

TEXT 32

श्रीभीष्म उवाच

इति मतिरूपकल्पिता वितृष्णा  
भगवति सात्वतपुरावे विभूमि ।  
स्वसुखमुपगते क्वचिद्विहर्तुं  
प्रकृतिमुपेयुषि यद्वप्रवाहः ॥ ३२ ॥

*śrī-bhīṣma uvāca*

*iti matir upakalpitā vitṛṣṇā*

*bhagavati sātvata-puṅgave vibhūmni*

*sva-sukham upagate kvacid vihartum*

*prakṛtim upeyuṣi yad-bhava-pravāhaḥ*

*śrī-bhīṣmaḥ uvāca*—Śrī Bhīṣmadeva said; *iti*—thus; *matih*—thinking, feeling and willing; *upakalpitā*—invested; *vitṛṣṇā*—freed from all sense desires; *bhagavati*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *sātvata-puṅgave*—unto the leader of the devotees; *vibhūmni*—unto the great; *sva-sukham*—self-satisfaction; *upagate*—unto Him who has attained it; *kvacid*—sometimes; *vihartum*—out of transcendental pleasure; *prakṛtim*—in the material world; *upeyuṣi*—do accept it; *yat-bhava*—from whom the creation; *pravāhaḥ*—is made and annihilated.

**Bhīṣmadeva said:** Let me now invest my thinking, feeling and willing, which were so long engaged in different subjects and occupational duties, in the all-powerful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is always self-satisfied, but sometimes, being the leader of the devotees, He enjoys transcendental pleasure by descending on the material world, although from Him only the material world is created.

Because Bhīṣmadeva was a statesman, the head of the Kuru dynasty, a great general and a leader of *kṣatriyas*, his mind was strewn over so many subjects, and his thinking, feeling and willing were engaged in different matters. Now, in order to achieve pure devotional service, he wanted to invest all powers of thinking, feeling and willing entirely in the Supreme Being, Lord Kṛṣṇa. He is described herein as the leader of the devotees and all-powerful. Although Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of

Godhead, He Himself descends on earth to bestow upon His pure devotees the boon of devotional service. He descends sometimes as Lord Kṛṣṇa as He is, and sometimes as Lord Caitanya. Both are leaders of the pure devotees. Pure devotees of the Lord have no desire other than the service of the Lord, and therefore they are called *sātvata*. The Lord is the chief amongst such *sātvatas*. Bhīṣmadeva, therefore, had no other desires. Unless one is purified from all sorts of material desires, the Lord does not become one's leader. Desires cannot be wiped out, but they have only to be purified. It is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* by the Lord Himself that He gives His instruction from within the heart of a pure devotee who is constantly engaged in the service of the Lord. Such instruction is given not for any material purpose but only for going back home, back to Godhead (Bg. 10.10). For the ordinary man who wants to lord it over material nature, the Lord not only sanctions and becomes a witness of activities, but He never gives the nondevotee instructions for going back to Godhead. That is the difference in dealings by the Lord with different living beings, both the devotee and the nondevotee. He is leader of all the living beings, as the king of the state rules both the prisoners and the free citizens. But His dealings are different in terms of devotee and nondevotee. Nondevotees never care to take any instruction from the Lord, and therefore the Lord is silent in their case, although He witnesses all their activities and awards them the necessary results, good or bad. The devotees are above this material goodness and badness. They are progressive on the path of transcendence, and therefore they have no desire for anything material. The devotee also knows Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the original Nārāyaṇa because Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by His plenary portion, appears as the Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, the original source of all material creation. The Lord also desires the association of His pure devotees, and for them only the Lord descends on the earth and enlivens them. The Lord appears out of His own will. He is not forced by the conditions of material nature. He is therefore described here as the *vibhu*, or the almighty, for He is never conditioned by the laws of material nature.

### TEXT 33

त्रिभुवनकमनं तमालवर्णं

रविकरगौरवराम्बरं दधाने ।  
वपुरलककुलावृताननाब्जं  
विजयसखे रतिरस्तु मेऽनवद्या ॥ ३३ ॥

*tri-bhuvana-kamanam tamāla-varṇam*  
*ravi-kara-gaura-varāmbaram dadhāne*  
*vapur alaka-kulāvṛtānanābjam*  
*vijaya-sakhe ratir astu me 'navadyā*

*tri-bhuvana*—three statuses of planetary systems; *kamanam*—the most desirable; *tamāla-varṇam*—bluish like the *tamāla* tree; *ravi-kara*—sun rays; *gaura*—golden color; *varāmbaram*—glittering dress; *dadhāne*—one who wears; *vapur*—body; *alaka-kula-āvṛta*—covered with paintings of sandalwood pulp; *anana-abjam*—face like a lotus; *vijaya-sakhe*—unto the friend of Arjuna; *ratir astu*—may attraction be reposed upon Him; *me*—my; *navadyā*—without desire for fruitive results.

**Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the intimate friend of Arjuna. He has appeared on this earth in His transcendental body, which resembles the bluish color of the tamāla tree. His body attracts everyone in the three planetary systems [upper, middle and lower]. May His glittering yellow dress and His lotus face, covered with paintings of sandalwood pulp, be the object of my attraction, and may I not desire fruitive results.**

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa by His own internal pleasure appears on earth, He does so by the agency of His internal potency. The attractive features of His transcendental body are desired in all the three worlds, namely the upper, middle and lower planetary systems. Nowhere in the universe are there such beautiful bodily features as those of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore His transcendental body has nothing to do with anything materially created. Arjuna is described here as the conqueror, and Kṛṣṇa is described as his intimate friend. Bhīṣmadeva, on his bed of arrows after the Battle of Kurukṣetra, is remembering the particular dress of Lord Kṛṣṇa which He put on as the driver of Arjuna's chariot. While fighting was going on between Arjuna and Bhīṣma, Bhīṣma's attraction was drawn by the glittering dress of Kṛṣṇa, and indirectly he admired his so-called enemy Arjuna for possessing the Lord as his friend. Arjuna was

always a conqueror because the Lord was his friend. Bhīṣmadeva takes this opportunity to address the Lord as *vijaya-sakhe* (friend of Arjuna) because the Lord is pleased when He is addressed conjointly with His devotees, who are related with Him in different transcendental humors. While Kṛṣṇa was the charioteer of Arjuna, sun rays glittered on the dress of the Lord, and the beautiful hue created by the reflection of such rays was never forgotten by Bhīṣmadeva. As a great fighter he was relishing the relation of Kṛṣṇa in the chivalrous humor. Transcendental relation with the Lord in any one of the different *rasas* (humors) is relishable by the respective devotees in the highest ecstasy. Less intelligent mundaners who want to make a show of being transcendently related with the Lord artificially jump at once to the relation of conjugal love, imitating the damsels of Vrajadhāma. Such a cheap relation with the Lord exhibits only the base mentality of the mundaner because one who has relished conjugal humor with the Lord cannot be attached to worldly conjugal *rasa*, which is condemned even by mundane ethics. The eternal relation of a particular soul with the Lord is evolved. A genuine relation of the living being with the Supreme Lord can take any form out of the five principal *rasas*, and it does not make any difference in transcendental degree to the genuine devotee. Bhīṣmadeva is a concrete example of this, and it should be carefully observed how the great general is transcendently related with the Lord.

#### TEXT 34

युधि तुरगरजोविधूम्रविष्वक्-  
 कचलुलितश्रमवार्यलङ्कृतास्ये ।  
 मम निशितशरैर्विभिद्यमान-  
 त्वचि विलसत्कवचेऽस्तु कृष्ण आत्मा ॥ ३४ ॥

*yudhi turaga-rajo-vidhūmra-viṣvak-  
 kaca-lulita-śramavāry-alaṅkṛtāsye  
 mama niśita-śarair vibhidyamāna-  
 tvaci vilasat-kavace 'stu kṛṣṇa ātmā*

*yudhi*—on the battlefield; *turaga*—horses; *rajaḥ*—dust; *vidhūmra*—

turned an ashen color; *viṣvak*—waving; *kaca*—hair; *lulita*—scattered; *śramavāri*—perspiration; *alaṅkṛta*—decorated with; *āsyē*—unto the face; *mama*—my; *niśita*—sharp; *śaraiḥ*—by the arrows; *vibhidyamāna*—pierced by; *tvaci*—in the skin; *vilasat*—enjoying pleasure; *kavace*—protecting armor; *astu*—let there be; *kṛṣṇe*—unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *ātmā*—mind.

**On the battlefield [where Śrī Kṛṣṇa attended Arjuna out of friendship], the flowing hair of Lord Kṛṣṇa turned ashen due to the dust raised by the hoofs of the horses. And because of His labor, beads of sweat wetted His face. All these decorations, intensified by the wounds dealt by my sharp arrows, were enjoyed by Him. Let my mind thus go unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa.**

The Lord is the absolute form of eternity, bliss and knowledge. As such, transcendental loving service to the Lord in one of the five principal relations, namely *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalyā* and *mādhuryā*, i.e., neutrality, servitorship, fraternity, filial affection and conjugal love, is graciously accepted by the Lord when offered to the Lord in genuine love and affection. Śrī Bhīṣmadeva is a great devotee of the Lord in the relation of servitorship. Thus his throwing of sharp arrows at the transcendental body of the Lord is as good as the worship of another devotee who throws soft roses upon Him.

It appears that Bhīṣmadeva is repenting the actions he committed against the person of the Lord. But factually the Lord's body was not at all pained, due to His transcendental existence. His body is not matter. Both He Himself and His body are complete spiritual identity. Spirit is never pierced, burnt, dried, moistened, etc. This is vividly explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. So also it is stated in the *Skanda Purāṇa*. It is said there that spirit is always uncontaminated and indestructible. It cannot be distressed, nor can it be dried up. When Lord Viṣṇu in His incarnation appears before us, He seems to be like one of the conditioned souls, materially encaged, just to bewilder the *asuras*, or the nonbelievers, who are always alert to kill the Lord, even from the very beginning of His appearance. Kāṁsa wanted to kill Kṛṣṇa, and Rāvaṇa wanted to kill Rāma, because foolishly they were unaware of the fact that the Lord is never killed, for the spirit is never annihilated.

