

## INTRODUCTION TO GEETOPANISHAD

by

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The Bhagavad-Gita is also known as Geetopanishad. It is the essence of Vedic knowledge and one of the most important Upanishads in Vedic literature.

There are many commentaries on the Bhagavad-Gita in English, and the necessity for another English edition should be explained on the following basis: an American lady asked me to recommend an English edition of the Bhagavad-Gita which she could read. I was unable to do so in good conscience. Of course, there are many English editions of the Bhagavad-Gita, but of those I have seen-- not only in America, but also in India-- none can be said to be authoritative, because in almost every one of them, the author has expressed his personal opinion through the commentaries without touching the spirit of Bhagavad-Gita as it is.

The spirit of Bhagavad-Gita is mentioned in the Bhagavad-Gita itself. It is like this: if we want to take a particular medicine, then we have to follow the directions written on the label of the bottle. We cannot take the medicine according to our own directions, or the directions of a friend not in knowledge of this medicine. We must follow the directions on the label or the directions of our physician. The Bhagavad-Gita also should be accepted as it is directed by the speaker Him-

self. The speaker is Lord Sri Krishna. He is mentioned on every page as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or Bhagavan. Bhagavan sometimes means any powerful person or demi-god, but here it means Krishna. This is confirmed by all the great acharyas, including Shankara and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. In India there are many authorities on Vedic knowledge, and they have virtually all accepted Sri Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord, Himself, also says in Bhagavad-Gita, that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. We should therefore accept Bhagavad-Gita as it is directed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Himself.

Now, in the Fourth Chapter, the Lord tells Arjuna that this yoga system of the Bhagavad-Gita was first spoken to the Sun God.

"Imam vivasvate yogam proktavan aham avyam  
Vivasvan manave praha manuriksakave vravit.  
Evam parampara praptam imam rajassaya viduh  
Sakalena mahata yoga nastah paramptapa." (IV, 1-2)

The Lord said, "My dear Arjuna, formerly I spoke this devotional service of Bhakti yoga to the Sun God. The Sun God told it to Manu and Manu told it to King Iksaku. Thus all the saintly kings learnt this process of transcendental science of linking with the Supreme by such disciplic succession called parampara, but at the present moment this chain of disciplic succession or teaching the science from authority to authority appears to be

missing or lost."

The clear direction is that the Bhagavad-Gita has to be understood through the chain of disciplic succession and not by personal interpretation as it has been in this modern age. Sri Krishna is here to re-establish this line of disciplic succession. Arjuna was chosen because, "You are my devotee and My friend; therefore, only you can understand." Therefore the Bhagavad-Gita is especially meant for the devotee of the Lord.

"Sa eve ayam amya te adya yoga proktah puratanah  
Bhaktahasi me sakha ca iti rahasyam hi etad uttamam."  
(BG IV 3)

"That oldest form of yoga system which was spoken to the Sun God some millions of years before is now spoken to you again because you are My devotee and friend. Therefore you can understand the great mystery of this science of Bhakti yoga."

Arjuna was neither a great scholar nor a Vedantist, but a great soldier. A soldier is not supposed to be scholarly, and yet Arjuna was selected to understand the Bhagavad-Gita because of one qualification only: he was a devotee of the Lord. This indicates that the Bhagavad-Gita is especially meant for the devotee of the Lord.

There are three kinds of transcendentalists: the yogi, the impersonalist, and the bhakta, or devotee. Krishna says to Arjuna, "I am making you the first man of the disciplic succession. The old succession is broken. I wish to re-establish the line of teaching which was passed down from the Sun God. So you

become the authority of the Bhagavad-Gita" The Bhagavad-Gita is directed to the devotee of the Lord, who is directly in touch with the Lord as a friend. To learn the Bhagavad-Gita one should be like Arjuna: a devotee having a direct relationship with the Lord.

A devotee can be in relationship with the Lord in five different ways:

1. He may have a passive relationship;
2. He may have an active relationship;
3. He may be in friendship;
4. He may have the relationship of a parent;
5. He may have the relationship of a conjugal lover of the Lord.

