

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 122: Chapter 13, Verses 14-17

(September 2 – September 8, 2020)

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ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT

TRANSLITERATION

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।

sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādam tat sarvato 'kṣhi-śhiro-mukham

सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥ १३-१४ ॥

sarvataḥ śhrutimal loke sarvam āvṛitya tiṣṭhati

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।

sarvendriya-guṇābhāsaṁ sarvendriya-vivarjitam

असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च ॥ १३-१५ ॥

*asaktaṁ sarva-bhṛich chaiva nirguṇaṁ guṇa-bhokṭri
cha*

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।

bahir antaśh cha bhūtānām acharaṁ charam eva cha

सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ॥ १३-१६ ॥

sūkṣmatvāt tad avijñeyaṁ dūra-sthaṁ chāntike cha tat

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।

avibhaktaṁ cha bhūteṣhu vibhaktaṁ iva cha sthitam

भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥ १३-१७ ॥

bhūta-bharṭri cha taj jñeyaṁ grasishṇu prabhaviṣṇu cha

TRANSLATION

- (14) Everywhere are His hands and feet, eyes, heads, and faces. His ears too are in all places, for He pervades everything in the universe.
- (15) Though He perceives all sense-objects, yet He is devoid of the senses. He is unattached to anything, and yet He is the sustainer of all. Although He is without attributes, yet He is the enjoyer of the three modes of material nature.
- (16) He exists outside and inside all living beings, those that are moving and not moving. He is subtle, and hence, He is incomprehensible. He is very far, but He is also very near.
- (17) He is indivisible, yet He appears to be divided amongst living beings. Know the Supreme Entity to be the Sustainer, Annihilator, and Creator of all beings.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1q8GX42VfYnMqdpG58_ofbdVpsDBuTi3i/view?usp=sharing

Chapter 13

Verse 14:

This verse begins with *sarvatah pani-padam tat*, meaning the Supreme Lord has hands and feet everywhere. This denotes that by His potency the Supreme Lord is capable of doing everywhere what all hands and feet do in the embodied state. Similarly, Lord Krishna says *sarvatah shrutimalloke*, meaning He hears everything in all directions internally and externally. This indicates that He is capable of performing the functions of the senses, such as hearing and seeing, without the need of any physical sense organ. **The Supreme Lord, known as Parabrahman, although possessing no hands and feet, is able to perform the activities of hands and feet.** The *Shvetashvatara Upanishad III.IXX*, beginning with *apani pado jivana grihita*, meaning footless and handless He moves and grasps; eyeless and earless He sees and hears. **That the *atma* or immortal soul of every sentient, even while being situated as an infinitesimal particle of Parabrahman, has the capacity of performing functions without organs as well.** This is confirmed in the *Mundaka Upanishad III.I.VIII*, beginning with *tatha vidva punya-pape vidhuya niranjana param samyam upaiti*, meaning the *atma* casting off the dross of merit and demerit becomes purified attaining qualitative sameness in transcendence as the *brahman*. **So, in conclusion, the *khshetra-jna* abides all throughout creation, encompassing everything. This means that the *atma* pervades all things in creation without exception since the *atma* has no limitations of time**

and space. The *atma* is qualitatively equated to *Parabrahman* but quantitatively it is minuscule similar to a ray of light from the sun.

Verse 15:

The phrase *sarvendriya-gunabhasam* means the source of the *brahman* or spiritual substratum pervading all existence, known as *Parabrahma* or the Supreme Being, is capable of illuminating all the senses with consciousness along with their faculties such as sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, etc. But devoid of all material qualities, *Parabrahma* is still capable of performing all the activities of the senses without the need for physical sense organs. The same holds true for the *atma* or immortal soul which is capable of experiencing the activities of the senses without sense faculties and which by its own virtue has the capacity of omniscience like *Parabrahma*. The word *asaktam* means indifferent or unattached to the material and yet is *sarva-bhrit* or capable of assuming all physical bodies and is the maintainer of all physical bodies. The *Chandogya Upanishad VII.XXV*, beginning with *sa eva dhastat*, says that the Supreme Lord is everywhere in all directions. The Supreme Lord is *nirguna*, meaning transcendental to the three modes of material nature, including the sattvic, rajasic and tamasic qualities (goodness, passion and ignorance, respectively), pervading the material existence, and yet the Supreme Lord is the ultimate experiencer of these three modes.

Verse 16:

The word *bahih* means outside, which refers to the *atma* or immortal soul which still exists even when it departs a physical body at death and abandons the subtle body along with the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether although it is present within them as well. As confirmed in the *Chandogya Upanishad VI.VII.VII*, beginning with *sa ya esho animaitad*, meaning the source of the *brahman* or spiritual substratum pervading all existence, known as *Parabrahma* or the Supreme Lord Krishna, eternally exists in everything by His transcendental potency. By nature, it is *acharam* or stationary and unmoving, but it is *charam* or moving in its embodied state. Due to being supra-subtle without material and mundane qualities, it is *avijneyam* or incomprehensible. The *atma* or immortal soul possesses all powers and knowledge although it occupies and inhabits a bodily form. Because it is subatomic it cannot be perceived by technological methods and remains a mystery. Therefore, it is extremely difficult for worldly people of logic and reason to understand it being separate and distinct from the physical body. The words *doorastham chantike* means that the *atma* although present within their own bodies is very far away from those who are arrogant, ostentatious, irreverent, etc. who do not possess the 20 virtues of righteousness mentioned in Verses 8 to 12 above, such as humility, reverence and nonviolence. However, it is extremely near to those dear ones who possess the 20 virtues.

This is because these 20 virtues facilitate a living entity's ability to perceive internally and realize the *atma*.

Verse 17:

By the Supreme Lord Krishna who is known as *Parabrahma*, the intrinsic potency as the source of the *brahman* or spiritual substratum pervading all existence, is devoid of all divisions, abiding everywhere within all creatures, demigods, humans etc. But to the spiritually unaware, there appears to be divisions and differences due to variegation of forms. What Lord Krishna has stated in Verse 2 of this chapter that those who are knowledgeable of the *kshetra-jna* are spiritually enlightened about the *atma* or immortal soul, existing equally within all living entities, and distinctly separate from the physical body, although residing within the etheric heart of all sentient beings. When textural quotes are read as I am a demigod, I am a man, etc. it is only referring to the body, the physical form shrouding the *atma* due to *karma*, the resultant reactions from past life activities. The *atma* as a distinct, separate immortal entity can be discerned by reflection and contemplation in as much as the *atma* provides the support for the aggregate combination of the five fundamental elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether, which in varying degrees make up the physical body. So *Parabrahma* is known as *bhuta-bhartr*, the maintainer of all beings as distinguished from the maintained. Since *Parabrahma* exists after the time of universal destruction, He is known as *grasishnu*, the annihilator of the material elements, as distinguished from the annihilated. Because *Parabrahma* is the causer of transformations, He is known as *prabha-visnu*, the creator of universal manifestation, as distinguished from the created. In as much as no such properties are ever present in a dead body, it can be correctly concluded that mere matter possessed *kshetra* or field of activity is never capable of being the maintainer, the annihilator or the creator whereas the *kshetra-jna* is capable.