

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 13: Chapter 2, Verses 12-17

(July 25 –July 31, 2018)

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TRANSLITERATION

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥ १२ ॥

*na tv evāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ na tvaṁ neme janādhipāḥ
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ sarve vayam ataḥ param*

देहिनोऽस्मिन् यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥ १३ ॥

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir dhīras tatra na muhyati*

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ १४ ॥

*mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino 'nityās tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata*

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५ ॥

*yaṁ hi na vyathayanty ete puruṣaṁ puruṣarṣabha
sama-duḥkha-sukhaṁ dhīraṁ so 'mṛtatvāya kalpate*

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ १६ ॥

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ
ubhayor api dr̥ṣṭo 'ntas tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ*

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित् कर्तुमर्हति ॥ १७ ॥

*avināśi tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idaṁ tatam
vināśam avyayasyāsyā na kaścit kartum arhati*

TRANSLATION

- (12)** Certainly never at any time did I not exist, nor you, nor all these kings and certainly never shall we cease to exist in the future.
- (13)** Just as in the physical body of the embodied being is the process of childhood, youth and old age; similarly by the transmigration from one body to another the wise are never deluded.
- (14)** O Arjuna, only the interaction of the senses and sense objects give cold, heat, pleasure and pain. These things are temporary, appearing and disappearing; therefore try to tolerate them.
- (15)** O noblest of men, that person of wise judgement equipoised in happiness and distress, whom cannot be disturbed by these is certainly eligible for liberation.
- (16)** In the unreal there is no duration and in the real there is no cessation; indeed the conclusion between both the two has been analyzed by knowers of the truth.
- (17)** But know that by whom this entire body is pervaded, is indestructible. No one is able to cause the destruction of the imperishable soul.

https://userpages.umbc.edu/~hosmane/BHAJANS/Bhagavadgita/Audio%20Recordings%20of%20Bhagavadgita%20Sung%20By%20Dr%20Ram/Bhagavadgita_Chapter2_Verses%2012-17_Sung%20by%20Dr%20Ram_071718.mp4

Commentary:

Verse 12:

Lord Shri Krishna reminds Arjuna that there was never a time when He, Arjuna, and all other kings did not exist or will cease to exist in future. He is now confirming unequivocally that He is beginningless and endless existing always eternally. Interestingly, He also states that all other living beings, including but not limited to Arjuna, are also eternal. What the Lord is really referring to here are the souls of all living entities that are micro parts of Himself, the Paramatman, the Supreme and Ultimate Soul. The physical body, on the other hand, is in all respects subject to destruction so there is no purpose in being frightened, nor should there be any concern over the possibility of destruction of the individual soul.

Verse 13:

While it is true that the Supreme Lord Krishna is not ever subject to birth and death being transcendental to the material manifestation, what about the individual living entities who everyday are dying and being born. This is what is being answered in this verse. Even as the embodied living entity in the very same lifetime possesses different physical bodies during different stages of life such as infancy, youth and old age, but always keeps the consciousness that one is the same individual despite these modifications presented in the form of the body. So it can be

understood that on the destruction of the physical body the eternal soul is embodied in another physical body only due to the impressions one has accumulated in their subtle body. The eternal soul does not perish when the physical body perishes; therefore the spiritually intelligent are not deluded by the birth or destruction of the body knowing that the eternal soul is not subject to birth or death.

Verse 14:

It may be countered by Arjuna that he was not grieving for those who have died or are living but he was grieving for himself who would be miserable and forlorn by their loss. This is being perfectly answered by the Supreme Lord in this verse. That by which the objects of the senses are perceived is called *matra* or the functions of the senses which are hearing, seeing, smelling, touching and tasting. Their contact with their appropriate objects produces the sensations of hot and cold, loud and soft, sweet and sour and the like. But as they are solely dependent upon external objects and these objects are always coming and going, they are known to be temporary and thus should be tolerated. Similarly the contact with the objects of the senses gives rise to pleasure and pain for all living entities and as these contacts are transitory being temporary one being situated in spiritual knowledge should with fortitude tolerate them and not succumb to lamentation or exaltation because of them.

Even then, in the absence of self-realisation there is always sorrow. *Matra* means sensuous experience and *sparshas* means contact with them, thus *matra-sparshas* is the interaction of the senses with sense objects. These interactions are like hot and cold or pleasure and pain. Although only the body is what is actually experiencing these things, anyone with lack of sufficient knowledge who considers that they are their body automatically classifies the soul as the body as well and this misconception is factually the cause of all sorrow.

Verse 15:

Rather than attempting to control the contacts of the senses with the sense objects; one should simply tolerate them. The Supreme Lord declares that the one whose sense objects are unable to overpower, subdue or afflict one's senses, and who is equipoised in pleasure and pain, not being attached to either one due to spiritual knowledge becomes a fit candidate for immortality, which is liberation from the material bondage of birth and death due to acquisition of spiritual knowledge.

Verse 16:

The unreal being of the nature of the impermanent has no real existence. By contrast, The real being the nature of the eternal has no destruction, and is always existent. The conclusion about both of these 'real' and the 'unreal' things has been correctly made by the knowers of the Ultimate Truth. Foreexample, the objects of the sense like excessive heat and cold are extremely difficult to endure, but they still are not permanent. However, the ones with profound knowledge and discrimination of the truth will simply endure them thinking that they are not permanent. It must be understood that this nature of the duration and cessation of things in this world cannot be

ascertained by one lacking spiritual intelligence. Lord Krishna emphasizes the point that the reality of the duration and cessation in the material existence can be perceived only by those elevated souls who have attained the Ultimate Truth.

Verse 17:

The imperishable soul whose existence is a reality has been delineated and emphasized by Lord Krishna in this verse. He establishes the relationship between the body and the soul, by saying that the soul pervades the body. What does he mean by this? The soul is sentient, i.e. it possesses consciousness. The body is made from insentient matter, devoid of consciousness. However, the soul passes on the quality of consciousness to the body as well, by residing in it. Hence, the soul pervades the body by spreading its consciousness everywhere in it. For example, For example, fragrance is a quality of the flower. But the garden where the flower grows also becomes fragrant.” This means that the flower is able to pass on its fragrant quality to the garden. Likewise, the soul is sentient, and it also makes the dead matter of the body sentient, by pervading its consciousness in it.