishna prema prayate, Krishna prem.* Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead not because He is just one Indian person. God is God whether He is in India, America or China or in whichever country. He is one who is the Supreme creator, the Supreme maintainer. Supreme, He is the Supreme Personality, the understanding of Supreme is no one is equal to Him or no one is Superior to Him, that is the meaning of Supreme. He is the Supreme. So that is how our relationship with Him becomes established. He is the Supreme therefore we must surrender unto Him and it begins with our action. We can either act for our own sake or we can act for His sake. We can act either to gratify our senses, enjoy through our senses or we can act in order to give pleasure to His senses. And when we become engaged in giving pleasure to His senses then that is called Bhakti. The definition of Bhakti therefore is *hrisikena hrsikesa sevanam bhaktir ucyate*, when the senses are engaged in serving or giving pleasure to the master of the senses, Lord of the senses *hrsikesa*, that is called Bhakti. So anyway, we will discuss more on this topic, we are gradually going to unfold Bhagavad Gita unto all of you and I hope you will benefit and if you want we will give you our email address, contact address so please communicate with us. If you have any question we will answer them. Thank you all very much. *vancha-kalpatarubhyas ca krpa-sindhubhya eva ca patitanam pavanebhyo vaisnavebhyo namo namah.*

2.

SRILA PRABHUPADA APPRECIATION

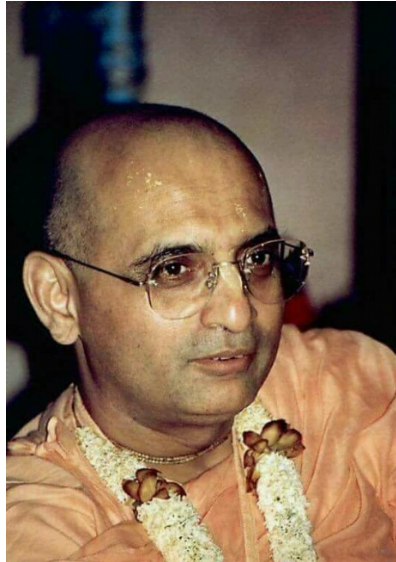


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essential manifestation of the Vedic wisdom, this knowledge has spread all over the world. People are benefitting so many thousands and thousands of people all over the world are recognizing the importance of this knowledge.

3.

GURU MAHARAJA'S INSTRUCTIONS



- ❖ The real intelligent class of people relish this Bhagavad Gita;
- ❖ Actually, the way to perfect the human form of life is recognizing the importance of spiritual involvement;
- ❖ Spiritual life is the ultimate goal of human life;
- ❖ Why are we alive although our bodies are made of matter? Why this body made of dead matter is alive? Because the soul is there in this body. This is the most important thing to recognize;
- ❖ Therefore the Vedas are giving instruction, "Don't act in a wrong way but act in a right way;
- ❖ Don't act in a wrong way, don't tell a lie, don't steal, don't hurt anybody, don't cause pain to others;
- ❖ Simple advise Krishna is giving. Why? Because if we act for our own sake then we will be responsible for that reaction but if we act on behalf of Krishna then Krishna will take the reaction;
- ❖ In simple words when we act on behalf of Krishna, Krishna rewards us;
- ❖ Unfortunately these informations are not been provided in schools, colleges and universities therefore we have to take up the responsibility to distribute this knowledge.
- ❖ When we express our love through some action that is called bhajan. When that action is directed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead then it is called Bhakti; and
- ❖ Real love is expressed through service.

(The content of this E-magazine was based a lecture given by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami on 26 May 2018 at Deland, Florida)

(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)