Therefore Bhīṣmadeva's piercing of the body of Lord Kṛṣṇa is a sort of

bewildering problem for the nondevotee atheist, but those who are devotees, or liberated souls, are not bewildered.

Bhīṣmadeva appreciated the all-merciful attitude of the Lord because He did not leave Arjuna alone, although He was disturbed by the sharpened arrows of Bhīṣmadeva, nor was He reluctant to come before Bhīṣma's deathbed, even though He was ill-treated by him on the battlefield. Bhīṣma's repentance and the Lord's merciful attitude are both unique in this picture.

Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a great *ācārya* and devotee in the humor of conjugal love with the Lord, remarks very saliently in this regard. He says that the wounds created on the body of the Lord by the sharpened arrows of Bhīṣmadeva were as pleasing to the Lord as the biting of a fiancée who bites the body of the Lord directed by a strong sense of sex desire. Such biting by the opposite sex is never taken as a sign of enmity, even if there is a wound on the body. Therefore, the fighting as an exchange of transcendental pleasure between the Lord and His pure devotee, Śrī Bhīṣmadeva, was not at all mundane. Besides that, since the Lord's body and the Lord are identical, there was no possibility of wounds in the absolute body. The apparent wounds caused by the sharpened arrows are misleading to the common man, but one who has a little absolute knowledge can understand the transcendental exchange in the chivalrous relation. The Lord was perfectly happy with the wounds caused by the sharpened arrows of Bhīṣmadeva. The word *vibhidyamāna* is significant because the Lord's skin is not different from the Lord. Because our skin is different from our soul, in our case the word *vibhidyamāna*, or being bruised and cut, would have been quite suitable. Transcendental bliss is of different varieties, and the variety of activities in the mundane world is but a perverted reflection of transcendental bliss. Because everything in the mundane world is qualitatively mundane, it is full of inebrieties, whereas in the absolute realm, because everything is of the same absolute nature, there are varieties of enjoyment without inebriety. The Lord enjoyed the wounds created by His great devotee Bhīṣmadeva, and because Bhīṣmadeva is a devotee in the chivalrous relation, he fixes up his mind on Kṛṣṇa in that wounded condition.

### TEXT 35

सपदि सखिवचो निशम्य मध्ये  
निजपरयोर्बलयो रथं निवेश्य ।  
स्थितवति परसैनिकायुरक्षणा  
हतवति पार्थसखे रतिर्ममास्तु ॥ ३५ ॥

*sapadi sakhi-vaco niśamya madhye  
nija-ṣarayoṛ balayo ratham niveśya  
sthitavati para-sainikāyur akṣṇā  
hṛtavati pārtha-sakhe ratir mamāstu*

*sapadi*—on the battlefield; *sakhi-vacaḥ*—command of the friend; *niśamya*—after hearing; *madhye*—in the midst; *nija*—His own; *ṣarayoḥ*—and the opposite party; *balayoḥ*—strength; *ratham*—chariot; *niveśya*—having entered; *sthitavati*—while staying there; *para-sainika*—of the soldiers on the opposite side; *āyur*—duration of life; *akṣṇā*—by looking over; *hṛtavati*—act of diminishing; *pārtha*—of Arjuna, son of Pṛthā (Kuntī); *sakhe*—unto the friend; *ratih*—intimate relation; *mama*—my; *astu*—let there be.

In obedience to the command of His friend, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the arena of the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra between the soldiers of Arjuna and Duryodhana, and while there He shortened the life spans of the opposite party by His merciful glance. This was done simply by His looking at the enemy. Let my mind be fixed upon that Kṛṣṇa.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (1.21-25) Arjuna ordered the infallible Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to place his chariot between the phalanxes of the soldiers. He asked Him to stay there until he had finished observing the enemies he had to face in the battle. When the Lord was so asked, He at once did so, just like an order carrier. And the Lord pointed out all the important men on the opposite side, saying, "Here is Bhīṣma, here is Droṇa," and so on. The Lord, being the supreme living being, is never the order supplier or order carrier of anyone, whoever he may be. But out of His causeless mercy and affection for His pure devotees, sometimes He carries out the order of the devotee like an awaiting servant. By executing the order of a devotee, the Lord becomes pleased, as a father is pleased to carry out the order of his small child. This is possible only out of pure

transcendental love between the Lord and His devotees, and Bhīṣmadeva was quite aware of this fact. He therefore addressed the Lord as the friend of Arjuna.

The Lord diminished the duration of life of the opposite party by His merciful glance. It is said that all the fighters who assembled on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained salvation by personally seeing the Lord at the time of death. Therefore, His diminishing the duration of life of Arjuna's enemy does not mean that He was partial to the cause of Arjuna. Factually He was merciful to the opposite party because they would not have attained salvation by dying at home in the ordinary course of life. Here was a chance to see the Lord at the time of death and thus attain salvation from material life. Therefore, the Lord is all good, and whatever He does is for everyone's good. Apparently it was for the victory of Arjuna, His intimate friend, but factually it was for the good of Arjuna's enemies. Such are the transcendental activities of the Lord, and whoever understands this also gets salvation after quitting this material body. The Lord does no wrong in any circumstance because He is absolute, all good at all times.

