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Bhagavad gita chapter-17

1. This doubt of Arjuna's is to be cleared by Kṛṣṇa. BG 17.1

Are those who create some sort of God by selecting a human being and placing their faith in him worshipping in goodness, passion or ignorance? Do such persons attain the perfectional stage of life? Is it possible for them to be situated in real knowledge and elevate themselves to the highest perfectional stage? Do those who do not follow the rules and regulations of the scriptures but who have faith in something and worship gods and demigods and men attain success in their effort? Arjuna is putting these questions to Kṛṣṇa.

2. How one acquire a nature which is of a specific quality? Bg 17.2

According to their previous activities in the mode of goodness, passion or ignorance, they acquire a nature which is of a specific quality.

3. How a living entity is in contact with material nature? BG 17.2

since the living entity is in contact with material nature, he acquires different types of mentality according to his association with the material modes.

4. How one can change his position with the help of spiritual master? Bg 17.2

But this nature can be changed if one associates with a bona fide spiritual master and abides by his rules and the scriptures. Gradually, one can change his position from ignorance to goodness, or from passion to goodness.

5. How one can change his position to a higher mode of nature? BG 17.2

The conclusion is that blind faith in a particular mode of nature cannot help a person become elevated to the perfectional stage. One has to consider things carefully, with intelligence, in the association of a bona fide spiritual master. Thus one can change his position to a higher mode of nature.

6. How Everyone has a particular type of faith? Bg 17.3

Everyone has a particular type of faith, regardless of what he is. But his faith is considered good, passionate or ignorant according to the nature he has acquired. Thus, according to his particular type of faith, one associates with certain persons.

7. What is the only path back without fear? BG 17.3

Although one may be conducted by some impression, or some conception of life, originally he is nirguṇa, or transcendental. Therefore one has to become cleansed of the material contamination that he has acquired, in order to regain his relationship with the Supreme Lord. That is the only path back without fear: Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

8. How a person is surely to be conducted by the influence of the modes of nature? BG 17.3

If one is situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then that path is guaranteed for his elevation to the perfectional stage. If one does not take to this path of self-realization, then he is surely to be conducted by the influence of the modes of nature.

9. Why The word śraddhā, or “faith,” is very significant ? BG 17.3

Śraddhā, or faith, originally comes out of the mode of goodness. One’s faith may be in a demigod or some created God or some mental concoction. One’s strong faith is supposed to be productive of works of material goodness. But in material conditional life, no works are completely purified. They are mixed. They are not in pure goodness. Pure goodness is transcendental

10. How one’s faith is established? BG 17.3

As long as one’s faith is not completely in purified goodness, the faith is subject to contamination by any of the modes of material nature. The contaminated modes of material nature expand to the heart. Therefore according to the position of the heart in contact with a particular mode of material nature, one’s faith is established.

11. How we find different types of faith in this world? BG 17.3

It should be understood that if one’s heart is in the mode of goodness his faith is also in the mode of goodness. If his heart is in the mode of passion, his faith is also in the mode of passion. And if his heart is in the mode of darkness, illusion, his faith is also thus contaminated. Thus we find different types of faith in this world,

12. Why different types of faith, there are different kinds of worship? BG 17.3

Thus we find different types of faith in this world, and there are different types of religions due to different types of faith. The real principle of religious faith is situated in the mode of pure goodness, but because the heart is tainted we find different types of religious principles. Thus according to different types of faith, there are different kinds of worship.

13. According to scriptural injunction who is worshipable? BG 17.4

According to scriptural injunction, only the Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshipable,

14. Those who are situated in goodness Whom they worship? Bg 17.4

Those who are situated in goodness generally worship the demigods. The demigods include Brahmā, Śiva and others such as Indra, Candra and the sun-god. There are various demigods. Those in goodness worship a particular demigod for a particular purpose.

15. those who are in the mode of passion whom they worship? BG 17.4

They worship the demons. We recall that during the Second World War a man in Calcutta worshiped Hitler because thanks to that war he had amassed a large amount of wealth by dealing in the black market. Similarly, those in the modes of passion and ignorance generally select a powerful man to be God. They think that anyone can be worshiped as God and that the same results will be obtained.

16. those who are in the mode of ignorance whom they will worship? BG 17.4

They worship dead spirits. Sometimes people worship at the tomb of some dead man. Sexual service is also considered to be in the mode of darkness. Similarly, in remote villages in India there are worshipers of ghosts. We have seen that in India the lower-class people sometimes go to the forest, and if they have knowledge that a ghost lives in a tree, they worship that tree and offer sacrifices.