Arjuna was a devotee in relationship with the Lord as a friend. This friendship is different from friendship in the mundane world. This kind of friendship is transcendental. Everyone has some relationship with the Lord. Unfortunately, in our present status, we have forgotten our eternal relationship with the Lord. Yet, each of the millions upon millions of living beings has a particular relationship with Him. By the process of service one can revive one's original relationship with the Lord.

Now, Arjuna was a devotee and he was in touch with the Supreme Lord in Friendship. Thus, the Bhagavad-Gita was explained to him. How he accepted it should be noted. This is mentioned in the Tenth Chapter. After hearing the Bhagavad-Gita from the Lord, Arjuna accepted Krishna as the



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Supreme Brahman. Every living being is Brahman, but the Supreme Living Being is the Supreme Brahman. Arjuna accepted Krishna as pure-- free from all material contamination; as the Supreme Enjoyer, as the foremost Person; the Supreme Personality of Godhead; never born; and greatest. Now, one may say that, because Krishna and Arjuna were friends, Arjuna was only saying these things to his friend. Therefore, Arjuna mentions that Krishna is accepted as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, not only by himself, but by Narada, Vyasa, and numerous other great persons.

Therefore, Arjuna says, "Whatever You have spoken to me, I accept as perfect. Your personality is very difficult to understand. You cannot be known even by the demi-gods." This means that even persons greater than human beings cannot know Krishna. How then, can a human being know Krishna, unless he is a devotee?

In studying Bhagavad-Gita, one should not think that he is the equal of Krishna. Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One who wants to understand Bhagavad-Gita should accept Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Otherwise it is very hard to understand, and it becomes a great mystery.

This Bhagavad-Gita is meant for delivering persons from the nescience of this material entanglement. Everyone is in difficulty, just as Arjuna was on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Not only Arjuna, but each of us is full of anxieties because of this material entanglement. Our existence is eternal, but somehow we are put into this position which

is asat. Asat means unreal.

Unless one is inquiring as to why he is suffering, he is not a perfect human being. Humanity begins when this inquiry is awakened in the mind. Every activity of the human being is said to be a failure unless this inquiry is present in the mind. One should ask, "Where am I from? Where am I going? Why am I here?" When these inquiries are awakened in the mind of a sane human being, then he can understand Bhagavad-Gita. He must also have respect for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Krishna comes here just to establish the real work of life, which man forgets. Out of many, many human beings who awaken, the Bhagavad-Gita is directed to the one who seeks to understand his position. The Lord has great mercy for human beings. Therefore, He spoke the Bhagavad-Gita to Arjuna to enlighten him. Arjuna was actually above all such ignorance, but he was put into ignorance on the battlefield of Kurukshetra just <sup>to</sup> ask what life was all about, so that our mission of human life can be perfected.

It is the preliminary study of the Science of God which is explained here. The first question is; What is the cause? Next what is the constitutional position of the living entities, or Jiva, in respect to the controller, or Iswara. Living entities are not Iswara. If I say, "I am not controlled, I am free," I do not speak well for my sanity. In this conditioned state of life, at any rate, we are all controlled. Next we may consider prakriti, or nature. Then time-- the duration of the existence or manifestation of this created universe. Then karma, or activity. The living beings

are all engaged in different activities. All cosmic manifestation is engaged in activity. So, we have to learn from Bhagavad-Gita what God is. What is the nature of Jiva, living entities? Their relationship with Iswara, the Supreme Controller? What is prakriti, the cosmic manifestation? What is the control of Time, and what are the activities of the living entities?

In the Bhagavad-Gita it is established that the Supreme Godhead, or Krishna, or Brahman or whatever you like-- the Supreme Controller-- is greatest of all. The living beings are controlled. The Lord has control over universal affairs -- the material nature. Material nature is not independent. It is working under the direction of the Supreme Lord. When we see wonderful things happening, we should know that behind these manifestations, there is a Controller. Matter belongs to the inferior prakriti; and the living entities are explained as superior prakriti. Prakriti means "who is controlled." Prakriti is female. Like a husband controls the activities of his wife, prakriti is also subordinate, predominated. The Lord-- the Supreme Personality of Godhead-- is the predominator, and prakriti-- the living entities and material nature-- is predominated. So, according to the Bhagavad-Gita the living entities, although they are part and parcel of the Supreme, are taken as prakriti. It is clearly mentioned in the Seventh Chapter of Bhagavad-Gita that this material nature is prakriti and that the living entities are also prakriti. The constitution of the material, or inferior prakriti, is divided into three modes: the mode of goodness,