### TEXT 36

व्यवहितपृतनामुखं निरीक्ष्य  
स्वजनवधाद्धिमुखस्य दोषबुद्ध्या ।  
कुमतिमहरदात्मविद्यया य-  
श्चरणरतिः परमस्य तस्य मेऽस्तु ॥ ३६ ॥

*vyavahita-ṣṛtanā-mukhaṁ nirīkṣya*  
*sva-jana-vadhād vimukhasya doṣa-buddhyā*  
*kumatim aharad ātma-vidyayā yaś*  
*caraṇa-ratiḥ paramasya tasya me 'stu*

*vyavahita*—standing at a distance; *ṣṛtanā*—soldiers; *mukham*—faces; *nirīkṣya*—by looking upon; *sva-jana*—kinsmen; *vadhāt*—from the act of killing; *vimukhasya*—one who is reluctant; *doṣa-buddhyā*—by polluted intelligence; *kumatim*—poor fund of knowledge; *aharat*—eradicated; *ātma-vidyayā*—by transcendental knowledge; *yaḥ*—He who; *caraṇa*—to the feet; *ratiḥ*—attraction; *paramasya*—of the Supreme; *tasya*—for

Him; *me*—my; *astu*—let there be.

**When Arjuna was seemingly polluted by ignorance upon observing the soldiers and commanders before him on the battlefield, the Lord eradicated his ignorance by delivering transcendental knowledge. May His lotus feet always remain the object of my attraction.**

The kings and the commanders were to stand in the front of the fighting soldiers. That was the system of actual fighting. The kings and commanders were not so-called presidents or ministers of defense as they are today. They would not stay home while the poor soldiers or mercenaries were fighting face to face. This may be the regulation of modern democracy, but when actual monarchy was prevailing, the monarchs were not cowards elected without consideration of qualification. As it was evident from the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, all the executive heads of both parties, like Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Arjuna and Duryodhana, were not sleeping; all of them were actual participants in the fighting, which was selected to be executed at a place away from the civil residential quarters. This means that the innocent citizens were immune from all effects of fighting between the rival royal parties. The citizens had no business in seeing what was going to happen during such fighting. They were to pay one fourth of their income to the ruler, whether he be Arjuna or Duryodhana. All the commanders of the parties on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra were standing face to face, and Arjuna saw them with great compassion and lamented that he was to kill his kinsmen on the battlefield for the sake of the empire. He was not at all afraid of the giant military phalanx presented by Duryodhana, but as a merciful devotee of the Lord, renunciation of worldly things was natural for him, and thus he decided not to fight for worldly possessions. But this was due to a poor fund of knowledge, and therefore it is said here that his intelligence became polluted. His intelligence could not be polluted at any time because he was a devotee and constant companion of the Lord, as is clear in the Fourth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Apparently Arjuna's intelligence became polluted because otherwise there would not have been a chance to deliver the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* for the good of all polluted conditioned souls engaged in material bondage by the conception of the false material body. The

*Bhagavad-gītā* was delivered to the conditioned souls of the world to deliver them from the wrong conception of identifying the body with the soul and to reestablish the soul's eternal relation with the Supreme Lord. *Ātma-vidyā*, or transcendental knowledge of Himself, was primarily spoken by the Lord for the benefit of all concerned in all parts of the universe.

TEXT 37

स्वनिगममपहाय मत्प्रतिज्ञा-  
मृतमधिकर्तुमवप्लुतो रथस्थः ।  
धृतरथचरणोऽभ्ययाच्चलद्गु-  
हरिरिव हन्तुमिभं गतोत्तरीयः ॥ ३७ ॥

*sva-nigamam apahāya mat-pratijñām*  
*ṛtam adhikartum avapluto rathasthaḥ*  
*dhṛta-ratha-caraṇo 'bhyayāc caladgur*  
*harir iva hantum ibhaṁ gatottariyaḥ*

*sva-nigamam*—own truthfulness; *apahāya*—for nullifying; *mat-pratijñām*—my own promise; *ṛtam*—factual; *adhi*—more; *kartum*—for doing it; *avaplutaḥ*—getting down; *ratha-sthaḥ*—from the chariot; *dhṛta*—taking up; *ratha*—chariot; *caraṇaḥ*—wheel; *abhyayāt*—went hurriedly; *caladguḥ*—trampling the earth; *hariḥ*—lion; *iva*—like; *hantum*—to kill; *ibham*—elephant; *gata*—leaving aside; *uttariyaḥ*—covering cloth.

