

CHAPTER FIFTEEN (Purusottama Yoga) - THE YOGA OF THE SUPREME PERSON

[The ultimate purpose of Vedic knowledge is to detach oneself from the entanglement of the material world and to understand Lord Krsna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One who understands Krishna's supreme identity surrenders unto Him and engages in His devotional service.]

[A. BECOMING DETACHED FROM THE MATERIAL WORLD - THE REFLECTION

OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD (15. 1-5)

One should detach himself from the material world, which reflects the spiritual world, and should surrender to Krsna and attain that spiritual world.]

(cn) REVIEW:

Chapter Twelve was about devotional service and Chapter Thirteen discusses a lot of transcendental knowledge that if we perfect we will be situated in transcendental consciousness.

That what keeps us in the material world is mentioned briefly in Chapter Thirteen, that is because of the living entity's tendency of thinking himself as the purusa and to try to enjoy the material world - 'karana guna-sanga'sya', that puts him in touch with the modes of material nature which entangle him in repeated births.

When we drew the picture of the living entity's entanglement within the material body, we used the analogy of the box, or a 3prison, that entraps the living entity within his field of activities and he could get out.

In Chapter Fourteen, the nature of the bars or the ropes that is tying him up, were described - those were the modes of material nature. They are three different varieties of ropes: goodness, passion and ignorance. This Chapter ended describing how to transcend.

In one hand that which keeps us within the material world, entangles us, glues us to the material energy - that is attachment which springs from our envy of Krsna's position as the enjoyer. It is our attachment to material enjoyment in subtle or gross forms, that keeps us in the material world under the control of the three modes of material nature. If o detached from sense enjoyment, the modes of material nature cannot touch him.

Chapter Fifteen concludes the opening section, Section A, which describes the nature of the entanglement of the soul with a different picture (from that of the box or prison picture), but the conclusion is that one should detach himself from the material world and the consequent attachment to Krsna i spiritual world. This is the process which is described as 'The Yoga of the Supreme Person'. Section A concludes talking about detachment.

Section B describes the fruit of attachment. And what is that glorious fruit? That is transmigration. This transmigration in the material world is compared like a forest fire, because it burns the living entity.

How one who has no spiritual knowledge, can see what is going on? One who has knowledge can see this transmigration.

Then, Section C describes that, not only can a person without knowledge see transmigration, but how Krsna is maintaining everyone in the material world through His different opulences.

Then, after describing that, in the last verse of Section C, Krsna describes that He is the knower of the Vedas and the compiler of the Vedanta.

Then in Section D, Krsna gives the conclusion, or Vedanta, almost summarizing all the knowledge of this Chapter. Krsna concludes that the living entity should surrender to Him and serve Him in all respects.

TEXT 1

sri-bhagavan uvaca
urdhva-mulam adhah-sakham
asvattham prahur avyayam
chandamsi yasya parnani
yah tam veda sa veda-vit

sri-bhagavan uvaca--the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; urdhva-mulam--with roots above; adhah--downwards; sakham--branches; asvattham--a banyan tree; prahuh--is said; avyayam--eternal; chandamsi--the Vedic hymns; yasya--of which; parnani--the leaves; yah--anyone who; tam--that; veda--knows; sah--he; veda-vit--the knower of the Vedas.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: It is said that there is an imperishable banyan tree that has its roots upward and its branches down and whose leaves are the Vedic hymns. One who knows this tree is the knower of the Vedas.

(cn) Just as the banyan tree of the material world is up-side down (the roots are upwards and the branches downwards) because it is just a reflection of the real tree which is situated in the spiritual world and this tree is situated on the desire of the living entity, just as the reflection of the tree is situated on water. One's material position is situated upon his desire.

Just as a banyan tree is very intricate, very complicated, in the same way, this material world is very, very complicated. The closer one gets to the leaves (of the reflected tree) the further away one gets from the spiritual world, even though it seems superficially that it is very high in the tree, it is actually very low because it is a reflection.