the mode of passion, and the mode of ignorance. Above these modes is eternal Time. By the combinations of these modes and the control of eternal Time, the activities, called karma, come into being. These activities have been going on from time immemorial, and we are suffering from, or enjoying the fruits of these activities, just as in the present life we enjoy the fruits of our activities. It is as though I am a business man who has worked very hard and intelligently and have amassed a large bank balance. I am the enjoyer of the fruits of my activities. Again, if I open a business with a large amount of money and lose it all, I am the sufferer. Similarly, in the field of life, we enjoy the different fruits of our work. Now, these things-- Iswara, the Supreme Lord, jiva the living entities, prakriti or nature, Time, and karma are explained in the Bhagavad-Gita.

Of these five, the Lord, Time, and the living entity are permanent and eternal. The manifestations of Prakriti are temporary, but not false, as some philosophers say. According to the philosophy of the Vaishnavas, the manifestations are quite real, but temporary. They are like the clouds which appear during the rainy season, but disappear during the dry season. These manifestations occur at certain intervals and then they disappear and the vegetation dries up. Nevertheless, this process of Nature is working eternally.

Material nature is separated energy of the Supreme Lord. The living entities are also <sup>the</sup> energy of the Lord, but they are not separated. They are eternally related with the Lord. So, the Lord, Nature, the entity and Time are all eternal. Karma is not

eternal. The effects of karma may be old, and we may be suffering from the results of activity performed from time immemorial, but we are able to change our activities. We simply do not know which activities will give us release from these material entanglements, but this is explained in the Bhagavad-Gita.

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The position of Iswara is that of Supreme Consciousness. The entities, being part and parcels, are also consciousness. The entity is explained as prakriti, or Nature, and so also is material energy. But the living entities are conscious, and matter is not. Therefore, the jiva is called the higher energy. But the jiva is never supremely conscious at any stage. The Supreme Consciousness, explained in the Bhagavad-Gita as the Lord, is conscious, and the living beings are conscious. The jiva is conscious of his limited body, but the Lord is infinitely conscious. The Lord lives in the heart of every being. Therefore, he has the consciousness of all living entities.

The paramatam is living in each heart as the controller.

He is giving directions to act as He desires. The living entity, however, forgets what to do. He determines to act in one way, then becomes entangled in his own actions and reactions and achieves only frustration. When he gives up one body for another, as one changes a dress, the reactions of his past activities remain with him, determining his next birth. Actions can be changed when a living being is in goodness, and, in that state of sanity, he chooses to end his entanglement.

So, of the five items, all are eternal, except karma. Now, the entity's consciousness and the Lord's consciousness are both transcendental. They are not generated by association with matter. The theory that some material combination can generate consciousness is reflected in Bhagavad-Gita. Just as a light may be reflected according to the color of the glass, consciousness is reflected in the material world. But it does not depend upon matter for its existence.

The Supreme Consciousness, Iswara, is different from consciousness of the living entity in this way: the Supreme Lord says that when He descends into the material world, His consciousness is not materially affected. If He had been contaminated by contact with matter, He could not have spoken Bhagavad-Gita. However, we living entities are contaminated by the material world. The Bhagavad-Gita teaches that we must purify our activities in order to draw our consciousness back from material entanglement. This purification of activity is called bhakti. Bhakti means that, although one's activities appear to be ordinary, they are actually purified. One

may appear to work like an ordinary man, but the activities of a devotee of the Lord are not contaminated by the three gunas, or modes.

When our consciousness is contaminated by matter, this is called our conditioned state. The false ego is the belief that one is the product of this matter. One who is absorbed in this bodily conception, as Arjuna was, must get free from it. This is a preliminary for one who wants liberation. Freedom from this material consciousness is called mukti. In Srimad Bhagavatam, also, mukti is used to mean liberation from this material concept and to return to pure consciousness. The whole aim of Bhagavad-Gita is to teach us to reach this state of pure consciousness. On the last page of Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna asks Arjuna if he is now in purified consciousness. This implies action in accordance with the directions of the Lord.

