

doer and enjoyer. Therefore a striver instead of assuming 'am' should assume only 'is' viz., he should realize it.

Everyone realizes that pleasures and pains appear and disappear while the Self ever remains the same. Even the most sinful person realizes this fact. In spite of realizing this fact, a man feels happy and sad with the fleeting pleasures and pains. The reason is that attachment to pleasure and fear of pain do not let him realize that he is different from pleasure and pain—this discrimination does not work. In fact a man (the Self) does not feel happy and sad at all but he, identifying the Self with the body, assumes himself to be happy and sad. It means that pleasure (happiness) and pain (sadness) are based on his indiscriminative assumption only.



Link:—In the preceding three verses, Prakṛti (Matter) and Puruṣa (Spirit), were described. In the next verse, there is a description of Puruṣa, in particular.

उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥ २२ ॥

upadraṣṭānumantā ca bhartā bhoktā maheśvaraḥ
paramātmēti cāpyukto dehe'sminpuruṣaḥ paraḥ

The Soul (Puruṣa) having been vested within the body is called a 'witness', because he gives consent, he is called a 'permitter'; as he assumes that he sustains the body, he is called a 'sustainer'; as he experiences pleasure and pain, he is called 'experiencer'; being the master of the body he is 'Great Lord' (Maheśvara). Really speaking, this Puruṣa by his own nature is the Supreme Soul. In spite of, His residence in the body; he is untainted and unattached. 22

Comment:—

'Upadraṣṭānumantā ca bhartā bhoktā maheśvaraḥ'—The

Puruṣa (spirit), is eternal, all-pervading, immovable, constant and everlasting (Gītā 2/24). As the Puruṣa, observes the body, an evolute of prakṛti, He becomes a witness.

He, is the permitter, because He gives advice and permission, in the performance of actions.

He, by identifying himself with the individual body, sustains the body by providing food, water and other necessities, and protects it from cold and heat etc. So, He is the sustainer.

By identifying Himself with the body, He undergoes all sorts of experiences. He experiences pleasure and pain, in favourable and unfavourable, circumstances. So, He is the experienter.

He regards Himself, as the Lord of the body, senses, mind, intellect, wealth and property etc. So He is called the Great Lord.

'Paramātmēti cāpyukto dehe'sminpuruṣaḥ paraḥ'—The Spirit, dwelling in this body, is really the same, which has been termed as the 'Supreme Soul', in the scriptures. In spite of its residence, in the body, it has no affinity with it. Though it dwells in the body, it neither acts, nor is tainted (13/31).

In this verse, the Spirit dwelling in the body, has been called by different names, as a man is called by different names (such as father, uncle, brother and grandfather etc.,) according to the relationship it bears, though it is the same.

Appendix—In fact the Puruṣa (spirit) is transcendental (untainted and unattached) but having relationship with others, he becomes a witness, a permitter etc. As a man becomes a father by having relationship with a son, he becomes a son by bearing relationship with the father, he becomes a husband by bearing relationship with the wife and he becomes a brother by bearing relationship with a sister. All these relations are in order to perform one's duty, rather than to have the sense of mine (possession). The real Self is totally unattached and untainted.

Here the purpose of giving several epithets such as 'upadraṣṭā'

(witness), 'anumantā' (permitter) etc., is to express unity that the Self is only one. In the topic of knowledge the description of both Prakṛti and Puruṣa is important. Therefore here all the terms such as 'upadraṣṭā', 'anumantā' and 'īśvara' etc., are to be taken to stand for (denote) Puruṣa.



Link:—Having described 'Prakṛti' and 'Puruṣa', from the nineteenth verse to the twenty-second verse, the Lord in the next verse, declares the reward of knowing the two, in reality.

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥ २३ ॥

ya evaṁ veti puruṣaṁ prakṛtiṁ ca guṇaiḥ saha
sarvathā vartamāno'pi na sa bhūyo'bhijāyate

He who thus knows Puruṣa (Spirit) and prakṛti (nature) together with its modes, though he acts in everyway (whatever state of life he may be in), he is not born again. 23

Comment:—

'Ya evaṁ veti puruṣaṁ prakṛtiṁ ca guṇaiḥ saha sarvathā vartamāno'pi na sa bhūyo'bhijāyate'—Here the term 'Evam' (thus), denotes that the Spirit is different from, the body. He who knows this difference in reality, while performing his duty according to his caste, creed, stage of life and circumstances etc., is not reborn. He knows that prakṛti with its evolutes, modifications and instruments etc., which appears in the form of universe, is different from the Self. So he is not born again, because attachment to the modes of nature, is the cause of its birth (Gītā 13/21).

Here, the expression 'Sarvathā vartamāno'pi' (acts in anyway), does not involve forbidden actions, because he who knows prakṛti, with its modes as different from the self, can have no desire to gain the unreal. When he has no desire, forbidden actions