In his transmigration, the living entity, trying to taste the fruits of the tree, is moving from branch to branch, higher and higher, lower and lower, and the modes of material nature are nourishing his position. He is trying to enjoy but what he really wants is to get out, to get into the reality where the fruits are real, where the enjoyment is real, but he stuck on the tree of the material world, going from branch to branch, thinking that the next branch will be the one which will give him the fruit that he is looking for, that will satisfy him.

TEXT 2

adhah cordhvam prasrtas tasya sakha
guna-pravrddha visaya-pravalah
adhah ca mulani anusantatani
karmanubandhini manusya-loke

adhah--downward; ca--and; urdhvam--upward; prasrtah--extended; tasya--its; sakha--branches; guna--by the modes of material nature; pravrdhah--developed; visaya--sense objects; pravalah--twigs; adhah--downward; ca--and; mulani--roots; anusantatani--extended; karma--to work; anubandhini--bound; manusya-loke--in the world of human society.

TRANSLATION

The branches of this tree extend downward and upward, nourished by the three modes of material nature. The twigs are the objects of the senses. This tree also has roots going down, and these are bound to the fruitive actions of human society.

(cn) Depending upon where the person is situated on the tree, he has different types of sense objects and according to the different combinations of the three modes of material nature, that influence a particular part of the tree - the sense objects or the twigs will be a certain variety.

Travelling from branch to branch, thinking that he is making progress, but actually he is simply entangled in this incredible complex net work of the tree of the material world.

TEXT 3-4

na rupam asyeha tathopalabhyate
nanto na cadi na ca sampratistha
asvattham enam su-virudha-mulam
asanga-sastrena drdhena chittva

tatah padam tat parimargitavyam
yasmin gata na nivartanti bhuyah
tam eva cadyam purusam prapadye
yatah pravrttih prasrta purani

na--not; rupam--the form; asya--of this tree; iha--in this world; tatha--also; upalabhyate--can be perceived; na--never; antah--end; na--never; ca--also; adih--beginning; na--never; ca--also; sampratistha--the foundation; asvattham--banyan tree; enam--this; su-virudha--strongly; mulam--rooted; asanga-sastrena--by the weapon of detachment; drdhena--strong; chittva--cutting; tatah--thereafter; padam--situation; tat--that; parimargitavyam--has to be searched out; yasmin--where; gatah--going; na--never; nivartanti--they come back; bhuyah--again; tam--to Him; eva--certainly; ca--also;

adyam--original; purusam--the Personality of Godhead; prapadye--surrender; yatah--from whom; pravrttih--the beginning; prasrta--extended; purani--very old.

TRANSLATION

The real form of this tree cannot be perceived in this world. No one can understand where it ends, where it begins, or where its foundation is. But with determination one must cut down this strongly rooted tree with the weapon of detachment. Thereafter, one must seek that place from which, having one never returns, and there surrender to that Supreme Personality of Godhead from whom everything began and from whom everything has extended since time immemorial.

(cn) If one is within the complex of this banyan tree, which is so vast and complicated, one cannot actually understand what the totality of this tree looks like.

One has to stop being attached from going from branch to branch and to enjoy the fruits of this tree according to the modes of material nature. That detachment is necessary.

What is the complete process of this yoga of going to the spiritual world, not even stopping in the Brahman, but actually surrender to Krsna in the spiritual world? - this process is described in next text.

TEXT 5

nirmana-mohajita-sanga-dosa
adhyatma-nitya viniivrtta-kamah
dvandvair vimuktah sukha-duhkha-samjnair
gacchanty amudhah padam avyayam tat

nih--without; mana--false prestige; mohah--and illusion; jita--having conquered; sanga--of association; dosah--the faults; adhyatma--in spiritual knowledge; nityah--in eternity; viniivrtta--disassociated; kamah--from lust; dvandvaih--from the dualities; vimuktah--liberated; sukha-duhkha--happiness and distress; samjnaih--named; gacchanti--attain; amudhah--unbewildered; padam--situation; avyayam--eternal; tat--that.