So, consciousness is there, but because we are only parts, we tend to be affected by the modes of Nature. That is the difference between the individual living entities and the Supreme Lord. In contamination, consciousness says, "I am the Lord. I am the enjoyer." Every material being thinks this. Consciousness has two psychic divisions. One says, "I am the Creator," and the other says, "I am the Enjoyer." Actually, the Lord is the Creator and the Enjoyer. The entity co-operates like a part in a machine. In the body, for example, there are hands, legs, eyes, <sup>etc.</sup> ~~etc.~~ But these parts are not the enjoyers. The stomach is the enjoyer. All the parts of the body are <sup>en</sup> ~~en~~gaged in satisfying the stomach. Everything

should be given to the stomach. You can become healthy throughout your entire body when the parts of the body co-operate with the stomach. Similarly, the Lord is the enjoyer and we living beings have only to co-operate with Him. If the fingers try to enjoy the food, they are unable. They must give the food to the stomach in order to receive the benefit of it.

The central figure in existence is the Supreme Lord. The entities, by cooperation, can enjoy. If a master is satisfied, his servants are also satisfied, of course. The entities have this tendency to create and enjoy because the Lord has it, and the entities are His parts and parcels.

We find, in Bhagavad-Gita, that the Lord, the entities, manifestation, Time and action are completely explained. Taken together, this complete whole is called the Absolute Truth, Sri Krishna. The Impersonal Brahman is also subordinate to the Complete Person. It is explicitly explained in the Brahma Sutra as being like the rays of the sun emanating from the sun disc. Brahman realization of the Absolute Truth is therefore incomplete. The Supreme Personality is above Brahman. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is called Sat-Chit-Ananda.

Brahman realization is realization of His Sat, or eternity feature. Paramatman realization is realization of His Sat-Chit aspect-- eternity and knowledge. But, realization of the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, is realization of all features-- Sat-Chit-Ananda-- in full viraha, or form. The Lord has Form. He is a transcendental person. This is confirmed in all Vedic literature. Just as we are persons,



so is the Ultimate Truth. Realization of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is realization of all the features of the Absolute Truth. The complete whole Personality must have all that we see and all that we do not see.

This phenomenal world is also complete by itself. The twenty-four elements of which this manifestation is comprised are complete in this universe. No further outside energy is needed. When the time is complete, the universe will be annihilated by the complete arrangement of the Complete. Small completes exist in the whole Complete. <sup>Incomplete</sup> ~~Complete~~ knowledge results from misunderstanding of the complete Absolute Truth.

Bhagavad-Gita is complete. The Vedic knowledge is infallible. Here is an example of how the Hindus accept Vedic knowledge as complete. Cow dung is sacred according to Vedic scripture. If one touches the dung of an animal, he must bathe his whole body, and yet cow dung can purify an impure place or person, according to Vedic scripture. This seems contradictory, but because it is a Vedic injunction, we accept it, and, by that acceptance, we make no mistake. It has been found by modern chemists that cow dung is a composition of all antiseptic properties.

Vedic knowledge is complete, as it is above all doubts or errors. And Bhagavad-Gita is the essence of all Vedic knowledge. Vedic knowledge comes down from higher sources. It is not like our material research work, which is imperfect. We must receive this knowledge from the spiritual master, through the disciplic succession, which began with the Lord Himself.

Just as Arjuna accepted Bhagavad-Gita without any ~~altering~~<sup>alteration,</sup> so we too must accept Bhagavad-Gita without any ~~altering~~<sup>alteration,</sup> interpretation, or whimsy. We should accept it as perfect knowledge, spoken by the Lord Himself. Only the Lord could have given this infallible knowledge. A living entity would not be able to.

A living being in the mundane world has four defects:

1. He is sure to commit mistakes.
2. He is sure to be illusioned.
3. He has a tendency to cheat.
4. His senses are imperfect.

With these four defects, one cannot offer perfect information. Vedic knowledge was imparted by God in the heart of Brahma, the first living being in our universe, who passed it down through his sons.