**Fulfilling my desire and sacrificing His own promise, He got down from the chariot, took up its wheel, and ran towards me hurriedly, just as a lion goes to kill an elephant. He even dropped His outer garment on the way.**

The Battle of Kurukṣetra was fought on military principles but at the same time in a sporting spirit, like a friend's fight with another friend. Duryodhana criticized Bhīṣmadeva, alleging that he was reluctant to kill Arjuna because of paternal affection. A *kṣatriya* cannot tolerate insults on the principle of fighting. Bhīṣmadeva therefore promised that the next day he would kill all five Pāṇḍavas with special weapons made for the purpose. Duryodhana was satisfied, and he kept the arrows with him

to be delivered the next day during the fight. By tricks Arjuna took the arrows from Duryodhana, and Bhīṣmadeva could understand that this was the trick of Lord Kṛṣṇa. So he took a vow that the next day Kṛṣṇa would have to take up weapons Himself, otherwise His friend Arjuna would die. In the next day's fighting Bhīṣmadeva fought so violently that both Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa were in trouble. Arjuna was almost defeated; the situation was so tense that he was about to be killed by Bhīṣmadeva the very next moment. At that time Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted to please His devotee, Bhīṣma, by keeping Bhīṣma's promise, which was more important than His own. Seemingly He broke His own promise. He promised before the beginning of the Battle of Kurukṣetra that He would remain without weapons and would not use His strength for either of the parties. But to protect Arjuna He got down from the chariot, took up the wheel of the chariot and hurriedly rushed at Bhīṣmadeva in an angry mood, as a lion goes to kill an elephant. He dropped His covering cloth on the way, and out of great anger He did not know that He had dropped it. Bhīṣmadeva at once gave up his weapons and stood to be killed by Kṛṣṇa, his beloved Lord. The fighting of the day was thus ended at that very moment, and Arjuna was saved. Of course there was no possibility of Arjuna's death because the Lord Himself was on the chariot, but because Bhīṣmadeva wanted to see Lord Kṛṣṇa take up some weapon to save His friend, the Lord created this situation, making Arjuna's death imminent. He stood before Bhīṣmadeva to show him that his promise was fulfilled and that He had taken up the wheel.

### TEXT 38

शितविशिखहतो विशीर्णदंशः  
क्षतजपरिप्लुत आततायिनो मे ।  
प्रसभमभिससार मद्वधार्थं  
स भवतु मे भगवान् गतिर्मुकुन्दः ॥ ३८ ॥

*śita-viśikha-hato viśīrṇa-damśaḥ  
kṣataja-paripluta ātatāyino me  
prasabham abhisasāra mad-vadhārthaṁ  
sa bhavatu me bhagavān gatiṁ mukundaḥ*

*śīta*—sharp; *viśikha*—arrows; *hataḥ*—wounded by; *viśīrṇa-damśaḥ*—scattered shield; *kṣataja*—by wounds; *pariplutaḥ*—smeared with blood; *ātātāyinaḥ*—the great aggressor; *me*—my; *prasabham*—in an angry mood; *abhisasāra*—began to move on; *mat-vadha-artham*—for the purpose of killing me; *saḥ*—He; *bhavatu*—may become; *me*—my; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *gatiḥ*—destination; *mukundaḥ*—who awards salvation.

**May He, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who awards salvation, be my ultimate destination. On the battlefield He charged me, as if angry because of the wounds dealt by my sharp arrows. His shield was scattered, and His body was smeared with blood due to the wounds.**

The dealings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Bhīṣmadeva on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra are interesting because the activities of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared to be partial to Arjuna and at enmity with Bhīṣmadeva; but factually all this was especially meant to show special favor to Bhīṣmadeva, a great devotee of the Lord. *The astounding feature of such dealings is that a devotee can please the Lord by playing the part of an enemy.* The Lord, being absolute, can accept service from His pure devotee even in the garb of an enemy. The Supreme Lord cannot have any enemy, nor can a so-called enemy harm Him because He is *ajita*, or unconquerable. But still He takes pleasure when His pure devotee beats Him like an enemy or rebukes Him from a superior position, although no one can be superior to the Lord. These are some of the transcendental reciprocatory dealings of the devotee with the Lord. And those who have no information of pure devotional service cannot penetrate into the mystery of such dealings. Bhīṣmadeva played the part of a valiant warrior, and he purposely pierced the body of the Lord so that to the common eyes it appeared that the Lord was wounded, but factually all this was to bewilder the nondevotees. The all-spiritual body cannot be wounded, and a devotee cannot become the enemy of the Lord. Had it been so, Bhīṣmadeva would not have desired to have the very same Lord as the ultimate destination of his life. Had Bhīṣmadeva been an enemy of the Lord, Lord Kṛṣṇa could have annihilated him without even moving. There was no need to come before Bhīṣmadeva with blood and wounds. But He did so because the warrior devotee wanted to see the

transcendental beauty of the Lord decorated with wounds created by a pure devotee. This is the way of exchanging transcendental *rasa*, or relations between the Lord and the servitor. By such dealings both the Lord and the devotee become glorified in their respective positions. The Lord was so angry that Arjuna checked Him when He was moving towards Bhīṣmadeva, but in spite of Arjuna's checking, He proceeded towards Bhīṣmadeva as a lover goes to a lover, without caring for hindrances. Apparently His determination was to kill Bhīṣmadeva, but factually it was to please him as a great devotee of the Lord. The Lord is undoubtedly the deliverer of all conditioned souls. The impersonalists desire salvation from Him, and He always awards them according to their aspiration, but here Bhīṣmadeva aspires to see the Lord in His personal feature. All pure devotees aspire for this.

