

He Who sustains is God and He Who is sustained is also God. He Who destroys is God and He Who is destroyed is also God.



Link:—In the previous verse, the Lord said that He who is worth knowing, is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the entire universe. In the next verse, it is explained that He is the light of all lights.

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥ १७ ॥

jyotiṣāmapī tajjyotistamasah paramucyate
jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ jñānagamyāṁ hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam

That supreme soul is said to be, the light of all lights, entirely beyond darkness (ignorance). He is knowledge (jñāna), the knowable (jñeya) the goal of knowledge and is vested in the hearts of all. 17

Comment:—

'Jyotiṣāmapī tajjyotiḥ'—The sun, the moon, the stars, fire and electricity, are illuminators (light), of physical objects. The five sense-organs—ear, eye, skin, tongue and nose are, the illuminators (light) of sound, sight (colour), touch, taste and smell. The sense-organs can perceive the objects of sense, if the mind, remains with them. So mind, is the light (illuminator) of senses. Similarly, intellect is the light of the mind, as it guides and distinguishes, the real from the unreal. Self is the light of the intellect, because if a man does not attach importance, to the real and does not translate reality into practice, there is not much utility, of intellectual knowledge. The self is a fragment of the Lord, and so He is the light (Illuminator), of the self. So He is the light of all lights, and is self-effulgent but He is illuminated by, none.

As an examinee, can see other examinees who are sitting

on the front benches, but cannot see those, who are sitting at his back, similarly ego and intellect etc., can perceive mind and senses etc., but cannot perceive God, Who sees all of them, Who is their illuminator and Who is not illuminated by, anyone. He equally illuminates the entire world, moving or unmoving (Śrīmadbhā. 10/113/55). In Him, there is no trio of an illuminator, illumination and the illumined.

'Tamasah paramucyate'—The Supreme Lord, is entirely beyond darkness or ignorance. It means, that He is totally untainted and detached. Senses, mind, intellect and ego, can be tainted by ignorance and knowledge, but He is beyond ignorance, in the same way as, the sun is beyond the reach of darkness.

'Jñānaṁ jñeyam jñānagamyam'—God is knowledge Himself, free from ignorance. All beings, receive knowledge from Him. He is worth knowing (knowable), because nothing remains to be known, after knowing him. Worldly knowledge, is no doubt useful, but it is not a must, as it is not perfect in itself. After possessing it, something else remains, to be known. In fact, it is only the Lord, who is to be known certainly. Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the fifteenth chapter, declares, "I am worth knowing through the Vedas" (15/15) and "He who knows Me, knows all" (Gītā 15/19).

Virtues, such as absence of pride, freedom from hypocrisy, and non-violence etc., which have been described, from the seventh verse to the eleventh verse of this chapter, have been declared to be (true) knowledge. By that knowledge, renouncing the unreal, the Lord, can be known in reality. So the Lord has been called the goal to be attained by this knowledge.

'Hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam'—Though God pervades everywhere, He is particularly seated, in the hearts of all.

How to realize the presence of God in the heart?

(1) A striver, should realize the difference between, the real and the unreal. He should know, that there are different states, such as wakefulness, sleep, and sound sleep; childhood,

youth and old age, but he himself remains, the same. Pleasant and painful, favourable and unfavourable circumstances, appear and disappear, but he remains the same. There is contact, with things, persons etc., and then there is separation, from these, but he remains the same. It means that he is different from, all of them. By knowing this truth in reality, he will realize the presence of God in his heart, because he himself, being a fraction of the Lord, has identity with Him.

(2) As a starving person, becomes uneasy without food and a thirsty man without water, a striver, should become uneasy for God-realization. Then, he will realize that He is seated in his heart. By this realization, he will understand that God is all-pervading. This is true realization.

Appendix—The Knowable entity, which has been described from the twelfth verse to the seventh verse, is only the entire form of God ('Vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ'). The reason is that in it attributeless-formless (twelfth verse), God endowed with attributes—formless (thirteenth verse) and God endowed with attributes and form (sixteenth verse) all the three have been described.

'Jñānagamyam'—God can be known by spiritual realization, not by actions and objects etc. There is no other method besides spiritual realization to know Him. A man may know God by any spiritual discipline such as Karmayoga, Jñānayoga, Dhyānayoga etc., in fact He will be known only by Spiritual realization. If He is known by faith, belief, devotion and God's grace etc., then also He is known by Spiritual realization only. The reason is that 'knowing' is done by knowledge.

Here the term 'jñānagamyam' may also mean that He is attained by twenty virtues which have been mentioned from the seventh verse to the eleventh verse of this chapter.



Link:—Having given a brief description of Kṣetra (Body),