

CHAPTER - 17
THE DIVISIONS OF FAITH

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.1

arjuna uvāca
ye śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
teṣāṃ niṣṭhā tu kā kṛṣṇa
sattvam āho rajas tamaḥ

TRANSLATION

Arjuna inquired: O Kṛṣṇa, what is the situation of those who do not follow the principles of scripture but worship according to their own imagination? Are they in goodness, in passion or in ignorance?

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.2

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
tri-vidhā bhavati śraddhā
dehinām sā svabhāva-jā
sāttvikī rājasī caiva
tāmasī ceti tām śṛṇu

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: According to the modes of nature acquired by the embodied soul, one's faith can be of three kinds - in goodness, in passion or in ignorance. Now hear about this.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.3

sattvānurūpā sarvasya
śraddhā bhavati bhārata
śraddhā-mayo 'yaṃ puruṣo
yo yac-chraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ

TRANSLATION

O son of Bharata, according to one's existence under the various modes of nature, one evolves a particular kind of faith. The living being is said to be of a particular faith according to the modes he has acquired.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.4

yajante sātṭvikā devān
yakṣa-rakṣāṁsi rājasāḥ
pretān bhūta-gaṇāṁś cānye
yajante tāmasā janāḥ

TRANSLATION

Men in the mode of goodness worship the demigods; those in the mode of passion worship the demons; and those in the mode of ignorance worship ghosts and spirits.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.5

aśāstra-vihitaṁ ghorāṁ
tapyante ye tapo janāḥ
dambhāhaṅkāra-saṁyuktāḥ
kāma-rāga-balānvitāḥ

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.6

karṣayantaḥ śarīra-sthaṁ
bhūta-grāmam acetasaḥ
mām caivāntaḥ śarīra-sthaṁ
tān viddhy āsura-niścayān

TRANSLATION

Those who undergo severe austerities and penances not recommended in the scriptures, performing them out of pride and egoism, who are impelled by lust and attachment, who are foolish and who torture the material elements of the body as well as the Supersoul dwelling within, are to be known as demons.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.7

āhāras tv api sarvasya
tri-vidho bhavati priyaḥ
yajñas tapas tathā dānam
teṣāṃ bhedaṃ imaṃ śṛṇu

TRANSLATION

Even the food each person prefers is of three kinds, according to the three modes of material nature. The same is true of sacrifices, austerities and charity. Now hear of the distinctions between them.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.8

āyuh-sattva-balārogya-
sukha-prīti-vivardhanāḥ
rasyāḥ snigdhaḥ sthirā hṛdyā
āhārāḥ sāttvika-priyāḥ

TRANSLATION

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.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.9

katv-amla-lavanaty-usna-
tikṣna-rukṣa-vidahināḥ
ahara rajasasyesta
duhkha-sokamaya-pradah

TRANSLATION

BHAGAVAD-GITA 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.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.10

yāta-yāmaṁ gata-rasaṁ
pūti paryuṣitaṁ ca yat
ucchiṣṭam api cāmedhyaṁ
bhojanaṁ tāmāsa-priyam

TRANSLATION

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.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.11

aphalākāṅkṣibhir yajño
vidhi-diṣṭo ya ijjate
yaṣṭavyam eveti manaḥ
samādhāya sa sāttvikaḥ

TRANSLATION

Of sacrifices, the sacrifice performed according to the directions of scripture, as a matter of duty, by those who desire no reward, is of the nature of goodness.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.12

abhisandhāya tu phalaṁ
dambhārtham api caiva yat
ijjate bharata-śreṣṭha
taṁ yajñaṁ viddhi rājasam

TRANSLATION

But the sacrifice performed for some material benefit, or for the sake of pride, O chief of the Bhāratas, you should know to be in the mode of passion.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.13

vidhi-hīnam asṛṣṭānnaṁ
mantra-hīnam adakṣiṇam
śraddhā-virahitam yajñaṁ
tāmasaṁ paricakṣate

TRANSLATION

Any sacrifice performed without regard for the directions of scripture, without distribution of prasādam [spiritual food], without chanting of Vedic hymns and remunerations to the priests, and without faith is considered to be in the mode of ignorance.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.14

deva-dvija-guru-prājña-
pūjanam śaucam ārjavam
brahmacaryam ahimsā ca
śārīraṁ tapa ucyate