TEXT 39

विजयरथकुटुम्ब आत्ततोत्रे  
धृतहयरश्मिनि तच्छ्रियेक्षणीये ।  
भगवति रतिरस्तु मे मुमूर्षो-  
र्यमिह निरीक्ष्य हता गताः स्वरूपम् ॥ ३९ ॥

*vijaya-ratha-kuṭumba ātta-totre*  
*dhṛta-haya-raśmini tac-chriyekṣaṇīye*  
*bhagavati ratir astu me mumūrṣor*  
*yam iha nirīkṣya hatā gatāḥ sva-rūpam*

*vijaya*—Arjuna; *ratha*—chariot; *kuṭumba*—the object of protection at all risk; *ātta-totre*—with a whip in the right hand; *dhṛta-haya*—controlling the horses; *raśmini*—ropes; *tat-śriyā*—beautifully standing; *īkṣaṇīye*—to look at; *bhagavati*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *ratih astu*—let my attraction be; *me*—my; *mumūrṣoḥ*—one who is about to die; *yam*—upon whom; *iha*—in this world; *nirīkṣya*—by looking; *hatāḥ*—those who died; *gatāḥ*—attained; *sva-rūpam*—original form.

**At the moment of death, let my ultimate attraction be to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. I concentrate my mind upon the chariot driver of Arjuna who stood with a whip in His right hand and a bridle rope in His left, who was very careful to give protection to Arjuna's chariot by all**

**means. Those who saw Him on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained their original forms after death.**

A pure devotee of the Lord constantly sees the presence of the Lord within himself because of being transcendently related by loving service. Such a pure devotee cannot forget the Lord for a moment. This is called trance. The mystic (*yogī*) tries to concentrate upon the Supersoul by controlling the senses from all other engagements, and thus he ultimately attains *samādhi*. A devotee more easily attains *samādhi*, or trance, by constantly remembering the Lord's personal feature along with His holy name, fame, pastimes, etc. Therefore, the concentration of the mystic *yogī* and that of the devotee are not on the same level. The concentration of the mystic is mechanical, whereas that of the pure devotee is natural in pure love and spontaneous affection. Bhīṣmadeva was a pure devotee, and as a military marshal he constantly remembered the battlefield feature of the Lord as Pārtha-sārathi, the chariot driver of Arjuna. Therefore, the Lord's pastime as Pārtha-sārathi is also eternal. The pastimes of the Lord, beginning from His birth at the prison house of Kāṁsa up to the *mausala-līlā* at the end, all move one after another in all the universes, just as the clock hand moves from one point to another. And in such pastimes His associates like the Pāṇḍavas and Bhīṣma are constant eternal companions. So Bhīṣmadeva never forgot the beautiful feature of the Lord as Pārtha-sārathi, which even Arjuna could not see. Arjuna was behind the beautiful Pārtha-sārathi while Bhīṣmadeva was just in front of the Lord. As far as the military feature of the Lord is concerned, Bhīṣmadeva observed this with more relish than Arjuna.

All the soldiers and persons on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained their original spiritual form like the Lord after their death because by the causeless mercy of the Lord they were able to see Him face to face on that occasion. The conditioned souls rotating in the evolutionary cycle from the aquatics up to the form of Brahmā are all in the form of *māyā*, or the form obtained by one's own actions and awarded by material nature. The material forms of the conditioned souls are all foreign dresses, and when the conditioned soul becomes liberated from the clutches of material energy, he attains his original form. The impersonalist wants to attain the impersonal Brahman effulgence of the

Lord, but that is not at all congenial to the living sparks, parts and parcels of the Lord. Therefore, the impersonalists again fall down and get material forms, which are all false to the spirit soul. A spiritual form like the Lord's, either two-handed or four-handed, is attained by the devotees of the Lord either in the Vaikuṅṭhas or in the Goloka planet, according to the original nature of the soul. This form, which is cent percent spiritual, is the *svarūpa* of the living being, and all the living beings who participated on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, on both sides, attained their *svarūpa*, as confirmed by Bhīṣmadeva. So Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not merciful only to the Pāṇḍavas; He was also merciful to the other parties because all of them attained the same result. Bhīṣmadeva wanted the same facility also, and that was his prayer to the Lord, although his position as an associate of the Lord is assured in all circumstances. The conclusion is that whoever dies looking on the Personality of Godhead within or without attains his *svarūpa*, which is the highest perfection of life.