TRANSLATION

Those who are free from false prestige, illusion and false association, who understand the eternal, who are done with material lust, who are freed from the dualities of happiness and distress, and who, unbewildered, know how to surrender unto the Supreme Person attain to that eternal kingdom.

(cn) There is the material world, the banyan tree - we have to get out.

This is almost an introduction of this Chapter and a continuation from the previous chapters.

Now Krsna explains further, the goal of this Yoga, because the living entity is eternal, although he is on this temporary tree, and he should be...

PURUSOTTAMA-YOGA (6-20)

[B. TRANSMIGRATIONS (15. 6-11)

1. The goal is to return to the spiritual world, and those who achieve it, never return to this material world. (6)]

TEXT 6

na tad bhasayate suryo
na sasanko na pavakah
yad gatva na nivartante
tad dhama paramam mama

na--not; tat--that; bhasayate--illuminates; suryah--the sun; na--nor; sasankah--the moon; na--nor; pavakah--fire, electricity; yat--where; gatva--going; na--never; nivartante--they come back; tat dhama--that abode; paramam--supreme; mama--My.

TRANSLATION

That supreme abode of Mine is not illumined by the sun or moon, nor by fire or electricity. Those who reach it never return to this material world.

(cn) This has already been explained several times in previous chapters.

Krsna is giving a glimpse of the spiritual world from where we belong and mostly has to do with eternity. But of course we know from other scriptures that the spiritual world is not only eternal, there much more details about it. This spiritual world is where the living entities came from and what are they doing now in the analogy of the tree? Is jumping from branch to branch, which means transmigrating.

Now Krsna explains that we are actually eternal, we are not born when the body is born, we are not dying when the body dies.

TEXT 7

mamaivamsa jiva-loke
jiva-bhutah sanatanah
manah-sasthanindriyani
prakrti sthani karsati

mama--My; eva--certainly; amsah--fragmental particle; jiva-loke--in the world of conditional life; jiva-bhutah--the conditioned living entity; sanatanah--eternal; manah--with

the mind; sasthan--the six; indriyani--senses; prakrti--in material nature; sthani--situated; karsati--is struggling hard.

TRANSLATION

The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind. (cn) The mind has been mentioned in Chapter Six, specially, as essential in the yoga practice. One has to control the mind, because the mind is the key of attachment. The mind is the central position of attachment. This Chapter is very about attachment and detachment and attachment again but to Krsna. But the central focus of this is the mind. And because the mind's business is to accept and reject things, ultimately has to reject material and accept spiritual. That's the struggle that is going on within the mind. That is why so much stress is giving to the mind in any type of yoga.

This is explained a little further...

TEXT 8

sariram yad avapnoti
yac capy utkramatisvarah
gritvaitani samyati
vayur gandhan ivasayat

sariram--the body; yat--as; avapnoti--gets; yat--as; ca api--also; utkramati--gives up; isvarah--the lord of the body; grhitva--taking; etani--all these; samyati--goes away; vayuh--the air; gandhan--smells; iva--like; asayat--from their source.

TRANSLATION

The living entity in the material world carries his different conceptions of life from one body to another as the air carries aromas. Thus he takes one kind of body and again quits it to take another.

(cn) This is such a nice example. The air has nothing to do with the aroma, but when it passes over a fragrant garden, the air smells so nice and when it passes over the garbage pit where the stools and pigs are, the air smells terrible. But that good or bad smells are not the quality of the air, that is the quality of that which it is in contact with. Similarly as the soul, according to what his mind contacts (the modes of mat nature) creates its attachments. And whatever the mind is attached to, it carries the soul to his next situation. The soul has nothing to do with the particular situation, maybe a fragrant mood of goodness, maybe stinky mode of passion, but the soul has nothing to do with that. The mind is the m that has attracted the different situations. All depends on the mind and that is what will be explained in the next verse.

