

**Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 68: Chapter 8, Verses 01-05**

(August 21 –August 27, 2019)

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**ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT**

**TRANSLITERATION**

अथ अष्टमोऽध्यायः

*Atha Ashtamodhyaayah*

अर्जुन उवाच ।

*arjuna uvācha*

किं तद् ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।  
अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ ८-१ ॥  
अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।  
प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥ ८-२ ॥

*kiṁ tad brahma kim adhyātmaṁ kiṁ karma puruṣhottama  
adhibhūtaṁ cha kiṁ proktam adhidaivaṁ kim uchyate  
adhiyajñah katham ko 'tra dehe 'smin madhusūdana  
prayāṇa-kāle cha katham jñeyo 'si niyatātmabhiḥ*

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

*śhrī bhagavān uvācha*

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।  
भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥ ८-३ ॥  
अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।  
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥ ८-४ ॥  
अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।  
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ ८-५ ॥

*akṣharaṁ brahma paramaṁ svabhāvo 'dhyātmaṁ uchyate  
bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo visargaḥ karma-sanjñitaḥ  
adhibhūtaṁ kṣharo bhāvaḥ puruṣhaśh chādhidaiivatam  
adhiyajño 'ham evātra dehe deha-bhṛitāṁ vara  
anta-kāle cha mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram  
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ yāti nāstyatra sanśhayaḥ*

## TRANSLATION

- (01)** Arjun said: O Supreme Lord, what is *Brahman* (Absolute Reality), what is *adhyātma* (the individual soul), and what is karma? What is said to be *adhibhūta*, and who is said to be *Adhidaiva*? Who is *Adhiyajña* in the body and how is He the *Adhiyajña*? O Krishna, how are You to be known at the time of death by those of steadfast mind?
- (02)** The Blessed Lord said: The Supreme Indestructible Entity is called *Brahman*; one's own self is called *adhyātma*. Actions pertaining to the material personality of living beings, and its development are called karma, or fruitive activities.
- (03)** O best of the embodied souls, the physical manifestation that is constantly changing is called *adhibhūta*; the universal form of God, which presides over the celestial gods in this creation, is called *adhidaiva*; I, who dwell in the heart of every living being, am called *Adhiyajña*, or the Lord of all sacrifices.
- (04)** Those who relinquish the body while remembering Me at the moment of death will come to Me. There is certainly no doubt about this.

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## Chapter 8

### Verses 01 + 02:

At the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter, Lord Krishna introduced terms like *adhibhuta* identifying with the material substratum, *adhyatma* identifying with individual soul of embodied beings and *adhidaivas* identifying with the demigods. These subjects are essential and must be well comprehended by an aspirant who seeks to become a qualified devotee of the Supreme Lord. They will be further elucidated in detail in this chapter. Since Lord Krishna had introduced these terms only briefly, Arjuna was curious to learn more about these terms and how they relate to the Supreme Lord as well as to himself, and so he raises seven queries in the first two verses. What is *adhiyajna* that is entitled for propitiation and to whom is this propitiation offered? Who is the specific god? Who is the receiver of this *yajna* or propitiation offered in worship? Is it Indra the chief of all the demigods or is it to the Supreme Lord? If the Supreme Lord is the receiver then is *yajna* offered to Him internally residing inside the physical body or is it offered externally to His manifestation outside the physical body? If the *yajna* is offered internally then in what way does the Supreme Lord accept the offering? Finally, it is asked how and in what way is the Supreme Lord Krishna to be realized at the time of death of the physical body?

### Verse 03:

In answer to the questions raised by Arjuna in Verses 1 & 2 above, the Supreme Lord Krishna replies in the following three verses. He answers three of the questions with the

words *aksharam paramam* meaning the supreme indestructible reality which is imperishable and is never destroyed and is the essence in totality of all *atmas* or souls of all embodied beings. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.5.14 states that the *atma* is eternal and verily indestructible. The *jiva* or embodied being is in a perpetual state of bondage. So here *aksharam* refers to the individual *atma* and when matter merges with it then it becomes embodied and is referred to as *adhyatma* which is a combination of matter, senses, intelligence and subtle elements surrounding enveloping the *atma*. Both the *atma* and matter should be well comprehended by those aspirants for *moksha* or liberation from material existence in order to know what in life should be accepted and what in life should be rejected. Also, one should be clear as to the discharge of one's daily duties and *yajna* or worship in propitiation and whether such propitiation should be offered to demigods like *Indra* the celestial chief or *Surya* the sun god or exclusively to the Supreme Lord. All actions of various types offered to anything other than the Supreme Lord have a reaction attached to them and are known as *karma*. *Karma* is actions performed by the self, which dictate the individual's unique conditions of existence from birth to birth. These *karmas* keep the soul rotating in the cycle of material existence, called *Samsara*.

#### **Verse 04:**

In this verse Lord Krishna answers three questions. He confirms that *adhibhuta* is all perishable objects existing in the material substratum, including the supra subtle principles of sound, sight, light, smell etc. which are latent in the five fundamental elements of ether, fire, earth, water and air. He further reveals that the total aggregate of all embodied *atmas* or souls, as well as the presiding deity over all *atmas*, are all *adhidaiva*. This includes the demigods in charge of universal management such as *Surya* in charge of the sun, *Vayu* in charge of wind, *Varuna* in charge of water, etc. Referring to the person who performs the *yajna* or propitiation and worship, Lord Krishna is the *adhiyajna* the propagator of all action and the ultimate recipient of all offerings. Any offerings performed in the world are accomplished by the help of one's body wherein resides the Supreme Lord as the eternal *atma* and indwelling monitor. Thus the Supreme Lord is presiding over the performer of *yajna* because being dependent they are supported and sustained by Him and thus *yajna* should always be performed in propitiation to Him. Lord Krishna is the presiding deity of all *yajna*. He is the bestower of rewards for all actions and the enjoyer of the rewards of all sacrifices. He is residing in the bodies as the inner witness of all the demigods as well, who are the individual deities. In this way, the terms *adhibhuta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhiyajna*, have been explained comprehensively for the sake of imparting knowledge, so those who earnestly aspire can achieve the ultimate destination.

#### **Verse 05:**

In exact terms, the words *mad bhavam* means under my nature. Only when the nature of Lord Krishna's transcendental qualities and attributes and pastimes are recollected at the time of departing from the physical body at the moment of death will one achieve the cherished goal and attain Him. Otherwise if there is no knowledge of His transcendental nature there can be no remembrance. Naturally one acquires the state of consciousness upon whatever one meditates upon and this is an absolute essential fact applying itself to the destination of one's subsequent life at the moment of death. The remembrance of mundane corporeal things at the time of death assures in the next life a mundane corporeal existence accordingly. But those enlightened and exalted beings who remember Lord Krishna at the moment of death attain Him without fail and the means to this are given by the words *mam eva smaran* meaning remembering Him alone emphasizes that by constant remembrance spiritual realization is attained.