17. To Whom The impersonalists worship? BG 17.4

The impersonalists are supposed to be situated in the mode of goodness, and they worship five kinds of demigods.

18. according to Bhagavad-gītā who is demonic? BG 17.5-6

There are persons who manufacture modes of austerity and penance which are not mentioned in the scriptural injunctions. For instance, fasting for some ulterior purpose, such as to promote a purely political end, is not mentioned in the scriptural directions. The scriptures recommend fasting for spiritual advancement, not for some political end or social purpose. Persons who take to such austerities are, according to Bhagavad-gītā, certainly demoniac.

19. What is not mentioned in the Vedic literature? BG 17.5-6

Such unauthorized fasting or austerities for some political end are certainly very disturbing to others. They are not mentioned in the Vedic literature.

20. What kind of demonstrations are insults to the Supreme Personality of Godhead? BG 17.5-6

sometimes one dies by political fasting Such demonstrations are insults to the Supreme Personality of Godhead because they are enacted in disobedience to the Vedic scriptural injunctions.

21. Why The word acetasaḥ is significant? BG 17.5-6

The word acetasaḥ is significant in this connection. Persons of normal mental condition must obey the scriptural injunctions. Those who are not in such a position neglect and disobey the scriptures and manufacture their own way of austerities and penances.

22. How demonic person achieve the supreme goal? BG 17.5-6

The Lord forces demonic to take birth in the wombs of demoniac persons. Consequently they will live by demoniac principles life after life without knowing their relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If, however, such persons are fortunate enough to be guided by a spiritual master who can direct them to the path of Vedic wisdom, they can get out of this entanglement and ultimately achieve the supreme goal.

23. Who are actually wise? BG 17.7

Those who can understand analytically what kind of performances are in what modes of material nature are actually wise

24. What kind of people are foolish? BG 17.7

those who consider all kinds of sacrifice or food or charity to be the same cannot discriminate, and they are foolish

25. What kind of food the mode of goodness people eat? Bg 17.8

Foods dear to those in the mode of goodness increase the duration of life, purify one's existence and give strength, health, happiness and satisfaction. Such foods are juicy, fatty, wholesome, and pleasing to the heart.

26. What kind of food the mode of passion people will eat? BG 17.9

Foods that are too bitter, too sour, salty, hot, pungent, dry and burning are dear to those in the mode of passion. Such foods cause distress, misery and disease.

27. What kind of food the mode of darkness people will eat? Bg 17.10

Food prepared more than three hours before being eaten, food that is tasteless, decomposed and putrid, and food consisting of remnants and untouchable things is dear to those in the mode of darkness.

28. What is The purpose of eating food? BG 17.10

The purpose of food is to increase the duration of life, purify the mind and aid bodily strength. This is its only purpose.

29. What is known as Remnants of food? Bg 17.10

Remnants of food may be eaten only when they are part of a meal that was first offered to the Supreme Lord or first eaten by saintly persons, especially the spiritual master.

30. What Supreme Personality of Godhead accepts? BG 17.10

In Bhagavad-gītā the Supreme Lord says that He accepts preparations of vegetables, flour and milk when offered with devotion. *Patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam*. Of course, devotion and love are the chief things which the Supreme Personality of Godhead accepts.

31. Why one should offer food to the Supreme Personality of Godhead? Bg 17.10

It is mentioned that the prasādam should be prepared in a particular way. Any food prepared by the injunctions of the scripture and offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead can be taken even if prepared long, long ago, because such food is transcendental. Therefore to make food antiseptic, eatable and palatable for all persons, one should offer food to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

32. Why sacrifice should be done as a matter of duty? BG 17.11

The general tendency is to offer sacrifice with some purpose in mind, but here it is stated that sacrifice should be performed without any such desire. It should be done as a matter of duty.

33. What is not their in the mode of goodness? BG 17.11

the performance of rituals in temples or in churches. Generally they are performed with the purpose of material benefit, but that is not in the mode of goodness.

34. How one should go to a temple or church? BG 17.11

One should go to a temple or church as a matter of duty, offer respect to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and offer flowers and eatables without any purpose of obtaining material benefit.

35. Why Everyone thinks that there is no use in going to the temple just to worship God? BG 17.11

Everyone thinks that there is no use in going to the temple just to worship God. But worship for economic benefit is not recommended in the scriptural injunctions.