TEXT 9

srotram caksuh sparsanam ca
rasanam ghranam eva ca
adhisthaya manas cayam
visayan upasevate

srotram--ears; caksuh--eyes; sparsanam--touch; ca--also; rasanam--tongue;
ghranam--smelling power; eva--also; ca--and; adhisthaya--being situated in; manah--mind;
ca--also; ayam--he; visayan--sense objects; upasevate--enjoys.

TRANSLATION

The living entity, thus taking another gross body, obtains a certain type of ear, eye, tongue, nose and sense of touch, which are grouped about the mind. He thus enjoys a particular set of sense objects.

(cn) It's all grouped around the mind, that's why the mind is so important to be controlled. The particular set of senses we get all has to do with the mind's desires. It is the essential issue in any practice of yoga, to control the mind.

Let's back track a little bit: The living entity is on the tree of the material world, he is in this temporary situation, going from higher to lower, having good bodies and bad bodies on and on. Actually all are bad, inauspicious. The soul is eternal though, and he belongs to the spiritual world but he is transmigrating in this situation, based on his mind's desires. Then, based on his mind's desires, he gets a gross body and based on his gross body, 'visayan upasevate', he enjoys a particular set of sense objects. One may have the desire to eat stool but he cannot do it in his present body, but due to his mind's 'glorious' desire, he will get a pig's body.

Due to his mind's desire the living entity gets a gross body with a particular set of senses and sense objects.

TEXT 10

utkramantam sthitam vapi
bhunjanam va gunanvitam
vimudha nanupasyanti
pasyantijnana-caksusah

utkramantam--quitting the body; sthitam--situated in the body; va api--either;
bhunjanam--enjoying; va--or; guna-anvitam--under the spell of the modes of material
nature; vimudhah--foolish persons; na--never; anupasyanti--can see; pasyanti--can see;
jnana-caksusah--those who have the eyes of knowledge.

TRANSLATION

The foolish cannot understand how a living entity can quit his body, nor can they understand what sort of body he enjoys under the spell of the modes of nature. But one whose eyes are trained in knowledge can see all this.

TEXT 11

yatanto yogi nas cainam
pasyanty atmany avasthitam
yatanto 'py akrtatmano
nainam pasyanty acetasah

yatantah--endeavoring; yoginah--transcendentalists; ca--also; enam--this; pasyanti--can see; atmani--in the self; avasthitam--situated; yatantah--endeavoring; api--although; akrtatmanah--those without self-realization; na--do not; enam--this; pasyanti--see; acetasah--having undeveloped minds.

TRANSLATION

The endeavoring transcendentalists, who are situated in self-realization, can see all this clearly. But those whose minds are not developed and who are not situated in self-realization cannot see what is taking place, though they may try to.

[C. KRSNA'S POSITION AS THE MAINTAINER (15. 12-15)

Krsna should be seen as the One behind sunlight, the moon, and fire; as the fire of digestion; as the Paramatma in everyone's heart; as the giver of remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness; and as the compiler of the Vedanta and the goal of the Vedas.]

(cn) The phrase that makes all this section clear is: 'not only can't they see transmigration, these vimudhas, these people who have no knowledge, they cannot also see:

TEXT 12

yad aditya-gatam tejo
jagad bhasayate 'khilam
yac candramasi yac agnau
tat tejo viddhi mamakam

yat--that which; aditya-gatam--in the sunshine; tejah--splendor; jagat--the whole world; bhasayate--illuminates; akhilam--entirely; yat--that which; candramasi--in the moon; yat--that which; ca--also; agnau--in fire; tat--that; tejah--splendor; viddhi--understand; mamakam--from Me.

TRANSLATION

The splendor of the sun, which dissipates the darkness of this whole world, comes from Me. And the splendor of the moon and the splendor of fire are also from Me.

(cn) They see the sun but they can't understand that it comes from Krsna.

Here we hear more opulences of Krsna. Why Krsna has told these specific opulences? - Because we are completely dependent on the sun, on the moon, on fire, which means that we are completely dependent on Krsna, but we see all those things separated from Him. So Krsna here choose those opulences on which we are completely dependent on.

