

Brief summary for Tuesday 25th April (7.11 - 7.12 session)

We must thank all our teachers for their contribution to what has been written below. These are things we have learned and heard from other gracious souls whose teachings are expressed in our own words/understanding.

If you missed part 98, [check out the notes here.](#)

You can find [all the previous notes here.](#)

In verse 7.11, Krishna says of the strong or powerful, I am present as strength devoid of desire or selfish interest, and mundane attachment, and among all species of life I am love that is righteous, sexuality that honors dharma, O best of the Bharatas.

Krishna continues explaining His subtle qualities. He is the strength of the mighty performing their individual duties devoid of passion and attachment. The strength mentioned here is of the nature of purity or sattva. Kama or desire represents the material influence of passion (rajas).

Passion is an active desire for things unattained, the unabated craving to get a not yet obtained object with the thought to enjoy it.

Raga or attachment indicates the material influence of ignorance (tamas). Attachment is a passive emotion of the mind, being synonymous with the thirst for more of a desired object after already attaining it and experiencing it. It is a mental condition which after obtaining and enjoying an object makes one cling to the conception that such an object must always remain and continue to be enjoyed.

Krishna is strength not displayed out of anger or used with the desire to maintain ones own lifestyle. Srila Prabhupada points out that:

"The strong man's strength should be applied to protect the weak, not for personal aggression."

It is devoid of desire and attachment born of the lower influence of material nature, where one can't advance spiritually.

Krishna says kama-raga-vivarjitam, meaning devoid of passion and attachment, and so He explains the nature of His strength. Ultimately Krishna speaks of the strength of those who have turned their back on the illusion of material life. One has to maintain their body and mind, but for the sake of performing one's religious duty or spiritual practice. He is the serene, sublime strength which empowers one to regularly perform their spiritual duties without deviation or cessation.

Krishna is eternally full and powerful in strength; this is His natural propensity. He bestows similar strength like He did with the five Pandavas. So He is balam balavatam or the strength of the strong. Ba symbolises strength and la symbolises bliss, so He is the bliss of strength Himself.

Krishna also identifies Himself with love that is in accordance with scriptural law. The passion that is not contrary to sanatana dharma or eternal righteousness. Krishna uses the term dharmaviruddhau which means "that which is not opposed to dharma." Classically this refers to marriage and union for children. You could say Krishna is saying I am lust or the energy of sexual desire not contrary to dharma, directed towards one's wife or husband to produce children. One fulfils their material desires in a religious way. Krishna resides in desires or passion not contrary to righteousness. While love by nature is lawless, Krishna says material love should be tamed. The effect of this is the awakening of the soul and its prospect for love on the spiritual plane, real love arising out of self-sacrifice.

Although love is lawless, in material life, when it is not reigned in, the pursuit of it amounts to ignoring obvious laws of nature, which in the least render such love unenduring. Scripture points this out and advocates that

material love be redirected in order that it be fulfilled. When love is fully spiritualised, it transcends scripture.

We have discussed before how sex is such a powerful impulse and in some schools of yoga, one has to give it up completely. It is not the case with bhakti. But in the highest sense materially speaking, it is a force that creates new life. So Krishna is the essence of this, of new life, being the very life of all.

We won't go too much into this topic as we have discussed it in the 6th chapter when Krishna mentioned one needs to be celibate to practice astanga yoga. Although it doesn't necessarily need to be given up in bhakti, ultimately everyone agrees the sexual urge should be harnessed and restricted in some manner. For example, we don't just go and jump on someone in the shopping centre. This sense arises in human life. Dogs will jump on anyone and everyone, even your leg. The only argument is where to draw the line.

In bhakti in particular, some teachers restrict sexual activity to procreation, some to married life, some to a committed life partner, but the purpose is the same. We see with Srila Prabhupada, when some students struggled with this, he adapted the principle according to their needs so they could continue to make steady progress in their bhakti practice.

The point is establishing a standard one can follow steadily and that helps progressively harness this desire to move away from self-centredness. Real joy comes from the culture of selfless action, in which one acts for the satisfaction of God and not one's material senses.

Anyone can progress from whatever position they find themselves in. We should endeavor to meet a standard of restraint realistic to us while engaging in spiritual practice, especially chanting Krishna Nama. If over time we realize our realistic standard is contrary to our teacher's guidelines then we should speak sincerely with them. A proper guru filled with

compassion and love for their disciple will make suitable adjustments, always encouraging above all the chanting of Krishna nama.

