

The Bhagavad-gita says that, out of many thousands of people, someone may develop this reasoning power: "Why am I suffering?" We do not want to suffer, but suffering is forced upon us. We do not want too much heat or cold, but too much cold and too much heat are forced upon us. We do not want thirst, hunger, old age, disease and death. The real problems of life are birth, old age, disease and death. But nobody is free from all these sufferings in this world.

Everyone is full of anxiety despite increasing material comforts, economic development and scientific advancement. The Western countries have reached the summit of material civilization, but people are still dissatisfied. The government has difficulty controlling crime, drug addiction, adultery etc. When the civilization becomes godless and human beings are geared towards a rat race for money and sex, life becomes hellish.

We should know that sense gratification is meant for animals, and that sense control is for human beings. By tapasya, penance, we can purify ourselves and regain our eternal life.

Only in human life are we endowed with the intelligence to inquire. "What happens after death? What is the actual destination of my life?" This is called "brahma jijnasa", enquiring about oneself and God. The first aphorism of the Vedanta sutra says: athato brahma jijnasa "Now that you have achieved a human body, you should inquire about the Absolute Truth."

The human body is compared to a solid boat, which can help one cross the ocean of the material world and take one to the Kingdom of God. The Vedic scriptures are compared to favorable breezes. The spiritual master is compared to an expert captain who can monitor the boat and take it to the desired destination. A human being who does not take advantage of this opportunity for achieving unending spiritual bliss is cheating himself and is a killer of his own soul.

Thus the cause of suffering and the actual destination of life are proper subjects of enquiry.