TEXT 13

gam avisya ca bhutani
dharayamy aham ojasa
pusnami causadhih sarvah
somo bhutva rasatmakah

gam--the planets; avisya--entering; ca--also; bhutani--the living entities; dharayami--sustain; aham--I; ojasa--by My energy; pusnami--am nourishing; ca--and; ausadhih--vegetables; sarvah--all; somah--the moon; bhutva--becoming; rasa-atmakah--supplying the juice.

TRANSLATION

I enter into each planet, and by My energy they stay in orbit. I become the moon and thereby supply the juice of life to all vegetables.

(cn) Not only Krsna is supplying the vegetables and make them tasty, but in the next verse He says:

TEXT 14

aham vaisvanaro bhutva
praninam deham asritah
pranapana-samayuktah
pacamy annam catur-vidham

aham--I; vaisvanarah--My plenary portion as the digesting fire; bhutva--becoming; praninam--of all living entities; deham--in the bodies; asritah--situated; prana--the outgoing air; apana--the down-going air; samayuktah--keeping in balance; pacami--I digest; annam--foodstuff; catuh-vidham--the four kinds.

TRANSLATION

I am the fire of digestion in the bodies of all living entities, and I join with the air of life, outgoing and incoming, to digest the four kinds of foodstuff.

TEXT 15

sarvasya caham hr̥di sannivisto
mattah smrtirjnanam apohanam ca
vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyo
vedanta-krd veda-vid eva caham

sarvasya--of all living beings; ca--and; aham--I; hr̥di--in the heart; sannivistah--situated; mattah--from Me; smrtih--remembrance; jnanam--knowledge; apohanam--forgetfulness; ca--and; vedaih--by the Vedas; ca--also; sarvaih--all; aham--I am; eva--certainly; vedyah--knowable; vedanta-krt--the compiler of the Vedanta; veda-vid--the knower of the Vedas; eva--certainly; ca--and; aham--I.

TRANSLATION

I am seated in everyone's heart, and from Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness. By all the Vedas, I am to be known. Indeed, I am the compiler of Vedanta, and I am the knower of the Vedas.

(cn) We are completely dependent on Kṛṣṇa for everything. And here shows that not only we are dependent of Him for remembrance. We think of Kṛṣṇa for remembrance, but if He would not give us forgetfulness and we would remember everything that we come in contact with, our brain would be so crowded with useless information that we wouldn't be able to function. discrimination of remembrance is given by Kṛṣṇa otherwise we would be constantly remembering all kinds of useless and sometimes disturbing things and situations that we pass through.

And specially if one follows the Vedas to get elevation, Kṛṣṇa states in this verse that He is the purpose.

People may not understanding this. How is Kṛṣṇa the compiler of the Vedanta? - Because Śrīla Vyāsadeva is His incarnation.

After explaining in this Section His position and how people don't understand that they are completely dependent on Him, Kṛṣṇa explains Vedanta Sutra.

[D. THREE KINDS OF LIVING ENTITIES (15. 16-20)

1. Conditioned living entities are fallible; those living entities who are in harmony with the Lord's creation are called infallible. (16)]

TEXT 16

dvav imau purusau loke

ksaras caksara eva ca
ksarah sarvani bhutani
kuta-stho 'ksara ucyate

dvau--two; imau--these; purusau--living entities; loke--in the world; ksarah--fallible; ca--and; aksarah--infallible; eva--certainly; ca--and; ksarah--fallible; sarvani--all; bhutani--living entities; kuta-sthah--in oneness; aksarah--infallible; ucyate--is said.

TRANSLATION

There are two classes of beings, the fallible and the infallible. In the material world every living entity is fallible, and in the spiritual world every living entity is called infallible.

(cn) Then Krsna introduces a third kind.

