

Bhagavad-Gita – Part Two- Chapter 7 : **His Holiness Bhakti Caru Swami**



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Okay so then I will briefly discuss about the seventh chapter which is actually our main... These next few days we will extensively discuss the other chapters of Bhagavad-gita. Today as I mentioned, is just we discussed about the introduction and how one comes to this platform of spiritual understanding, transcending material platform how one comes to the spiritual platform.

As an expert guide, Krishna knows how to guide different individuals according to his situation, according to his propensities. Now in the seventh chapter, Krishna is actually dealing with jnana and vijnana. Jnana means knowledge and vijnana means realised knowledge.

Now in order to understand jnana and vijnana, we have to actually understand another concept. What is ajnana. So generally people think that jnana means knowledge, any knowledge. But according to the Vedic understanding, knowledge about the material nature is not knowledge. It's ignorance, ajnana.

Knowledge about material things is not knowledge, it's ajnana, ignorance. And this ignorance is tying us down to this region of darkness. Our attachment to this material nature is due to our ignorance. Now to get deeper into it. Will it take us out of it? No, if we go deeper into ignorance what will you get? By going deeper into ignorance will you ever come to the platform of knowledge? No. Therefore the first consideration is , "Give that up." This is not what we want to deal with. Knowledge about the material nature is

not important. What really matters is the knowledge about our real identity, the knowledge about the soul to begin with.

Krishna very systematically gave that knowledge at the beginning of Bhagavad-gita. Krishna pointed out what is the characteristic of the soul. Soul is *na jayate mriyate va kadacin*. The soul is never born, the soul will never die.

The soul is not perishable.

nainam chindanti sastrani

The soul cannot be cut by any weapon.

nainam dahati pavakah

The soul cannot be burnt by fire.

na cainam na kledayanty apo

na sosayati marutah

The soul is not affected by any material condition. It cannot be cut. It cannot be burnt. It cannot be drowned. It cannot be moistened. It cannot be dried. That is the nature of the soul. Which means the soul is beyond this material nature. So the knowledge about the soul and its spiritual identity is jnana.

But the knowledge about the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the soul's eternal relationship with Him is vijnana. And understanding that everything will be known.

(Note from Ramola: Sorry, not sure how to remove the page-lines above and the page-line below.)

yasmin vijnate sarvam eva vijnatam bhavanti. Knowing this everything becomes known and achieving this everything becomes achieved. So Krishna has pointed out at the beginning of seventh chapter. Krishna is pointing out.

mayy asakta-manah partha

yogam yunjan mad-asrayah

asamsayam samagram mam

yatha jnasyasi tac chrnu

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: “Now hear, O son of Prtha, how by practicing yoga in full consciousness of Me, with mind attached to Me, you can know Me in full, free from doubt.”

“Listen to me, I will give you that knowledge”, that is what Krishna is telling. *yogam yunjan mad-asrayah*. “Being connected to Me, mind attached to Me, being sheltered by Me, taking shelter of Me, the way you will get to know Me without any doubt, listen to that knowledge.” And then in the next verse Krishna is pointing out:

jnanam te 'ham sa-vijnanam

idam vaksyamy asesatah

yaj jnatva neha bhuyo 'nyaj

jnatavyam avasisyate

Krishna is telling, “I shall now declare unto you in full this knowledge, both phenomenal and numinous. This being known, nothing further shall remain for you to know.”

So here we can see that Krishna is pointing out: *jnanam te 'ham sa-vijnanam* – jnana and vijñana. Prabhupada translated jnanam means phenomenal knowledge and vijñanam means numinous knowledge. So the knowledge which is perfect and complete, that knowledge I will give you. What is that knowledge? That knowledge is the knowledge about the soul’s eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Now when one is situated in that knowledge, does he need to know anything else? No. Then he is situated in perfect knowledge.

But this knowledge is very rare.

manusyanam saharesu

kascid yatati siddhaye

yatatam api siddhanam

kascin mam vetti tattvatah

Saharesu, out of thousands and thousands of *manusyanam*, human beings, rarely one aspires for spiritual perfection. *kascid yatati siddhaye*. And of those who achieve perfection; not that everybody who aspires for spiritual perfection becomes perfect. Maybe out of thousands of them, rarely one achieves that perfection. And among those perfected ones, it is difficult to find one who is a devotee of Mine. “Know Me in truth.” Know Me in truth, means, who can get to know Krishna? Krishna has pointed out beforehand *aktamam abhijanati* that only a devotee can get to know Me. So when Krishna says “Knows me in truth” meaning that He is talking about a devotee. So this is