Except for the Lord, no one is the proprietor of anything. The Lord is the original Creator. He is the creator of Brahma, the original being in our universe. Therefore, we should accept things given to us by the Lord as our allotment. Arjuna had decided not to fight. He told the Lord that he could not enjoy the kingdom if he killed his relatives to obtain it. This was due to his bodily concept of himself, and thus his relationship with uncles, brothers, nephews, and so forth, all these relationships pertain to the body. But finally, Arjuna agreed to work for the Lord's enjoyment. We should not act like ordinary animals. Human life is meant for something else. Vedic literature is meant for human beings, not for animals. An animal can kill without sin because he

is bound by the modes of his nature. But, if a man kills, he is responsible. He has a choice in his actions.

In Bhagavad-Gita activities are explained as determined by the three modes of nature. Thus, there are actions performed in ignorance, in passion, and in goodness. There are also three kinds of eatables: food eaten in ignorance, in passion, and in goodness. These are all clearly described.

Therefore, if we properly follow the instructions in Bhagavad-Gita, our lives will be purified and we will reach our ultimate destination. This destination is also explained in Bhagavad-Gita.

Beyond this material sky there is a spiritual sky. This material sky is temporary, and at the end of this universe it will be annihilated. That is the law of material nature. But, there is another nature which is eternal. The jiva is eternal just as the Lord is eternal. We have an intimate relationship with the Lord, and we are qualitatively equal to the Lord. The transcendental abode is also eternal. The association of the Lord and the living entities in the transcendental abode is the ultimate aim of human life.

The Lord is so kind to the living entities because the living entities all have a claim to being sons of the Lord. The Lord says that, of every type of living entity, whatever its kind, He is the Father. The Lord wishes to reclaim all these living souls, to have them back in the eternal sky. The entities can be restored to the eternal sky, once they are free of illusion. So, He comes Himself, in different incarnations, or else he sends His confidential servants as

sons or as acharyas, to reclaim the conditioned souls. This reclaiming is no sectarian religious process. It is the eternal function of the eternal living entities in relationship with the Eternal Lord.

Sanatan Dharma means the eternal religion. This word is explained as something without a beginning and without any end. We must accept the word like this. The word religion is somewhat different from Sanatan Dharma. It means faith and faith may change from one object to another. But Sanatan Dharma means that which cannot be changed. Liquidity cannot be taken from water. Heat cannot be taken from fire. Similarly Sanatan Dharma cannot be taken from the living entities. We must find out the eternal function of the eternal living entities, in order to know what Sanatan Dharma is. Ramanacharya says this has no beginning and no end. Some may feel that this is some what sectarian concept, but if we look deeper, we will see that Sanatan Dharma is the business of all the people of the world-- nay, of all the living entities in the universe.

Now a particular religious faith may have some beginning in the history of human society, but Sanatan Dharma lies outside of history, as it belongs to the living entities who have no birth and who never die. They continue to live after the destruction of the material body, just as they lived before its formation.

Let us try to understand this eternal religion from the Sanskrit root word for dharma. This word root, dhr means to sustain. Therefore, dharma is that quality which remains always and which cannot be taken away. When we speak of fire, it is

concluded that light and heat will be there. Otherwise we cannot call it fire. In a similar way, we must find the constant companion of the living being. That eternal part of quality is his religion.

When Sanatan <sup>Geswami</sup>~~Godwami~~ asked Lord Chaitanya about swarup, or the real constitution of the living being, the Lord replied that the real constitution of the entity is to render service to the Lord. Extending this, we see that one being serves another living being in some capacity, and thus enjoys its life. An animal serves a man, a friend serves his friend, mother serves child, husband serves wife, Mr. A. serves Mr. B. Mr. B. serves Mr. C, and so on. There is no exception to service in the society of living beings. The politician convinces the voter of his capacity for service and thus gets his job. The artisan serves the merchant; the store owner serves his customer. In fact, no living being is exempted from rendering service to others. Service then, is a thing which is the constant companion of the living being, and it can be concluded that rendering service is the eternal religion of the eternal living being.