The chanting creates a bright future for us, whereas restraint is both a by-product of the chanting and further supports the chanting. Never give up the chanting of the holy name under any circumstances, even if it may seem hypocritical at times given the strength of your material desires. It is best to be realistic about one's desires, although progress resulting from healthy restraint will not necessarily show up in its entirety in this life. One should try not to cave in to desire, but nor should we artificially repress. Everyone must find the appropriate balance from which to cultivate a spiritual identity. This is what is meant by sattva.

But the main point here is that Krishna is the essence of that expression of sexual desire that is dharmic. The expression of passion with commitment to a life of progressive spiritual culture.

Krishna, even while abiding in everything still has the capacity to remain distinct from them although as the Supreme Lord He encompasses all. All these entities Krishna has listed with their peculiar characteristic are born from Him alone. They depend on Him and exist in Him alone. He alone exists while they are all modes of His.

It is an expandable list of powerful manifestations of material nature. Krishna is everything. He wants Arjuna to see this practically, that I am inside everything.

Specificity can conjure up feelings of limitations. But for love, specificity is required. Form facilitates rather than restricts. E.g. Water in a cup can be properly utilised, a concept or idea can be given form and become a beautiful piece of art such as a painting. These things Krishna gives can be useful to understand the universality of Krishna, to see Him in everything we perceive.

We want feeling for Krishna as we interact with the world. Without feeling, there is no meaning to life. If you go to a sports event, the emotion behind the fans in the stands is what makes it special. Not the velocity of the ball, the angle measurements of the kick, etc. We may look at that side after, but the emotion is what makes it have any meaning.

We want to understand the universality of our deity. He is not just in the temple. He is in the heart of our guru, the hearts of the devotees and so on. Krishna is saying, I am everything. We have to understand the universality of the Deity, that He is everywhere and everything. There are even instances where Prabhupada said that those who were still attached to drinking alcohol, although it would be best to give it up, at least think of Krishna as the water in the whiskey or the beer and in time one will give up that tendency and go for pure water.

For example, in 1973 in Stockholm, while giving a class on verse 7.1, Srila Prabhupada said:

"So Kṛṣṇa says, raso 'ham apsu kaunteya: "Any liquid thing, the taste, which attracts you, that is I am." Even you are a drunkard, you are fond of tasting wine, I should recommend that you simply think that "This taste of wine is Kṛṣṇa." That will make a yogi of you. That will make you the greatest yogi. If you simply think this, that "I am tasting wine. Oh, very nice taste. This is Kṛṣṇa." Is there any loss if you think like that? This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Raso 'ham apsu kaunteya prabhāsmi śaśi-sūryayoḥ: ([BG 7.8](#)) "I am the shining of the sun and the moon." Now, every day, morning, you see the sun shining. So as soon as you see the sun shining, if you think of Kṛṣṇa: "Oh, this sun shining is Kṛṣṇa," you become a yogi. You become a yogi. At night also, as soon as you see the moonshine, so immediately, if you think, "This moon shining is Kṛṣṇa..."

So you can become Kṛṣṇa conscious in any circumstances. There is no limitation, that "You have to become Kṛṣṇa conscious under this

condition, that condition." The condition will be enunciated later on. First of all, try to become Kṛṣṇa..., that you, at least, you drink water and so many times in a day, you just try to think that the taste of the water is Kṛṣṇa. That is the beginning of your Kṛṣṇa yoga system. And then, if you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, then you'll become, gradually, the greatest yogi without becoming very learned scholar, without becoming Vedantist, without becoming religionist or... Simply by this process you try to practice, and your life will be perfect."

When you see the sun, you can think of Krishna. My seeing is based on light. So the greatest source of light, I offer my respects there. This universality will allow us to enter the sweeter aspects of Krishna's lila or pastimes. We don't jump there, although it is nice to hear about them as well. It is said for the heart that isn't pure, the universal form should be meditated on. Of course, the Holy name is recommended for everyone. Sacrifice and giving, this is the tapa though. The strength of dharma. To do the right thing is strong. Don't be part of the world in the full sense of the term. Krishna is the strength to do the right thing.

Krishna ends His description of how He is the essential or maintaining principle of various manifestations. The next verse provides a summary.

