

CHAPTER - 14
THE THREE MODES OF MATERIAL NATURE

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.1

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
param bhūyaḥ pravakṣyāmi
jñānānām jñānam uttamam
yaj jñātvā munayaḥ sarve
parām siddhim ito gatāḥ

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Again I shall declare to you this supreme wisdom, the best of all knowledge, knowing which all the sages have attained the supreme perfection.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.2

idaṁ jñānam upāśritya
mama sādharṁyam āgatāḥ
sarge 'pi nopajāyante
pralaye na vyathanti ca

TRANSLATION

By becoming fixed in this knowledge, one can attain to the transcendental nature like My own. Thus established, one is not born at the time of creation or disturbed at the time of dissolution.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.3

mama yonir mahad brahma
tasmin garbhaṁ dadhāmy aham
sambhavaḥ sarva-bhūtānām
tato bhavati bhārata

TRANSLATION

The total material substance, called Brahman, is the source of birth, and it is that Brahman that I impregnate, making possible the births of all living beings, O son of Bharata.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.4

sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya
mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ
tāsām brahma mahad yonir
aham bīja-pradaḥ pitā

TRANSLATION

It should be understood that all species of life, O son of Kuntī, are made possible by birth in this material nature, and that I am the seed-giving father.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.5

sattvaṁ rajas tama iti
guṇāḥ prakṛti-sambhavāḥ
nibadhnanti mahā-bāho
dehe dehinam avyayam

TRANSLATION

: Material nature consists of three modes — goodness, passion and ignorance. When the eternal living entity comes in contact with nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, he becomes conditioned by these modes.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.6

tatra sattvaṁ nirmalatvāt
prakāśakam anāmayam
sukha-saṅgena badhnāti
jñāna-saṅgena cānagha

TRANSLATION

O sinless one, the mode of goodness, being purer than the others, is illuminating, and it frees one from all sinful reactions. Those situated in that mode become conditioned by a sense of happiness and knowledge.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.7

rajo rāgātmakam viddhi
tṛṣṇā-saṅga-samudbhavam
tan nibadhnāti kaunteya
karma-saṅgena dehinam

TRANSLATION

The mode of passion is born of unlimited desires and longings, O son of Kuntī, and because of this the embodied living entity is bound to material fruitive actions.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.8

tamas tv ajñāna-jam viddhi
mohanam sarva-dehinām
pramādālasya-nidrābhis
tan nibadhnāti bhārata

TRANSLATION

O son of Bharata, know that the mode of darkness, born of ignorance, is the delusion of all embodied living entities. The results of this mode are madness, indolence and sleep, which bind the conditioned soul.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.9

sattvam sukhe sañjayati
rajaḥ karmaṇi bhārata
jñānam āvṛtya tu tamaḥ
pramāde sañjayaty uta

TRANSLATION

O son of Bharata, the mode of goodness conditions one to happiness; passion conditions one to fruitive action; and ignorance, covering one's knowledge, binds one to madness.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.10

rajas tamaś cābhibhūya
sattvaṁ bhavati bhārata
rajaḥ sattvaṁ tamaś caiva
tamaḥ sattvaṁ rajas tathā

TRANSLATION

Sometimes the mode of goodness becomes prominent, defeating the modes of passion and ignorance, O son of Bharata. Sometimes the mode of passion defeats goodness and ignorance, and at other times ignorance defeats goodness and passion. In this way there is always competition for supremacy.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.11

sarva-dvāreṣu dehe 'smin
prakāśa upajāyate
jñānaṁ yadā tadā vidyād
vivṛddhaṁ sattvaṁ ity uta

TRANSLATION

The manifestations of the mode of goodness can be experienced when all the gates of the body are illuminated by knowledge.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.12

lobhaḥ pravṛttir ārambhaḥ
karmaṇām aśamaḥ spṛhā
rajasy etāni jāyante
vivṛddhe bharatarṣabha

TRANSLATION

O chief of the Bhāratas, when there is an increase in the mode of passion the symptoms of great attachment, fruitive activity, intense endeavor, and uncontrollable desire and hankering develop.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.13

aprakāśo 'pravṛttiś ca
pramādo moha eva ca
tamasy etāni jāyante
vivṛddhe kuru-nandana