When a man claims allegiance to some designated faith or sect, such as Hindu, Buddhist, Moslim, or Christian, this is non-Sanatan. Such faiths can be changed. The Moslem may become a Christian, or the Christian may become a Hindu. Such changeable faiths, therefore, is not religion. However if one be Hindu, Moslem or Christian, one is always a servant. So the particular faith is not the religion, but the service is the religion.

We are in a relationship of service to the Supreme Lord. He is the Enjoyer and we are His servants. We are created for His enjoyment, and if we accept that position, it makes us happy. Going back to our earlier example, fingers cannot be independently happy without the cooperation of the stomach. Similarly, the living entity cannot be happy without rendering service to the Supreme Lord.

Worship of demi-gods is not approved in Bhagavad-Gita because, in the seventh chapter, twenty-eighth verse, the Lord says, "Only those who are adrift by lust worship the demi-gods and not the Lord."

Now, when we speak of Krishna, we should remember that this is not a sectarian name. Krishna means all pleasure.

Krsi bhu vacka savdo nas ca nirvrti vacaka

Tayor aikyam param brahma Krsna iti abhidhiyate.

Krs + bhu = the substance which attracts, nas = the highest transcendental pleasure. Therefore Krs + na = the Supreme Brahman Personality of Godhead.

Krishna, the Supreme Lord, is the reservoir of pleasure. Our consciousness seeks happiness because we are part and parcel of the Lord. The Lord is always happy, and if we dovetail our activities with His, we will partake of His happiness.

The Lord incarnates in order <sup>to</sup> show us His joyous nature, and <sup>p</sup>astimes. When Krishna was at Vrindaban, His activities with his friends, the cowherd boys, his girl friends, and all His other pastimes were full of happiness. The whole population of Vrindaban was mad after Him. At this time, He even restricted his father from worshipping the demigods, to show

us that no one need worship any god but Him.

The purpose of human life is to return to the abode of the Lord. This is described in Bhagavad-Gita, the description of the eternal sky. This is in Chapter 8, verses 19 and 20:

"Bhuta-gramah sa eva yam  
Bhuta-bhuta pralivate  
Ratryagame casah partha  
Prabhavaty aharagame.

Paras tasmāt tu bhavo nvo  
Vyakto vyaktat sanatanah  
Yah sa sarvesu bhutesu  
Nasyatsu na vinasyati

We have a material concept of the sky, with the sun, stars, moon, etc. But the Lord says that in the eternal sky there is no need of sun or moon, nor of fire or electricity, because the spiritual sky is already illuminated by the Brahmajyoti, the rays of the Supreme Lord. Brahmajyoti is in the Spiritual sky and it is named Goloka. The Lord resides eternally in His supreme abode, but He can be approached from here also.

The Lord comes to manifest His real form, Sat-Chit Ananda vigraha, so that we don't have to imagine what He is like. However, although the Lord comes among us and plays with us like a human being, we should not think that He is one of us. It is because of his omnipotence that He can come among us and show us His pastimes.

There are innumerable planets in the Brahmajyoti, just as there are in the material sky, but all these planets are spiritual, not material. The Lord says that anyone who can <sup>approach</sup> ~~approach~~ that spiritual sky need not return to this material sky. In the material sky, even if we live on the highest planet, which is called Brahmaloaka, we must still suffer the miseries of

material existence. These miseries are four: birth, death, disease, and old age; no material being is free of them.

The Lord says that the living entities are travelling from one planet to another. We need not rely upon mechanical arrangements to go to other planets. For anyone who wants to go to another planet, such as the moon, the Bhagavad-Gita instructs that there is a simple formula-- even to go to the highest planet. If we practice the process of worshipping the particular demi-god of the particular planet, we can go to that planet.

yanti devavrata devan  
pitrn yanti pitrvratah  
bhutani yanti bhute jya  
yanti madyajino 'pi mam

Persons who worship demi-gods, mistaking them for God, can approach such planets where the demi-gods like Indra and Chandra are. They are authorized representatives of God, entrusted with administration of material affairs. Such persons do not know what God actually is. Those who worship their ancestors reach the planets that their ancestors have reached. Those who worship material things remain in the realm of matter, and those who worship Me (Krishna), they approach My abode.