TRANSLATION

Austerity of the body consists in worship of the Supreme Lord, the brāhṁaṇ as, the spiritual master, and superiors like the father and mother, and in cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy and nonviolence.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.15

anudvega-karaṁ vākyaṁ
satyaṁ priya-hitam ca yat
svādhyāyābhyasanaṁ caiva
vāñ-mayaṁ tapa ucyate

TRANSLATION

Austerity of speech consists in speaking words that are truthful, pleasing, beneficial, and not agitating to others, and also in regularly reciting Vedic literature.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.16

manaḥ-prasādaḥ saumyatvaṁ
maunam ātma-vinigrahaḥ
bhāva-saṁsuddhir ity etat
tapo mānasam ucyate

TRANSLATION

And satisfaction, simplicity, gravity, self-control and purification of one's existence are the austerities of the mind.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.17

śraddhayā parayā taptam
tapas tat tri-vidham naraiḥ
aphalākāṅkṣibhir yuktaiḥ
sāttvikam paricakṣate

TRANSLATION

: 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.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.18

satkāra-māna-pūjārtham
tapo dambhena caiva yat
kriyate tad iha proktam
rājasam calam adhruvam

TRANSLATION

Penance performed out of pride and for the sake of gaining respect, honor and worship is said to be in the mode of passion. It is neither stable nor permanent.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.19

mūḍha-grāheṇātmano yat
pīḍayā kriyate tapaḥ
parasyotsādanārtham vā
tat tāmasam udāhṛtam

TRANSLATION

Penance performed out of foolishness, with self-torture or to destroy or injure others, is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.20

dātavyam iti yad dānam
dīyate 'nupakāriṇe
deśe kāle ca pātre ca
tad dānam sāttvikam smṛtam

TRANSLATION

: 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.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.21

yat tu pratyupakārārtham
phalam uddīśya vā punaḥ
dīyate ca parikliṣṭam
tad dānam rājasam smṛtam

TRANSLATION

But charity performed with the expectation of some return, or with a desire for fruitive results, or in a grudging mood, is said to be charity in the mode of passion.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.22

adeśa-kāle yad dānam
apātrebhyaś ca dīyate
asat-kṛtam avajñātam
tat tāmasam udāhṛtam

TRANSLATION

: And charity performed at an impure place, at an improper time, to unworthy persons, or without proper attention and respect is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.23

om̐ tat sad iti nirdeśo
brahmaṇas tri-vidhaḥ smṛtaḥ
brāhmaṇās tena vedās ca
yajñās ca vihitāḥ purā

TRANSLATION

From the beginning of creation, the three words om̐ tat sat were used to indicate the Supreme Absolute Truth. These three symbolic representations were used by brāhmaṇ as while chanting the hymns of the Vedas and during sacrifices for the satisfaction of the Supreme.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.24

tasmād om̐ ity udāhṛtya
yajña-dāna-tapaḥ-kriyāḥ
pravartante vidhānuktāḥ
satatam̐ brahma-vādinām

TRANSLATION

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

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.25

tad ity anabhisandhāya
phalaṁ yajña-tapaḥ-kriyāḥ
dāna-kriyās ca vividhāḥ
kriyante mokṣa-kāṅkṣibhiḥ

TRANSLATION

Without desiring fruitive results, one should perform various kinds of sacrifice, penance and charity with the word tat. The purpose of such transcendental activities is to get free from material entanglement.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.26

sad-bhāve sādhu-bhāve ca
sad ity etat prayujyate
praśaste karmaṇi tathā
sac-chabdaḥ pārtha yujyate

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.27

yajñe tapasi dāne ca
sthiṭiḥ sad iti cocyate
karma caiva tad-arthīyaṁ
sad ity evābhidhīyate

TRANSLATION

The Absolute Truth is the objective of devotional sacrifice, and it is indicated by the word sat. The performer of such sacrifice is also called sat, as are all works of sacrifice, penance and charity which, true to the absolute nature, are performed to please the Supreme Person, O son of Pṛthā.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 17.28

aśraddhayā hutam dattam
tapas taptam kṛtam ca yat
asad ity ucyate pārtha
na ca tat pretya no iha

TRANSLATION

Anything done as sacrifice, charity or penance without faith in the Supreme, O son of P thā, is impermanent. It is called asat and is useless both in this life and the next.

Bhagavad-Gita