36. What is the duty of every civilized man regarding visiting temple? BG 17.11

One should go simply to offer respect to the Deity. That will place one in the mode of goodness. It is the duty of every civilized man to obey the injunctions of the scriptures and offer respect to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

37. What kind of sacrifices and rituals are considered to be in the mode of passion? BG 17.12

Sometimes sacrifices and rituals are performed for elevation to the heavenly kingdom or for some material benefits in this world. Such sacrifices or ritualistic performances are considered to be in the mode of passion.

38. What is Faith in the mode of darkness or ignorance is? Bg 17.13

Faith in the mode of darkness or ignorance is actually faithlessness.

39. What will produce a demoniac mentality and do not benefit human society? BG 17.13

Sometimes people worship some demigod just to make money and then spend the money for recreation, ignoring the scriptural injunctions. Such ceremonial shows of religiosity are not accepted as genuine. They are all in the mode of darkness; they produce a demoniac mentality and do not benefit human society.

40. What is the austerities and penances practiced by the body? BG 17.14

One should offer, or learn to offer, respect to God or to the demigods, the perfect, qualified brāhmaṇas and the spiritual master and superiors like father, mother or any person who is conversant with Vedic knowledge. These should be given proper respect.

41. How one should practice cleansing ? BG 17.14

One should practice cleansing oneself externally and internally, and he should learn to become simple in behavior. He should not do anything which is not sanctioned by the scriptural injunctions. He should not indulge in sex outside of married life, for sex is sanctioned in the scripture only in marriage, not otherwise. This is called celibacy. These are penances and austerities as far as the body is concerned.

42. What is penance as far as talking is concerned? BG 17.15

One should not speak in such a way as to agitate the minds of others. Of course, when a teacher speaks, he can speak the truth for the instruction of his students, but such a teacher should not speak to those who are not his students if he will agitate their minds. This is penance as far as talking is concerned.

43. Why one should not talk nonsense ? BG 17.15

one should not talk nonsense. The process of speaking in spiritual circles is to say something upheld by the scriptures.

44. What is called penance of speech? BG 17.15

One should at once quote from scriptural authority to back up what he is saying. At the same time, such talk should be very pleasurable to the ear. By such discussions, one may derive the highest benefit and elevate human society. There is a limitless stock of Vedic literature, and one should study this. This is called penance of speech.

45. How to make the mind austere? BG 17.16

To make the mind austere is to detach it from sense gratification. It should be so trained that it can be always thinking of doing good for others.

46. What is the best training for the mind? BG 17.16

The best training for the mind is gravity in thought. One should not deviate from Kṛṣṇa consciousness and must always avoid sense gratification. To purify one's nature is to become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

47. How the Satisfaction of the mind can be obtained? BG 17.16

Satisfaction of the mind can be obtained only by taking the mind away from thoughts of sense enjoyment. The more we think of sense enjoyment, the more the mind becomes dissatisfied.

48. Why in the present age no possibility of the mind's becoming satisfied? BG 17.16

In the present age we unnecessarily engage the mind in so many different ways for sense gratification, and so there is no possibility of the mind's becoming satisfied.

49. What is the best course is to divert the mind? BG 17.16

The best course is to divert the mind to the Vedic literature, which is full of satisfying stories, as in the Purāṇas and the Mahābhārata. One can take advantage of this knowledge and thus become purified.

50. How one can purify his existence? BG 17.16

The person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness observes perfect silence in this sense. Control of the mind means detaching the mind from sense enjoyment. One should be straightforward in his dealings and thereby purify his existence.

51. What is called austerity in goodness? Bg 17.17

This threefold austerity, performed with transcendental faith by men not expecting material benefits but engaged only for the sake of the Supreme, is called austerity in goodness.

52. Why penance and austerity are executed? BG 17.18

Sometimes penance and austerity are executed to attract people and receive honor

53. How penance and austerity are performed? BG 17.18

Penance and austerity are performed to receive honor, respect and worship from others. Persons in the mode of passion arrange to be worshiped by subordinates and let them wash their feet and offer riches.

54. What is considered to be in the mode of passion? BG 17.18

arrangements artificially made by the performance of penances are considered to be in the mode of passion.