how rare it is to become a devotee of the Lord. This is how rare it is to achieve devotional service to the Lord. If we consider just simply *manusyanam saharesu*. Not one thousand but many, many thousands. Out of thousands of people rarely one aspires for spiritual perfection. So let's consider that out of ten thousand, one aspires for spiritual perfection. And out of thousands of them, rarely one achieves perfection. Or let us say out of thousand of such aspirants, one achieves perfection. So 1000 x 10 000 is ten million. And then of those who have achieved perfection, rarely one becomes a devotee. So out of ten million, one achieves spiritual perfection. So out of say hundred such people, perfected ones, one becomes a devotee. So what did you get, out of one billion, one becomes a devotee. What's the population of this world? So that is how rare it is to become a devotee of the Lord.

But we are in a very special situation. Bhagavad-gita was spoken five thousand years ago, but Krishna coming as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has created a very special situation. That situation is that this devotional service has become quite easily available. Caitanya Mahaprabhu distributed it to everybody. It's available to everybody. That's why it's become so easily available.

But just receiving this doesn't make us perfect. We have to properly practice the process. So we have to recognise how rare an opportunity we have received. Now should you take advantage of it or squander it? Naturally we want to take advantage of it. So please take up this process with all sincerity.

Now again I will make one point.

Actually I was expecting a lot more questions because I am trying to make some points clear to you. Now if I don't hear questions I don't know whether you understand me or not. Am I making sense? (Devotees respond yes). Do you understand? Did you understand everything that I said? Now if you didn't understand then why didn't you ask questions? If there is something that I failed to clarify, then shouldn't you have asked questions? As I said, this is actually a matter of question and answer. We are here with a specific purpose. This seminar has a very specific purpose. The purpose is to make you understand something. What we are pursuing, what we are practicing, we are trying to give you a clear understanding of that.

Question: Is the knowledge of the material nature or material knowledge useless? What about our various occupations/skills, which we use to earn our income?

Answer: Yes. Now let me consider what is the difference between material and spiritual? Do you know what is the difference between material and spiritual? Does material mean here and spiritual means there? The difference between material and spiritual is a very thin line. When we do something for ourselves, that's material. When we do something for Krishna that is spiritual. So knowledge also or occupational skills that you have, if you use them for your sense gratification for your sake, yes, then its useless. It's not going to benefit you. It may bring you some money but it won't really benefit you in the ultimate sense. But if you do it for Krishna, then it is spiritualised. And then, yes, it has a

lot of value. So whatever skill you have, whatever ability you have, whatever resources you have, make it a point to use it in Krishna's service because that will be the ultimate perfection of your life.

Please try to remember that Krishna consciousness is not a part time business. It is not a part time business that throughout the week I will do my own things and on Saturday I will come to the temple and attend the Sunday feast; and I have done a lot! No, that is a part time business. Okay, initially that is fine. If you are engaged in that way, initially that is okay. But Krishna consciousness is a life long commitment. Krishna consciousness is a twenty four hour business. If you really want to derive the benefit out of it, you have to become a pure devotee. A pure devotee means that he is completely committed to Krishna. It is not difficult. It is simple. You become Krishna's, then whatever you do becomes Krishna conscious. That's as simple as that. Whatever you are doing, just do it for Krishna. If you are running your business, run it for Krishna. If you are taking care of your household then do it for Krishna. Consider that your house is Krishna's temple. Consider that your family is Krishna's family. It is not your family and you take care of your family members. Then you are taking care of Krishna's devotees. Then whatever you are doing is becoming spiritualised. Yes, then you go and work, earn money to maintain your family. That you are going and working outside, will become Krishna conscious activity.

So they have certain utility, specially in today's world. Today's world actually is a very demanding world. Because of massive industrialisation, the world has become very, very complex. If you don't learn the art of developing those skills, you will be considered to be useless. If you do not know how to do certain things you won't get a job. If you don't get a job, then you won't be able to earn your living. And it becomes very difficult. But this is an artificial arrangement. This is not a natural arrangement. Some unfortunate arrangements has been made in this world that has made life so complex. Actually to survive, what do you need? All you need is food, water, air and to protect yourself you need a house, to cover yourself you need clothes. These are the basic necessities of life. But look at today's world; what it has become. If you have just food and water, clothes and shelter, that's not enough. You have to have a colour TV, you have to have a computer. You have to have a car. You have to have so many different useless things. In order to have them you have to have money. And if you don't have a skill, then you won't get a job. Because in today's society you are made into a sudra through this education system, unless you get a job you feel "Oh! What shall I do? I need a job". If you don't get a job then your life is useless.