In verse 7.12, Krishna says: furthermore, indeed know that all things constituted of the gunas or modes of purity, passion, and ignorance are born from me alone. At the same time, I am not in them—they, being subordinate to me, are in me. They exist in Me, manifested by the modes of My material nature. I remain apart from my creation.

Krishna, in concluding this brief elaboration on His presence in all things as their essence, tells Arjuna that this description is endless even though He has only explained some of His opulences (vibhūtiḥ). The expression of His powers as the cause or essence of all things is endless. There is no need

to list these more extensively. Everything is His potency and under His control.

Rather than go into further detail, He states in summary that the entire material existence is a product of the threefold influence of material nature (triguna), which emanates from Him. He is the primal cause and the essence of the effect. The world as an effect is in Him, but He is aloof from it. All things are dependent on Krishna and are an expression of His power. Whatever entities exist in the world in the forms of bodies, senses, objects of enjoyment and their causes—know them to all to have originated from Krishna alone, abide in Him alone. Those things in the mode of goodness, like sense and mind control and the devatas (demigods); those in the mode of passion such as lust and pride, and the humans seeking the comforts of this world; and those in the mode of ignorance like lamentation, illusion and the raksasas (those of demonic mentality)—these are all product of the gunas of prakrti belonging to Krishna.

He does not exist in them, that is, He does not depend on them like the jivas do. He is not dependent on them but they are dependent on Him. Though the body depends for its existence on the self, the body serves some purpose of the self in the matter of its sustenance. They all exist in Him, they are dependent on Him. Unlike the living entities, He is not under their control, rather, they exist under His control. Prakrti abides within Him and is under His complete control. They merely serve the purpose of His sport.

The original source of all living entities is exclusively Krishna but their birth in any of the three gunas is caused exclusively by their own actions and subsequent reactions. Although they emanate from Him, He is not dependent upon the living entities as in the case of the atma or soul is for residence. All have evolved from Lord Krishna, as all species have evolved from the different modes of nature, but He is not dependent upon them. At times He incarnates in the material creation for the purpose of maintaining universal order or to enjoy His lilas or divine pastimes but to do

so He does not have to give up His transcendental, spiritual form for a material body as His attributes, powers and qualities all remain intact. All creation comprised of animate and inanimate beings emanates solely from Him, is sustained by Him, and likewise is dissolved again back into Him. He permeates everything and so becomes invisible. All life is in Him, yet it cannot contain Him. He is completely independent and has His personal potency of powers, qualities and attributes.

We have now understood that Krishna is both the cause and the essence of everything. He can be seen in the world when we view all existence as a combination of Krishna's material and spiritual energies. He is also the active essence of everything.

Here Krishna summarises adding that everything is under His control, including the three modes of material nature, which in turn control this world. This verse ends Krishna's discussion of His para (spiritual) and apara (material) energies.

Srila Prabhupada nicely points out that:

"Similarly, all the modes of material nature—goodness, passion and ignorance—are emanations from the Supreme Lord, Krishna, but Krishna is not subject to material nature. Therefore He is nirguna, which means that these gunas, or modes, although issuing from Him, do not affect Him. That is one of the special characteristics of Bhagavan, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

We can understand that this is the real meaning of nirguna. Being beyond the influence of the gunas or the modes of material nature. Krishna is not within the modes but is the origin of the modes. It does not mean that He does not have attributes.

In summary, we have seen how one can even realise the Supreme Lord impersonally. He is preliminarily perceived by His different energies. He is all pervasive by diverse material and spiritual energies. The sun is

perceived by sun shine and for the universal perception of the Lord we perceive by His different energies.

In this way, there is no contradiction between personalists and impersonalists. Both conceptions are simultaneously present in everything practically speaking. So Caitanya Mahaprabhu's sublime doctrine is Acintya-bheda and abheda tattva. Simultaneously one and different. One of the special characteristics of Bhagavan is that He is nirguna, that is, not affected by the modes. All material activities are conducted under the three modes which emanate from Krishna.

If what Krishna has said about His being the cause of the entire world and its very essence is true, one may wonder why we are prevented from seeing, knowing and surrendering to Krishna if He is, in one way or another, everywhere. Arjuna wonders, "Why don't people know about it? Why don't they serve you?" Krishna responds to this doubt in the next two verses. We will study verses 7.13 and 7.14.