55. What is the result of penance and austerity ? BG 17.18

The results are temporary; they can be continued for some time, but they are not permanent

56. Give an instances of foolish penance undertaken by demons? BG 17.19

There are instances of foolish penance undertaken by demons like Hiraṇyakaśipu, who performed austere penances to become immortal and kill the demigods.

57. Whom Hiraṇyakaśipu preyed? BG 17.19

prayed to Brahmā for such things

58. By whom Hiraṇyakaśipu was killed by? BG 17.19

ultimately he was killed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

59. What is in the mode of ignorance? BG 17.19

To undergo penances for something which is impossible is certainly in the mode of ignorance.

60. What is considered to be in the mode of goodness? BG 17.20

Charity given out of duty, without expectation of return, at the proper time and place, and to a worthy person is considered to be in the mode of goodness.

61. What is said about charity in Vedic literature? BG 17.20

In the Vedic literature, charity given to a person engaged in spiritual activities is recommended.

62. Why Spiritual perfection is always a consideration in giving charity? BG 17.20

Spiritual perfection is always a consideration. Therefore charity is recommended to be given at a place of pilgrimage and at lunar or solar eclipses or at the end of the month or to a qualified brāhmaṇa or a Vaiṣṇava (devotee) or in temples. Such charities should be given without any consideration of return.

63. What is not recommended in the Vedic literature? BG 17.20

Charity to the poor is sometimes given out of compassion, but if a poor man is not worth giving charity to, then there is no spiritual advancement. In other words, indiscriminate charity is not recommended in the Vedic literature.

64. What kinds of charity are said to be given in the mode of passion? BG 17.21

Charity is sometimes performed for elevation to the heavenly kingdom and sometimes with great trouble and with repentance afterwards: "Why have I spent so much in this way?" Charity is also sometimes given under some obligation, at the request of a superior. These kinds of charity are said to be given in the mode of passion.

65. Why Only charity in the mode of goodness is recommended ? BG 17.21

There are many charitable foundations which offer their gifts to institutions where sense gratification goes on. Such charities are not recommended in the Vedic scripture. Only charity in the mode of goodness is recommended.

66. What sort of contribution is in the mode of ignorance? BG 17.22

Contributions for indulgence in intoxication and gambling are not encouraged here. That sort of contribution is in the mode of ignorance.

67. What kind of charity is also said to be in the mode of darkness? BG 17.22

if a person gives charity to a suitable person but without respect and without attention, that sort of charity is also said to be in the mode of darkness.

68. When they are aimed at the Supreme - om̐ tat sat what it indicates? BG 17.23

When they are aimed at the Supreme - om̐ tat sat, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the eternal - they become means for spiritual elevation. In the scriptural injunctions such an objective is indicated.

69. Why In the Vedic hymns, the word om̐ is always found? BG 17.23

These three words, om̐ tat sat, particularly indicate the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the Vedic hymns, the word om̐ is always found.

70. Why One who acts without following the regulations of the scriptures will not attain the Absolute Truth? BG 17.23

One who acts without following the regulations of the scriptures will not attain the Absolute Truth. He will get some temporary result, but not the ultimate end of life.

71. What are are certainly inferior in quality? BG 17.23

The conclusion is that the performance of charity, sacrifice and penance must be done in the mode of goodness. Performed in the mode of passion or ignorance, they are certainly inferior in quality.

72. Why Whenever a Vedic hymn or the holy name of the Supreme Lord is uttered, om̐ is added? BG 17.23

The three words om̐ tat sat are uttered in conjunction with the holy name of the Supreme Lord, e.g., om̐ tad viṣṇoḥ. Whenever a Vedic hymn or the holy name of the Supreme Lord is uttered, om̐ is added. This is the indication of Vedic literature.

73. What indicates the first goal? BG 17.23

These three words are taken from Vedic hymns. Om̐ ity etad brahmaṇo nediṣṭham nāma indicates the first goal.

74. What indicates the second goal? BG 17.23

Then tat tvam asi (Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.8.7) indicates the second goal.

75. What indicates the third goal? BG 17.23

sad eva saumya (Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.2.1) indicates the third goal.

76. Why om̐ tat sat hymn has great significance? BG 17.23

Formerly when Brahmā, the first created living entity, performed sacrifices, he indicated by these three words the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore the same principle has always been followed by disciplic succession. So this hymn has great significance.