In this way, we can go to the sun, the moon or any other planets. However, Bhagavad-Gita advises us not to go to any of these material planets. Not even the Brahmaloaka, which can only be reached by mechanical means in forty thousand years. In the spiritual sky there are innumerable planets which are never annihilated, but there is one called Krishnaloka Vrindaban, the Supreme Planet.

Bhagavad-Gita gives us the opportunity to leave this material world and to go to that eternal existence in the eternal



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And, as long as we want to lord it over material nature, there is no chance of going back to the spiritual Kingdom of God. That eternal Kingdom, which is not destructible like this material world, can be approached only by one who is not bewildered or attracted by this material nature. One who is attracted by devotional service to the Lord can go to that eternal Kingdom.

Our senses are so imperfect that we cannot even see all the planets that exist in the material sky. Vedic literature gives us information of many worlds that exist here. But one should hanker after the spiritual sky and the Supreme Kingdom. When one reaches the Supreme Kingdom, he doesn't have to return to the material world.

Now, a question may be raised: how do we approach the abode of the Supreme Lord? In Chapter 8, verses 5-8, the means for approaching the Lord's Supreme Abode are given: at the time of death, if one thinks of Krishna and remembers the form of Krishna, and then quits the present body, then he surely approaches the Spiritual Kingdom. Just as the transcendental nature of the Lord is Sat-Chit-Ananda vigraha, so the Lord has His Form, but this Form is eternal. This present body of ours is not Sat-Chit-Ananda. This body is asat, or perishable, full of ignorance, and niranda-- not happy.

The Lord says that when one quits this material body remembering the Form of Sri Krishna, he at once achieves his Sat-Chit Ananda vigraha-- the spiritual existence. This also applies to rebirth in this world. A man dies when his

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next birth has been decided by higher authorities. The acts of this life are a preparation ground for the next life. We are preparing for the next life by the activities of this life. So, if we make preparations to go to the abode of the Lord, we get a spiritual body, or spiritual nature, like the Lord has.

Now, there are different kinds of transcendentalists, as we have already explained. There is the Brahman-Vadi, the Paramatman-Vadi, and the devotee. In the spiritual sky, or Brahmajyoti, there are innumerable spiritual planets. The number of these planets is far greater than all the universes of the material world. The spiritual world represents three fourths of the Creation. One fourth of the Creation consists of innumerable universes like this one. Each universe has millions and millions of planets, but all of these universes together comprise only one fourth of the whole creation.

Now, one who wishes to go to the Spiritual Abode, and wishes to enjoy the association of the Supreme Lord, enters into a planet of the spiritual sky. There are many names for these planets. Any transcendentalist who, at the time of death, thinks of the Brahmajyoti, or paramatman, or Sri Krishna, enters the spiritual sky, but only the devotees may go to the Lord. The Lord further says that there is no doubt of this. One should not disbelieve. When the Lord speaks, we should not reject any part of what He says. Arjuna, whom we should emulate,

says, "I believe everything that You have said." The Lord says that at the time of death, whoever thinks of Him will certainly enter into the spiritual sky. There should be no

doubt of this.

Bhagevad-Gita also describes how one should act in order to enter into the spiritual Kingdom. Material nature is a display of one of the energies of the Supreme Lord. In the Vishnu Purana, the energies of the Supreme Lord have been summarized. The Lord has diverse, innumerable energies, of which we cannot conceive. But great learned souls have summarized all of these energies into three categories. The first is that all these energies are different potencies of the Lord. Vishnu. That energy is transcendental. Next is the marginal energy, which lies between the spiritual and the material. All the living entities belong to the eternal superior energy. Material energy is in the mode of ignorance. Material energy is also from Bhagavan. We can, at death, either leave this material world or remain here.

We are accustomed to think in terms of material energy. How can we transfer our thinking of material energy into thinking of spiritual energy? There is so much literature of the material world, like novels, newspapers, etc. We must transfer our reading from these to the spiritual Vedic literature. The learned sages wrote a great deal of literature, like the Puranas. In Chaitanya Chairanrita there is a verse which reads; "The conditioned souls have forgotten their eternal relationship with the Lord, and are engrossed in thinking of material things. They should just transfer their thinking to the Lord. He has created so many Vedas for this purpose."

