

that chariot Lord Kṛṣṇa is seated while in another part Arjuna is seated. The Lord starts preaching the divine gospel for the benediction of mankind by making Arjuna, an instrument and first of all He describes the discrimination between the body and (the embodied soul) its possessor.



*Link:—Lord Kṛṣṇa preaches the gospel of freedom, from grief to grieved Arjuna and says—*

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।

गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ ११ ॥

*śrībhagavānuvāca*

aśocyānanvaśocastvaṁ prajñāvādāṁśca bhāṣase  
gatāsūnagatāsūṁśca nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ

The Blessed Lord said:

Arjuna, you grieve for those who should not be grieved at, yet speak as if a man of wisdom. The wise grieve, neither for the living, nor for the dead. 11

*Comment:—*

[A man is grieved when he classifies objects and persons, into two divisions—One's own, and not one's own, such as, our kinsmen and not our kinsmen, of our caste and not of our caste, of our stage of life and not of our stage of life, our followers and not our followers. We have a sense of mine, attachment, love and desire for those, who we regard as ours. Through these—a sense of mine and desire etc., faults such as grief, worry, fear, perturbation, commotion and strain etc., arise. The root of all faults, is a sense of mine and desire etc., this is a rule.

At the beginning of the Gītā, Dhṛtarāṣṭra asked, "What did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do?" It shows his partiality towards

his own sons and attachment for them, though the Pāṇḍavas, regarded him more than their father.

Arjuna also developed the same attachment, but he had no partiality, he was impartial and so he uses the terms 'Seeing all these relations' (1/28) and 'How can we, by killing our own kinsmen, be happy' (1/37). It means that, Arjuna had attachment for the Kuru family, and because of possibility of destruction of the family, he was grieved. To remove this grief, Lord Kṛṣṇa preaches the gospel of the Gītā, which begins with this eleventh verse. In the end, Lord Kṛṣṇa declares that there is no justification for Him, to grieve and he should take refuge in Him, alone, and not grieve—'Grieve not' (18/66). The reason is, that dependence on the world leads to grief, while supreme or exclusive devotion to the Lord, leads to the state which is free from faults such as grief and worry etc.]

'Aśocyānanvaśocastvam'—There are two things in the world—real and unreal, the soul and the body. Both of these are not to be grieved at as the real is imperishable, and therefore, should not be grieved for and the unreal, is bound to perish, as it is perishing every moment, so it should not be grieved at. It means that these are grieved at, only because of ignorance or lack of discrimination. Whatever circumstances, in the form of birth-death, profit-loss etc., a man finds himself in, are result of his fate viz., his previous actions. It is sheer ignorance to feel happy or sad, in those, favourable or unfavourable circumstances, because these are transient.

'Prajñāvādāmśca bhāṣase'— On the one hand, you speak words of wisdom, but on the other hand, you grieve. It shows that you are merely talking tall, actually you are not wise, because the wise do not grieve, for anyone.

You also say that with the destruction of a family, its age old traditions disappear, women become depraved and there ensues an intermixture of castes, which leads to hell and

deprived of the ritual offerings of rice-balls (Piṇḍa) and water, their manes also fall—these words, as of the wise, also prove that a body is perishable, while the soul is imperishable. Had the soul not been imperishable, how could you have feared the fall of the killers and members of the family? Further, you would not have worried about the fall of manes. Your worry and fear prove, that a body is perishable while its master, the soul is eternal. So it is not right to grieve for them.

'Gatāsūnagatāsūmśca'—It is out of ignorance, that you grieve for the bodies because these will all perish. You should not lament for them. Such grief is a mistake.

It is also a great mistake to grieve for those who are dead because they suffer torture, if their people, grieve for them. The departing soul has to drink and eat the tears and phlegm\* shed by people here. Similarly, we should not grieve or worry for those who are living, because grief (worry) does not help them, in anyway. We should rather care for and help them.

Arjuna's limbs were giving way and his mouth was getting parched. The root of such feelings, is his identity with the body. Such identity creates affinity for those who nurse this body. That affinity gives birth to grief and worry in thinking of their death. So one is grieved (worried) and sad after thinking of those, who are living as well as those who are dead. One is grieved (worried) about the dead because deprived of the ritual offerings of rice-balls and water, the manes, have a downfall (1/42), and he is worried about the living ones, because they are arrayed on the battlefield, staking their lives and property (1/33). Both types of worries relate to their bodies. So they are of the same character.

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\* The departing soul has to eat and drink the phlegm and tears shed by the relatives. So we should not lament the death of a relative but should perform obsequies (Pañcatantra, Mitrabheda 365).

The departing soul hereafter drinks the tears shed by the relatives here (Skanda Purāṇa, Brāhma. Setu. 48/42).

Instead of grieving, for those who are dead, we should offer ritual water and rice-balls etc., because it is our duty. Similarly, we should make arrangement to care for those who are living. So we should give a serious thought to it which enables us to understand our duty, while worry (grief), destroys the power of thinking.

**'Nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ'**—Discrimination between the real and the unreal, is called 'Paṇḍā' (wisdom), and one who has developed discrimination, is known as 'Paṇḍita' (wise). Such wise men do not grieve, because they can discriminate between the real and the unreal—the imperishable self (soul) and the perishable body. Grief arises, only when the unreal is accepted as real i.e., when there is a desire to maintain the body forever. For the real, there is no grief or worry, at all.

**Appendix**—There is one division of the body (Śarīra) while another division is of the self (Śarīrī). Both have no relationship at all with each other. Both are quite different in nature. One is insentient while the other is sentient. One is perishable while the other is imperishable. One is mutable while the other is immutable. One is kaleidoscopic while the other remains the same for time immemorial—'bhūtagrāmaḥ sa evāyam' (Gītā 8/19), 'Sarge'pi nopajāyante pralaye na vyathanti ca' (Gītā 14/2).