TRANSLATION

When there is an increase in the mode of ignorance, O son of Kuru, darkness, inertia, madness and illusion are manifested.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.14

yadā sattve pravṛddhe tu
pralayaṁ yāti deha-bhṛt
tadottama-vidāṁ lokān
amalān pratipadyate

TRANSLATION

When one dies in the mode of goodness, he attains to the pure higher planets of the great sages.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.15

rajasi pralayaṁ gatvā
karma-saṅgiṣu jāyate
tathā pralīnas tamasi
mūḍha-yoniṣu jāyate

TRANSLATION

When one dies in the mode of passion, he takes birth among those engaged in fruitive activities; and when one dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth in the animal kingdom.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.16

karmaṇaḥ sukṛtasyāhuḥ
sāttvikam nirmalam phalam
rajasas tu phalam duḥkham
ajñānam tamasaḥ phalam

TRANSLATION

The result of pious action is pure and is said to be in the mode of goodness. But action done in the mode of passion results in misery, and action performed in the mode of ignorance results in foolishness.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.17

sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam
rajaso lobha eva ca
pramāda-mohau tamaso
bhavato 'jñānam eva ca

TRANSLATION

From the mode of goodness, real knowledge develops; from the mode of passion, greed develops; and from the mode of ignorance develop foolishness, madness and illusion.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.18

ūrdhvaṁ gacchanti sattva-sthā
madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ
jaghanya-guṇa-vṛtti-sthā
adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ

TRANSLATION

Those situated in the mode of goodness gradually go upward to the higher planets; those in the mode of passion live on the earthly planets; and those in the abominable mode of ignorance go down to the hellish worlds.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.19

nānyam guṇebhyaḥ kartāram
yadā draṣṭānupaśyati
guṇebhyaś ca param vetti
mad-bhāvaṁ so 'dhigacchati

TRANSLATION

When one properly sees that in all activities no other performer is at work than these modes of nature and he knows the Supreme Lord, who is transcendental to all these modes, he attains My spiritual nature.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.20

guṇān etān atītya trīn
dehī deha-samudbhavān
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-duḥkhair
vimukto 'mṛtam aśnute

TRANSLATION

When the embodied being is able to transcend these three modes associated with the material body, he can become free from birth, death, old age and their distresses and can enjoy nectar even in this life.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.21

arjuna uvāca
kair liṅgais trīn guṇān etān
atīto bhavati prabho
kim ācāraḥ katham caitāms
trīn guṇān ativartate

TRANSLATION

Arjuna inquired: O my dear Lord, by which symptoms is one known who is transcendental to these three modes? What is his behavior? And how does he transcend the modes of nature?

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.22

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
prakāśaṁ ca pravṛttiṁ ca
moham eva ca pāṇḍava
na dveṣṭi sampravṛttāni
na nivṛttāni kāṅkṣati

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.23

udāsīna-vad āsīno
guṇair yo na vicālyate
guṇā vartanta ity evaṁ
yo 'vatiṣṭhati neṅgate

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.24

sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ sva-sthaḥ
sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanaḥ
tulya-priyāpriyo dhīras
tulya-nindātma-saṁstutiḥ

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.25

mānāpamānayos tulyas
tulyo mitrāri-pakṣayoḥ
sarvārambha-parityāgī
guṇātītaḥ sa ucyate

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O son of Pāṇḍu, he who does not hate illumination, attachment and delusion when they are present or long for them when they disappear; who is unwavering and undisturbed through all these reactions of the material qualities, remaining neutral and transcendental, knowing that the modes alone are active; who is situated in the self and regards alike happiness and distress; who looks upon a lump of earth, a stone and a piece of gold with an equal eye; who is equal toward the desirable and the undesirable; who is steady, situated equally well in praise and blame, honor and dishonor; who treats alike both friend and enemy; and who has renounced all material activities — such a person is said to have transcended the modes of nature.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.26

mām ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa
bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatīyaitān
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate

TRANSLATION

One who engages in full devotional service, unfailing in all circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman.

BHAGAVAD-GITA 14.27

brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham
amṛtasyāvyayasya ca
śāśvatasya ca dharmasya
sukhasyaikāntikasya ca

TRANSLATION

And I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman, which is immortal, imperishable and eternal and is the constitutional position of ultimate happiness.