At first, there were four Vedas. Then, He explained them

by the Puranas. Then, for those incapable of understanding these, He gave the Mahabharata, in which there is the Bhagavad-Gita. Then the Vedanta Sutra, which summarizes all Vedic knowledge. At last, the Vedanta Sutra was explained in Srimad Bhagwatam.

Just as the materialist is always engaged in reading materialist literature, the devotee centers his reading capacity onto this literature, so kindly presented by Vyasadeva, so that at the time of death the devotee may think of the Lord and go to Him.

Krishna advises Arjuna not simply to go on remembering Him and give up his material duty. The Lord never suggests anything impractical. To maintain the material body, one has to work. The working world is divided into four parts: Brahmin, Shatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra. Each one works in a different way, as learned man, administrator, mercantiler, or laborer. The Lord advises us not to give up work, but to remember Him always, along with the struggle for existence. This is Krishna Consciousness. Unless one does this, it is not possible to go to the Lord.

Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu practiced kirtan or chanting. One should always chant the Name of the Lord, because the Name of the Lord and the Lord are not different. Lord Chaitanya's instructions to always chant the Name of Krishna, and Krishna's injunction to remember Him always, are not different. The Lord and His Name are not different from each other. In the absolute status, there is no difference between one thing and another. Since the Lord is absolute, there is no difference between His Name and Himself: He is omnipresent. We should know

Him always, twenty-four hours a day. How is this possible?

A very crude example is given by the acharyas; it is like a married woman who is in love with another man. Such an attachment is necessarily very strong. Now, the woman always wants to show her husband that she is busy in family affairs so that he won't suspect her having a lover. However, she is always thinking of her lover, although she carries on her household duties well-- in fact, with greater care than she might if she had no lover. In the same way, we must establish our love for the Lord, and carry out our duties well.

Krishna did not advise Arjuna to go off to the Himalayas to practice yoga. When the Lord described the system of yoga to him, Arjuna declined, saying that it was too difficult for him. But then the Lord said that one who thinks always of Him is the greatest yogi, the supermost jnani, and the best devotee. The Lord said, "As a Shatriya, you cannot give up your fighting; but devote all your actions to Me." He also says that if one is completely surrendered to Him, there is no doubting.

One has to learn this process of Krishna Consciousness. To do so, one should approach a person who is fixed firmly in this consciousness. The mind is always flying from this thing to that, serving no real benefit. One must learn to fix the mind always on the Supreme Lord. The mind is very restless, and difficult to manage, but one can concentrate the ear on the sound of Krishna. The Supreme Personality of Godhead can be approached by one who is constantly thinking of Him in this way.

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These processes are given in Bhagavad-Gita. No one is barred from them. Hearing of Lord Krishna is possible for everyone, even a human being in the lowest status of life. Laborer, tradesman, or woman-- these are counted in the category of less fully developed intelligence-- the Lord says that even those lower than this-- anyone, in fact, who accepts this principle of bhakti yoga and accepts the Supreme Lord as the highest goal of life, can approach the perfection of human life. This is the one permanent solution of life. This is the ~~sum~~<sup>sum</sup> and substance of Bhagavad-Gita.

The conclusion is that Bhagavad-Gita is a transcendental literature that should be read very carefully. If one follows the instructions, he can be freed of all fears and sufferings in this life and attain a spiritual birth in the next life.

Another result is that if one reads Bhagavad-Gita seriously and reverently, then the reactions of his past deeds will no longer effect him. The Lord says, in the end, that He Himself takes the responsibility to indemnify all the reactions of sins for one who comes to Him. One cleanses himself daily by bathing in water, but for one who once bathes in the sacred Ganges water of Bhagavad-Gita, the dirt of past sins is washed away for all time. If one reads Bhagavad-Gita regularly and attentively, no other literature is needed.

In the present age, people are engaged by so many things that they have no time to devote their energy to other topics. However, one who simply reads Bhagavad-Gita need not read any other Vedic literature. Bhagavad-Gita is the essence of all Vedic knowledge. It is said that one who drinks the water of



the Ganges will be freed from sin. Similarly, one who studies Bhagavad-Gita has no need of any other literature whatever.

Lord Krishna is the original Vishnu, the ultimate end of all knowledge and of all seeking after knowledge.