But one can very easily go to the nature and cultivate. Prabhupada used to say that with two acres of land and two cows, one can maintain a family. All you need is two acres of land and two cows, and you can maintain your family. All that you need, your food etc. you can get from the two acres of land. But in today's world, no one will take that proposal seriously. Their reaction is "Oh! Give me break! Two acres of land and two cows! Where will I get the car? Where will I get the colour TV? And if I don't, then my life is meaningless". All these education systems are absolutely meaningless. We don't need to learn all those things actually. When there was no computer, was there any need

to learn how to run a computer? When there was no motor car, was there any need to learn about a motor car? Did they live their lives in those days? But today they have made all kinds of educational arrangements. For everything there is an education. Prabhupada was aghast when he heard that in Sweden, in schools, they give sex education. Those days it was thirty years back, it was Sweden. Now all over the world it is happening. Prabhupada's reaction was, "What's there to learn about sex life. Even a dog knows." So, human society has become so complex by some unnecessary arrangements by some stupid fools.

What is the motivation? The motivation is profit. They simply want to make money by making fools of others. If you don't learn this, your life is useless. What is the purpose? I am going to enslave you; specialised slavery. The more we are actually getting into that education system, the more we are becoming slaves of this demoniac culture. In this way Kali is actually controlling everybody. These are all actually Kali's arrangements to control. Anyway, the bottom line is that learning things are good, provided you can use it in Krishna's service. Yesterday we were discussing that things have come and Prabhupada used them. When Prabhupada went to America, first he was using a typewriter to type. But then Prabhupada got a tape recorder and he started to use the tape recorder to translate Bhagavad-gita. Then Prabhupada got a dictaphone. Then Prabhupada got devotees to transcribe. Prabhupada used all these facilities in Krishna's service. So we do not say "No!". In Krishna consciousness we don't say "No" to anything excepting those four things; no meat eating, no intoxication, no illicit sex and no gambling. Besides that, "Yes, yes, yes!" For everything it's Yes. Everything can be used in Krishna's service.

You have a question Syamananda?

Question: Guru Maharaj, you were saying that it is not enough just to receive vijana, we actually have to practice properly. So what does that actually mean in terms of the preaching mission in being an ISKCON devotee. What does that mean to actually practice properly in terms of 'I am an ISKCON devotee, what is my responsibility'?

Answer: Yes, practice is the application of the theoretical information. We understand that we are spirit souls. Theoretically we understand. We understand that Krishna is God and we understand that we have a relationship. But the practical application is to cultivate that relationship. And there comes the sadhana bhakti, practicing of devotional service. Yes, we have to practice. What Prabhupada instructed, now we have to apply, to put into practice.

Question: (Inaudible)...and preaching out to others?

Answer: I see, preaching aspect. Yes, naturally. First we receive it and then we distribute it; especially when we have a mission like spreading this movement all over the world. When we have a responsibility to spread it all over the world, then everybody has to take up that responsibility. Not just "I am practicing and that's fine". I say that is only fifty percent. You are chanting sixteen rounds, following four regulative principles, practicing

sadhana bhakti, rendering service; that is fifty percent. The other fifty percent is to go out and make others chant Hare Krishna, following four regulative principles, render devotional service.

Question: How rare is it to get a human form? Why do we carry our karma from lifetime to lifetime?

Answer: How rare is it to get a human form? Extremely rare. You know how rare it is? Even for a resident of heavenly planets, there is a description of it in Mahabharata. A living entity goes to a heavenly planet due to his pious activities. When the pious activities are exhausted then he loses his right to remain in the heavenly planet and he falls from the heavenly planet. When he is falling, below the heavenly planet there are the rakshasas. The rakshasas catch him and eat him up. Due to that pain, he begins to shed tears. His soul leaves the body through the tear drops. Those tear drops come down to the earth with the rain drops. Then it enters into a plant. Then it enters into a grain. Then a living entity eats that grain. Then the spirit soul goes into his semen. Then it enters into a mother's womb. There it develops a body, according to the mother. Now consider how rare it is. It is not that every soul eaten by a man in the form of a grain, that enters into the semen of that person will impregnate an ovum and get a body. And if one gets a body, out of 8 400 000 species, the chances of getting the human form of life is only 400 000. So see how rare it is. Therefore don't squander this wonderful opportunity. Take full advantage of this human form of life. It's extremely rare. You may get a human form of life. What's the guarantee that you will come to Krishna consciousness. So we not only got this human form of life, we got this opportunity to become Krishna conscious. It's a very, very rare opportunity. So we must take proper advantage of that.