[2. Each living entity is eternally part and parcel of Krsna. But now he is struggling as he changes from body to body in his search for pleasure within this material world. (7-9)]

TEXT 17

uttamah purusas tv anyah
paramatmety udahrtah
yo loka-trayam avisya
bibharty avyaya isvarah

uttamah--the best; purusah--personality; tu--but; anyah--another; parama--the supreme; atma--self; iti--thus; udahrtah--is said; yah--who; loka--of the universe; trayam--the three divisions; avisya--entering; bibharti--is maintaining; avyayah--inexhaustible; isvarah--the Lord.

TRANSLATION

Besides these two, there is the greatest living personality, the Supreme Soul, the imperishable Lord Himself, who has entered the three worlds and is maintaining them.

(cn) Krsna explains here, directly and clearly, without the examples that He is the One, 'bibharty avyaya isvarah', He is the controller, He is the maintainer of this world, He is the Supersoul...

When Krsna describes the 'aksara', the infallible, He said 'kuta-stho 'ksara ucyate', the infallible ones, they are one with Krsna in desire. That is the quality that one needs to be in the spiritual world - one has to be harmonious with Krsna in desire, which means that one has to be detached from the material world. Therefore Krsna in the beginning had

said: 'surrender to Supreme Personality of Godhead, give up your independent desire to be the enjoyer!' That is the state of infallibility - one has to accept his position as the servant.

TEXT 18

yasmat ksaram atito 'ham
aksarat api cottamah
ato 'smi loke vede ca
prathitah purusottamah

yasmat--because; ksaram--to the fallible; atitah--transcendental; aham--I am; aksarat--beyond the infallible; api--also; ca--and; uttamah--the best; atah--therefore; asmi--I am; loke--in the world; vede--in the Vedic literature; ca--and; prathitah--celebrated; purusa-uttamah--as the Supreme Personality.

TRANSLATION

Because I am transcendental, beyond both the fallible and the infallible, and because I am the greatest, I am celebrated both in the world and in the Vedas as that Supreme Person.

TEXT 19

yo mam evam asamudho janati purusottamam
sa sarva-vid bhajati mam
sarva-bhavana bhārata

yah--anyone who; mam--Me; evam--thus; asamudhah--without a doubt; janati--knows; purusa-uttamam--the Supreme Personality of Godhead; sah--he; sarva-vid--the knower of everything; bhajati--renders devotional service; mam--unto Me; sarva-bhavana--in all respects; bhārata--O son of Bharata.

TRANSLATION

Whoever knows Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without doubting, is the knower of everything. He therefore engages himself in full devotional service to Me, O son of Bharata.

(cn) First one has to be detached, then one has to become 'kuto'stho', "one" with desires. And because Kṛṣṇa has mentioned about Vedānta and the Vedas, next He says,

TEXT 20

iti guhyatamam sastram

idam uktam mayanagha
etat buddhva buddhi man syat
krta-krtayas ca bharata

iti--thus; guhya-tamam--the most confidential; sastram--revealed scripture; idam--this; uktam--disclosed; maya--by Me; anagha--O sinless one; etat--this; buddhva--understanding; buddhi-man--intelligent; syat--one becomes; krta-krtayah--the most perfect in his endeavors; ca--and; bharata--O son of Bharata.

TRANSLATION

This is the most confidential part of the Vedic scriptures, O sinless one, and it is disclosed now by Me. Whoever understands this will become wise, and his endeavors will know perfection.

(cn) Srila Prabhupada can enter this 'most confidential part' unto the more exoteric parts that Krsna is saying.

This is the actual conclusion, this is the actual confidential part: that one should surrender to Krsna in all respects and then he will become wise.

This is the most confidential message of the sastras.

One can only understand this if he is sinless.

This is the yoga of the Supreme Person.

Breaking the attachment therefore becoming 'one' with Krsna in desire, understanding that Krsna is the all-powerful One who is maintaining us - then serve Him and surrender to Him in all respects. This is the conclusion of all the sastras.

THUS ENDS THE STUDY OF CHAPTER FIFTEEN.