

similarly by casting off worn-out bodies, we don't die and by acquiring new bodies, we are not born. It means that the body dies, we (the self) don't die. If we die, who will reap the fruit of virtuous and sinful actions? Who will acquire new bodies? Who will be in bondage? Who will attain salvation?



*Link:—In the next three verses, there is the description that the soul is super-mundane.*

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥ २३ ॥

nainam chindanti śastrāṇi nainam dahati pāvakaḥ  
na cainam kledayantyāpo na śoṣayati mārutaḥ

Weapons cannot cut the soul, nor can fire burn it, water cannot drench it, nor can wind make it dry. 23

*Comment:—*

'Nainam chindanti śastrāṇi'—Weapons cannot cut the soul because they are made of the earth-element which cannot even reach the soul. So how can they hurt the soul?

'Nainam dahati pāvakaḥ'—Fire cannot burn the soul, because the soul is beyond the reach of fire. It means that fire can never bring any change ever in it.

'Na cainam kledayantyāpaḥ'—Water cannot drench the soul because water cannot wet it. Water can never bring any change in it.

'Na śoṣayati mārutaḥ'—Wind cannot dry the soul because it is beyond the reach of wind. It can never bring any change in the least in it.

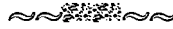
Thus out of the five gross elements four cannot hurt the soul. Now, the question arises—why has Lord Kṛṣṇa not mentioned the fifth element—ether? The answer is, that Ākāśa (ether) is actionless. Earth, water, fire, wind are born of ether and these are incapable of acting on ether. Therefore, when they cannot

even hurt ether, how can they hurt the soul, which is beyond the reach of even Matter or nature (prakṛti)? These elements with attributes cannot reach the soul, which is without any attributes (Gītā 13/31).

The soul is eternal. All the four elements such as the earth etc., are activated by the power of the soul. So, how can they impair the soul, the source of their power? The soul is all-pervading, while the four elements, such as the earth etc., are the pervaded ones. How can the pervaded ones, hurt the all-pervading one?

Here, the context is of war. Arjuna is grieved at the thought of the imminent death, of his kinsmen. Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa explains to Arjuna that the soul cannot be hurt by any weapons. A weapon can cut the body, not the soul, a fire-emitting missile can burn the body, but not the soul, the Neptune noose (Varuṇa weapon), can drench a body but not the soul, and the wind-missile can dry the body but not the soul. It means that the soul is not hurt by any weapons and missiles, it remains the same, while it is the body alone which decays and dies. So, it is sheer ignorance to lament for it.

**Appendix**—We say, 'This is a body'—there is a change in the body, but in 'Is' (Śarīrī) there is no change. Similarly when we say, 'There is wood or timber', then there is variation in wood, not in 'Is'. Wood is cut, 'Is' is not cut. Wood burns, 'Is' does not burn. Wood becomes wet, 'Is' doesn't get wet. Wood dries, 'Is' does not get dry. Wood never remains uniform while 'Is' never becomes multiform.



अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।

नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥ २४ ॥

acchedyo'yamadāhyo'yamakledyo'śoṣya eva ca  
nityaḥ sarvagataḥ sthāṇuracalo'yaṁ sanātanah