Question: You said that in Karma yoga one can act but at least offer the results to Krishna if you want to enjoy but not suffer. Yet we see that the greater part of humanity cannot even do that. Do they fall outside of this category?

Answer: Yes. Most of the human society is out of that category. Karma yoga means offering the results to Krishna. How many people accept Krishna? How many people even accept God? And of those who accept God, out of that, how many of them accept Him as a person? Of those who accept Him as a Person, how many of them accept Him as Krishna; then to offer the results of your actions to Krishna; very rare.

Question: How can we remain steady in Krishna consciousness without the mind being distracted by so many things e.g. during chanting or even during daily life?

Answer: Try to steady your mind. It will be difficult but keep on practising. That's what Krishna suggested. When Arjuna said that, "How shall I control the mind? It is very difficult. It is more difficult to control the mind. It's as difficult as controlling the wind". Then what was Krishna's response to that?

abhyasena tu kaunteya ,

practice
and *vairagyena ca grhyate*

detachment

If you remain attached to the different objects of the material senses then, yes, the mind will remain unsteady. So recognise that in this material nature there is nothing to enjoy. We have nothing to achieve in this material nature besides becoming Krishna conscious. The only thing that matters in this world is our becoming Krishna conscious. So let's try to become Krishna conscious. Let's take advantage of all these opportunities to become Krishna conscious. Try to control the mind, try to control your actions. Sit down and try to chant. When you cannot sit down at one place while chanting, what does it mean? It means that your mind is unsteady. Because your mind is unsteady, you just want to go here and there. If you want to go for a japa walk and chant; that is one thing. But please take this into consideration, that here we are for these seven days to achieve something. And we have designed this program in a certain way to achieve that. We have this one hour. Probably from tomorrow we will be chanting for forty five minutes, not even one hour. For these forty five minutes, make it a point to sit here and chant. The mind will say, "Oh, let me go out". The mind will say, "I have to make a phone call". The mind will say so many things. But just control your mind say "Okay. For these forty five minutes, just become steady". And then you try to increase. The purpose of coming here to this retreat is to achieve that actually; to steady our mind; to become steady in our devotional service.

I was actually considering the difference between a holiday or vacation and a retreat. Is there a difference between a holiday, a vacation and a retreat? Now did you come for a vacation or you came for a retreat? Please take this point seriously. You came for a retreat. Retreat means retreat. You see when you are in the battlefield and you are losing the battle, what does the general do? An expert general retreats. And he considers how to plan his attack. So that's what we are doing. We are retreating. We are withdrawing ourselves from everything so, that life is left behind. For these few days, that life is left behind. Now you are retreating. Now let us consider, how do we shape our spiritual life for our own benefit. So this practice is going to be helpful. Yes, everybody actually comes up with this question; how to steady my mind while chanting.

Even Arjuna asked that question. Arjuna is asking that question, "Krishna, how shall I control my mind? It is so unsteady." Now consider Arjuna's mind. Can you imagine how steady Arjuna's mind was? You know that story? You know the incident where Dronacarya was giving a test to his students. He asked different students. He put a bird on a thing and the point was to shoot the eye of the bird. And he asked everyone. Everyone failed. "What are you seeing Yudhisthira?". "I am seeing the bird, I am seeing the tree." I'm seeing, this I'm seeing that. "Forget it". In this way Dronacarya asked everyone and finally when he asked Arjuna, "Arjuna, what do you see?" Arjuna replied, "I see the bird." "What do you see?" "I see the bird's head." "What do you see?" "I see the bird's eye." Dronacarya asked, "Don't you see anything else?" Arjuna replied, "No." Then Dronacarya said, "Shoot."

Now consider what kind of mind Arjuna had to make it so steady. (laughter)

How do you think Arjuna pierced the fish that was rotating? And where he had to shoot that fish and make it drop, looking at a pool of water. How could he do that? Can you imagine how steady, how focussed his mind was? And Arjuna is telling Krishna, *cancalam hi manah krsna*. So then what to speak of us. (laughter) So let's become serious about these points. Don't just ask the question. You know the answer. Now you act accordingly. You know the answer. Now act accordingly. Since you have figured out that your mind is unstable, now you know how to make it steady. Do it. But if you ask the question and keep on doing your nonsense, there won't be any benefit.

Question: It is stated that if you take one step towards Krishna then He takes ten steps towards you. So if out of many thousands, one may endeavour for perfection, does Krishna from within as the Supersoul, help the devotee to fulfil his desire to perform loving devotional service or does the devotee have to endeavour on his own completely?