#### TEXT 40

ललितगतिविलासवल्गुहास-  
 प्रणयनिरीक्षणकल्पितोरुमानाः ।  
 कृतमनुकृतवत्य उन्मदान्धाः  
 प्रकृतिमगन् किल यस्य गोपवध्वः ॥ ४० ॥

*lalita-gati-vilāsa-valguhāsa-  
 praṇaya-nirīkṣaṇa-kalpitorumānāḥ  
 kṛta-manu-kṛta-vatya unmadāndhāḥ  
 prakṛtim agan kila yasya goṣa-vadhvaḥ*

*lalita*—attractive; *gati*—movements; *vilāsa*—fascinating acts; *valguhāsa*—sweet smiling; *praṇaya*—loving; *nirīkṣaṇa*—looking upon; *kalpita*—mentality; *urumānāḥ*—highly glorified; *kṛta-manu-kṛta-vatyaḥ*—in the act of copying the movements; *unmada-andhāḥ*—gone mad in ecstasy; *prakṛtim*—characteristics; *agan*—underwent; *kila*—certainly; *yasya*—whose; *goṣa-vadhvaḥ*—the cowherd damsels.

Let my mind be fixed upon Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose motions and smiles of love attracted the damsels of Vrajadhāma [the gopīs]. The damsels

imitated the characteristic movements of the Lord [after His disappearance from the rāsa dance].

By intense ecstasy in loving service, the damsels of Vrajabhūmi attained qualitative oneness with the Lord by dancing with Him on an equal level, embracing Him in nuptial love, smiling at Him in joke, and looking at Him with a loving attitude. The relation of the Lord with Arjuna is undoubtedly praiseworthy for devotees like Bhīṣmadeva, but the relation of the *gopīs* with the Lord is still more praiseworthy because of their still more purified loving service. By the grace of the Lord, Arjuna was fortunate enough to have the fraternal service of the Lord as chariot driver, but the Lord did not award Arjuna with equal strength. The *gopīs*, however, practically became one with the Lord by attainment of equal footing with the Lord. Bhīṣma's aspiration to remember the *gopīs* is a prayer to have their mercy also at the last stage of his life. The Lord is satisfied more when His pure devotees are glorified, and therefore Bhīṣmadeva has not only glorified the acts of Arjuna, his immediate object of attraction, but has also remembered the *gopīs*, who were endowed with unrivalled opportunities by rendering loving service to the Lord. The *gopīs*' equality with the Lord should never be misunderstood to be like the *sāyujya* liberation of the impersonalist. The equality is one of perfect ecstasy where the differential conception is completely eradicated, for the interests of the lover and the beloved become identical.

#### TEXT 41

मुनिगणनृपवर्यसंकुलेऽन्तः-  
सदसि युधिष्ठिरराजसूय एषाम् ।  
अर्हणमुपपेद ईक्षणीयो  
मम दूशिगोचर एष आविरात्मा ॥ ४१ ॥

*muni-gaṇa-nṛpa-varya-saṅkule 'ntaḥ-*  
*sadasi yudhiṣṭhira-rājasūya eṣām*  
*arhaṇam upapeda īkṣaṇīyo*  
*mama dṛśi-gocara eṣa āvir ātmā*

*muni-gaṇa*—the great learned sages; *nṛpa-varya*—the great ruling kings;

*saṅkule*—in the great assembly of; *antaḥ-sadasi*—conference; *yudhiṣṭhira*—of Emperor Yudhiṣṭhira; *rāja-sūye*—a royal performance of sacrifice; *eṣām*—of all the great elites; *arhaṇam*—respectful worship; *upapada*—received; *ikṣaṇīyaḥ*—the object of attraction; *mama*—my; *dṛṣi*—sight; *gocaraḥ*—within the view of; *eṣaḥ āviḥ*—personally present; *ātmā*—the soul.

**At the Rājasūya-yajña [sacrifice] performed by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, there was the greatest assembly of all the elite men of the world, the royal and learned orders, and in that great assembly Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was worshiped by one and all as the most exalted Personality of Godhead. This happened during my presence, and I remembered the incident in order to keep my mind upon the Lord.**

After gaining victory in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, the Emperor of the world, performed the Rājasūya sacrificial ceremony. The emperor, in those days, upon his ascendance to the throne, would send a challenge horse all over the world to declare his supremacy, and any ruling prince or king was at liberty to accept the challenge and express his tacit willingness either to obey or to disobey the supremacy of the particular emperor. One who accepted the challenge had to fight with the emperor and establish his own supremacy by victory. The defeated challenger would have to sacrifice his life, making a place for another king or ruler. So Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira also dispatched such challenging horses all over the world, and every ruling prince and king all over the world accepted Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira's leadership as the Emperor of the world. After this, all rulers of the world under the regime of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira were invited to participate in the great sacrificial ceremony of Rājasūya. Such performances required hundreds of millions of dollars, and it was not an easy job for a petty king. Such a sacrificial ceremony, being too expensive and also difficult to perform under present circumstances, is now impossible in this age of Kali. Nor can anyone secure the required expert priesthood to take charge of the ceremony.