The body and the self—both are not to be grieved. The body ever perishes, therefore it is not to be grieved, while the self never perishes, therefore it is also not to be grieved. One is grieved only because of one's own folly. The body is continuously separating automatically while the self is ever attained to all. The wise men who know this distinction between the body and the self, never grieve for any being whether dead or alive. In their view the division of the changing body is different from that of the never changing self i.e., the ever existent entity.

The gospel of the Gītā begins with the discrimination between the body and the self. Other philosophical classics describe the

‘self’ and the ‘non-self’ in an objective manner and it becomes a matter of study but the Gītā instead of describing the self and non-self objectively, describes ‘deha-dehī’, ‘Śarīra-śarīrī’ (body and its owner) on the basis of the personal experience of all persons. This is uniqueness of the Gītā. The striver who wants to attain salvation first of all must know ‘Who I am’. Arjuna has also asked Lord Kṛṣṇa to tell him the highest good for him (Gītā 2/7). Salvation can only be attained by discriminating the self from the body. So long as a man holds ‘I am body’, he may listen to gospels, may preach gospels to others, may practise spiritual discipline but salvation is not possible.

It is a blunder to accept (assume) a thing, which is not one’s own, as one’s own and to disown a thing which is one’s own. Only the thing, which may ever live with us and with which we may ever live can be our own. The body in the same state doesn’t stay with us even for a moment while God ever lives with us. The reason is that the body belongs to the class of the world, while the self belongs to the class of God. Therefore it is the greatest blunder to assume the body as one’s own and not to assume God as one’s own. In order to rectify this blunder, the Lord in the Gītā first of all describes the discrimination between the body and the self and awakens the striver to the fact, “You (self) are not the entity which dies viz., you are not the body. You are the knower while the body is ‘the known’ (the Gītā 13/1). You are eternal and pervade everywhere ‘nityaḥ sarvagataḥ’ (Gītā 2/24), ‘yena sarvamidam tatam’ (Gītā 2/17) while the body is unipresent. You are a resident of the divine world while the body is a resident of the matter (mortal) world. You are a fragment of God—‘mamaivāṁśo jīvaloke’ (Gītā 15/7) while the body is a fragment of ‘Prakṛti’ (Nature)—‘manah saṣṭhānindriyāṇi prakṛtisthāni’ (Gītā 15/7). You ever live in immortality while the body ever lives in mortality. By the decay and death of

the body you don't decay and die in the least. Therefore, you shouldn't be obsessed by grief, worry and fear etc.

The self is not attached and limited to anybody, therefore it is said to be pervading everywhere—'sarvagataḥ' (Gītā 2/24), 'yena sarvamidaṁ tatam' (Gītā 2/17). Therefore the true nature of a striver is merely an ever existent entity, not śarīrī (one having a body) rather it is 'aśarīrī' (having no relation with the body). Therefore the Lord has also designated it as 'अव्यक्त'—unmanifest (Gītā 2/25), 'अव्यक्तादीनिभूतानि' unmanifest beings (2/28), the body is decaying every moment and it is 'Asat'. 'Asat' has no existence 'नास्ततो विद्यते भावः' (2/16). How a striver having relationship with the body even whose existence is not there can be termed 'śarīrī'? A striver is neither 'Śarīra' (body) nor 'Śarīrī' (dehī). In this section the Lord has used the term 'Śarīrī' (dehī) for the ever existent entity in order to explain it to the strivers. By calling it as 'Śarīrī' He means to say that a striver is not body.

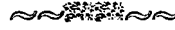
When we reflect upon the nature of the body and the self, we perceive that the body and the self have their own identity and when we don't reflect upon them, then they have also their own identity. On reflection there is no difference in the reality of their true nature but by reflecting upon them the striver's delusion is destroyed and the human life becomes successful by attaining its aim.

In human life there is predominance of discrimination. Therefore 'I am not body'—this discrimination is possible only in the human body. The sense of 'I' and 'mine' in the body is not the work of human intellect but that of beastly intellect. Therefore Śrī Śukadevajī Mahārāja says to king Parīkṣit—

tvam tu rājan mariṣyeti paśubuddhimimāṁ jahi  
na jātaḥ prāgabdhūto'dya dehavattvam na naṅkṣyasi

(Śrīmadbhā. 12/5/2)

‘O King! Now give up this beastly intellect that you will die. As the body was non-existent in the past, it was born afterwards and will die in future, it is not the case with you (the self) that you were non-existent in the past, were born afterwards and will die in future.’



*Link:—In the next two verses, the Lord explains why it is unwise to grieve for what is imperishable.*

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।  
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥ १२ ॥

na tvevāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ na tvam neme janādhipāḥ  
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ sarve vayamataḥ param

In fact, there was never a time when I or you or these kings, were non-existent. Nor is it, right that we shall cease to be in future. 12

*Comment:—*

[There are two things in the world, the soul (the real) and the body (the unreal) and both of these are not to be grieved for, because the soul never ceases to be and the body is ever perishable. So here it is explained that the soul is immortal, while the body is mortal.]

‘Na tvevāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ na tvam neme janādhipāḥ’—People think that I did not exist before My incarnation and you and these kings were also non-existent before our birth. But it is not so. All of us certainly existed, because the real is always existent, unaffectedly time, place and circumstances etc.

‘I, you and these kings, had their previous existence’—this declaration could suffice. But contrarily it is said—‘I, you and these kings had no such pre-existence—this is not true’. The reason is, that by the latter expression ‘that there was no such pre-existence—is not true’, the fact of their pre-existence is emphasized.