Answer: Very good question. The very simple answer to that is that yes, when you surrender to Krishna, then Krishna takes care of you. Then you are not alone. Then Krishna is helping you, because you took shelter of Krishna. When you surrender to Krishna, what did you actually say "Krishna I am completely incapable, Krishna, I am completely incompetent, I am completely useless, I do not know what to do. So You please take care of me". Krishna will say, "Okay fine. I will take care of you. But you surrender unto Me". So you surrender and Krishna will take care. So it doesn't matter. Then this consideration of *manusyanam saharesu* doesn't apply. If all the people surrender unto Krishna, Krishna will take care. And that is the good fortune that Srila Prabhupada has created for us. Previously this point was as rare as that; *manusyanam saharesu*. Out of thousands and thousands and thousands of people, one would become a devotee of Krishna. But now, although it was so rare, Caitanya Mahaprabhu came and gave it, "Okay. Become a devotee."; direct opportunity. Then Prabhupada came and took that mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and distributed it all over the world.

Question: Hare Krishna Maharaj, you mentioned that one characteristic of the soul is that it is not affected by material contamination? (HH Bhakti Caru Maharaj: Did I say that? I don't remember saying that. I don't remember saying that the soul does not become affected by material contamination). How is this strong defence mechanism broken, by our behaviour and psychological vices like envy or jealousy?

Answer: Well, Krishna answered that point. He said,

kama esa krodha esa

rajo-guna-samudbhavah

All these entanglements in the material nature are simply due to lust and anger, which is generated out of the influence of the mode of passion. And at the bottom of all that is our false ego. So how to get rid of the false ego? The way to get rid of false ego is to surrender to Krishna. Then the false ego will disappear. The false ego has been generated due to aversion to Krishna. So you surrender to Krishna, the false ego will disappear. And your real identity will become manifest.

Question: When does actual devotional service begin? Do we have to be free from all anarthas?

Answer: Well, actual devotional service begins with shraddha. *Adau shraddha*. The moment you accepted Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and identified yourself as a servant, and you surrendered yourself unto Krishna, then your devotional service began. Krishna is saying

sarva-dharman parityajya

mam ekam saranam vraja

aham tvam sarva-papebhyo

moksayisyami ma sucah

So the beginning of devotional service is the surrender or saranagati. Just surrender to Krishna. But in order to surrender you have to recognise Who is Krishna. Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. With that understanding you surrender to Krishna. That's the beginning of devotional service. Anarthas may be there, but anarthas will disappear gradually. When the cleansing process begins, all the dirt will become cleansed. It's not that first you have to clean the dirt and then you have to begin the process. No. This process will purify you.

Question: What if what I like to do, or enjoy doing, is not really within my nature? Is liking something or enjoying an activity fully indicative of one's nature? (HH Bhakti Caru Maharaj: Well, I don't understand that point.) What if what I like to do, or enjoy doing, is not really within my nature?

Answer: Rather it's the other way around. What is actually inherent to your nature, that is what you like to do. To say, what if I enjoy doing something that is not really within my nature, then you won't enjoy doing it. If you ask a tiger to eat grass, do you think he will enjoy it? No, because the tiger's nature is to eat meat. So when he gets meat, he enjoys it. That's his nature. Whereas a cow, when you give her grass, she enjoys it because her nature is to eat grass. So whatever is your nature, that's what you enjoy doing; not something that is not in your nature that you enjoy doing.

Question: Please share with us how to chant our rounds with feeling and longing? Thank you.

Answer: Very good question. Sometimes devotees ask, “How can I be attentive in my chanting?” The first answer to that is, to try to hear when you are chanting; attentive hearing. How do you receive sound? Do you receive sound through your tongue? Do you receive sound through your eyes? How do you receive sound? Through hearing. So receive the transcendental sound vibration and then remember Whose name you are chanting. Who is He? He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So add some feeling to your chanting. It’s out of love that you are chanting. You are trying to express your love. Try to add that feeling to it.

Question: When a person is about to leave his or her body, please explain what happens to the Supersoul?

Answer: The Supersoul is with the soul as a Witness. The soul is going to another body and the Supersoul also goes. The Supersoul is with the soul. The soul goes with the subtle body, and the Supersoul also goes with the individual.

Question: I used to really have a hard time chanting but I saved the situation. I got up at 2am, chant my rounds, then do my other work which is secondary to the Lord. Maybe other devotees can try this method.

Answer: Okay. Good advice. How many of you are going to wake up at two o’ clock? Okay. Whose point was that? That’s a good point. If not two o’ clock, then at least try to get up early because the early hours are a very good time to chant.

Thank you all very much.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

Gaura Premananda!

Haribol.