So, after being invited, all the kings and great learned sages of the world assembled in the capital of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. The learned society, including the great philosophers, religionists, physicians, scientists and

all great sages, was invited. That is to say, the *brāhmaṇas* and the *kṣatriyas* were the topmost leading men in society, and they were all invited to participate in the assembly. The *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* were unimportant elements in society, and they are not mentioned herein. Due to the change of social activities in the modern age, the importance of men has also changed in terms of occupational positions. So in that great assembly, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the cynosure of neighboring eyes. Everyone wanted to see Lord Kṛṣṇa, and everyone wanted to pay his humble respects to the Lord. Bhīṣmadeva remembered all this and was glad that his worshipful Lord, the Personality of Godhead, was present before him in His actual formal presence. So to meditate on the Supreme Lord is to meditate on the activities, form, pastimes, name and fame of the Lord. That is easier than what is imagined as meditation on the impersonal feature of the Supreme. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.5) it is clearly stated that to meditate upon the impersonal feature of the Supreme is very difficult. It is practically no meditation or simply a waste of time because very seldom is the desired result obtained. The devotees, however, meditate upon the Lord's factual form and pastimes, and therefore the Lord is easily approachable by the devotees. This is also stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.9). The Lord is nondifferent from His transcendental activities. It is indicated also in this *śloka* that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while actually present before human society, especially in connection with the Battle of Kurukṣetra, was accepted as the greatest personality of the time, although He might not have been recognized as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The propaganda that a very great man is worshiped as God after his death is misleading because a man after his death cannot be made into God. Nor can the Personality of Godhead be a human being, even when He is personally present. Both ideas are misconceptions. The idea of anthropomorphism cannot be applicable in the case of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 42

तमिममहमजं शरीरभाजां  
हृदि हृदि धिष्ठितमात्मकल्पितानाम् ।  
प्रतिदृशमिव नैकधार्कमेकं  
समधिगतोऽस्मि विधूतभेदमोहः ॥ ४२ ॥

*tam imam aham ajam śarīra-bhājām  
hṛdi hṛdi dhiṣṭhitam ātma-kalpitanām  
pratiḍṣam iva naikadhārkam ekam  
samadhi-gato 'smi vidhūta-bheda-mohaḥ*

*tam*—that Personality of Godhead; *imam*—now present before me; *aham*—I; *ajam*—the unborn; *śarīra-bhājām*—of the conditioned soul; *hṛdi*—in the heart; *hṛdi*—in the heart; *dhiṣṭhitam*—situated; *ātma*—the Supersoul; *kalpitanām*—of the speculators; *pratiḍṣam*—in every direction; *iva*—like; *na ekadhā*—not one; *arkam*—the sun; *ekam*—one only; *samadhi-gataḥ asmi*—I have undergone trance in meditation; *vidhūta*—being freed from; *bheda-mohaḥ*—misconception of duality.

**Now I can meditate with full concentration upon that one Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, now present before me because now I have transcended the misconceptions of duality in regard to His presence in everyone's heart, even in the hearts of the mental speculators. He is in everyone's heart. The sun may be perceived differently, but the sun is one.**

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the one Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead, but He has expanded Himself into His multiplenary portions by His inconceivable energy. The conception of duality is due to ignorance of His inconceivable energy. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.11) the Lord says that only the foolish take Him to be a mere human being. Such foolish men are not aware of His inconceivable energies. By His inconceivable energy He is present in everyone's heart, as the sun is present before everyone all over the world. The Paramātmā feature of the Lord is an expansion of His plenary portions. He expands Himself as Paramātmā in everyone's heart by His inconceivable energy, and He also expands Himself as the glowing effulgence of *brahmajyoti* by expansion of His personal glow. It is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* that the *brahmajyoti* is His personal glow. Therefore, there is no difference between Him and His personal glow, *brahmajyoti*, or His plenary portions as Paramātmā. Less intelligent persons who are not aware of this fact consider *brahmajyoti* and Paramātmā to be different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This misconception of duality is completely removed from the mind of Bhīṣmadeva, and he is now satisfied that it is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa only who is all in all in everything. This enlightenment is attained by the great

*mahātmās* or devotees, as it is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.19) that Vāsudeva is all in all in everything and that there is no existence of anything without Vāsudeva. Vāsudeva, or Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the original Supreme Person, as now confirmed by a *mahājana*, and therefore both the neophytes and the pure devotees must try to follow in his footsteps. That is the way of the devotional line.

The worshipable object of Bhīṣmadeva is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Pārthasārathi, and that of the *gopīs* is the same Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana as the most attractive Śyāmasundara. Sometimes less intelligent scholars make a mistake and think that the Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndāvana and that of the Battle of Kurukṣetra are different personalities. But for Bhīṣmadeva this misconception is completely removed. Even the impersonalist's object of destination is Kṛṣṇa as the impersonal *jyoti*, and the *yogī's* destination of Paramātmā is also Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is both *brahmajyoti* and localized Paramātmā, but in *brahmajyoti* or Paramātmā there is no Kṛṣṇa or sweet relations with Kṛṣṇa. In His personal feature Kṛṣṇa is both Pārthasārathi and Śyāmasundara of Vṛndāvana, but in His impersonal feature He is neither in the *brahmajyoti* nor in the Paramātmā. Great *mahātmās* like Bhīṣmadeva realize all these different features of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and therefore they worship Lord Kṛṣṇa, knowing Him as the origin of all features.