77. Why Bhagavad-gītā recommends om̐ tat sat hymes? BG 17.23

Bhagavad-gītā recommends, therefore, that any work done should be done for om̐ tat sat, or for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When one performs penance, charity and sacrifice with these three words, he is acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

78. Why There is no loss of energy in acting in such a transcendental way? BG 17.23

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a scientific execution of transcendental activities which enables one to return home, back to Godhead. There is no loss of energy in acting in such a transcendental way.

79. What assures the perfection of all activity? BG 17.24

Om̐ tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam (Ṛg Veda 1.22.20). The lotus feet of Viṣṇu are the supreme devotional platform. The performance of everything on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead assures the perfection of all activity.

80. Why transcendentalists begin always with om̐? BG 17.24

transcendentalists undertaking performances of sacrifice, charity and penance in accordance with scriptural regulations begin always with om̐, to attain the Supreme.

81. What the word tat indicates? BG 17.25

Without desiring fruitive results, one should perform various kinds of sacrifice, penance and charity with the word tat.

82. What is The purpose of such transcendental activities? BG 17.25

To be elevated to the spiritual position, one should not act for any material gain. Acts should be performed for the ultimate gain of being transferred to the spiritual kingdom, back to home, back to Godhead.

83. What The words praśaste karmaṇi, or “prescribed duties,” indicate? BG 17.26-27

The words praśaste karmaṇi, or “prescribed duties,” indicate that there are many activities prescribed in the Vedic literature which are purificatory processes

84. When the purification process begins? Bg 17.26-27

beginning from the time of conception up to the end of one’s life. Such purificatory processes are adopted for the ultimate liberation of the living entity. In all such activities it is recommended that one vibrate om̐ tat sat.

85. What The words sad-bhāve and sādhu-bhāve indicate? BG 17.26-27

The words sad-bhāve and sādhu-bhāve indicate the transcendental situation.

86. What is called sattva? BG 17.26-27

Acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is called sattva

87. Who is called a sādhu? BG 17.26-27

one who is fully conscious of the activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is called a sādhu

88. What is said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam? BG 17.26-27

In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.25.25) it is said that the transcendental subject matter becomes clear in the association of the devotees.

89. What is the word satām prasāṅgāt means? Bg 17.26-27

The words used are satām prasāṅgāt. Without good association, one cannot achieve transcendental knowledge.

90. When initiating a person or offering the sacred thread what one vibrates? BG 17.26-27

When initiating a person or offering the sacred thread, one vibrates the words om̐ tat sat.

91. What is the object in all kinds of performance of yajña? BG 17.26-27

in all kinds of performance of yajña the object is the Supreme, om̐ tat sat.

92. What is The word tad-arthīyam further means ? BG 17.26-27

The word tad-arthīyam further means offering service to anything which represents the Supreme, including such service as cooking and helping in the Lord's temple, or any other kind of work for broadcasting the glories of the Lord. These supreme words om̐ tat sat are thus used in many ways to perfect all activities and make everything complete.

93. Why Anything done without the transcendental objective is useless? BG 17.28

Anything done without the transcendental objective - whether it be sacrifice, charity or penance - is useless.

94. What are the activities are abominable? BG 17.28

Anything done without the transcendental objective it is declared that such activities are abominable

95. When there can never be any fruit? BG 17.28

Everything should be done for the Supreme in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Without such faith, and without the proper guidance, there can never be any fruit.

96. Why In all the Vedic scriptures, faith in the Supreme is advised? BG 17.28

In all the Vedic scriptures, faith in the Supreme is advised. In the pursuit of all Vedic instructions, the ultimate goal is the understanding of Kṛṣṇa. No one can obtain success without following this principle.

97. What is the way to make everything successful? BG 17.28

Therefore, the best course is to work from the very beginning in Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master. That is the way to make everything successful.

98. In the conditional state how people are attracted to worship? BG 17.28

In the conditional state, people are attracted to worshipping demigods, ghosts, or Yakṣas like Kuvera.

99. Why The mode of goodness is better? BG 17.28

The mode of goodness is better than the modes of passion and ignorance,

100. Why directly to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is better? BG 17.28

one who takes directly to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is transcendental to all three modes of material nature. Although there is a process of gradual elevation, if one, by the association of pure devotees, takes directly to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that is the best way. And that is recommended in this chapter.

101. What is the process of taking krishna consciousness? Bg 17.28

To achieve success in this way, one must first find the proper spiritual master and receive training under his direction. Then one can achieve faith in the Supreme. When that faith matures, in course of time, it is called love of God. This love is the ultimate goal of the living entities. One should therefore take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness directly.