

undergoes six modifications because it is perishable while the soul is imperishable.

Here in these verses Lord Kṛṣṇa has made such a distinction between the body and the soul, as is rarely found anywhere else in the Gītā.

Arjuna was grieved after thinking about the death of his kinsmen in the war. So Lord Kṛṣṇa wants to explain to him that the soul is not killed even when the body is slain, so he should not grieve.

**Appendix—**Our (of the self) nature and the nature of the body are quite different. We (the self) are not attached to the body, are not mingled with the body. The body is not attached to us, it is not mixed with us. Therefore at the death of the body we are not affected at all. By now we have passed through innumerable bodies, but what difference did it make in our entity (existence)? What loss did we sustain? We remained the same—‘bhūtagrāmaḥ sa evāyaṁ bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate’ (Gītā 8/19). Similarly at the death of the body we’ll remain the same.

As hands, feet and nose etc., are organs of the body, likewise the body is not an organ of the self. That which flows and varies is not an organ\* (of the imperishable) as phlegm and urine etc., flow and an ulcer (boil) varies, so they are not organs of the body. Similarly the body which flows and varies is not an organ of the self.



*Link:—In the nineteenth verse, Lord Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna that soul neither slays, nor is slain. In the twentieth verse, He explained how it is not slain. Now, in the next verse, He explains how it does not slay.*

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।  
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ २१ ॥

\*adravaṁ mūrttimat svāṅgaṁ prāṇisthamavikārajam  
atatsthaṁ tatra dr̥ṣṭaṁ ca tena cettattathāyutam

**vedāvināśinam nityam ya enamajamavyayam  
katham sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kaṁ ghātayati hanti kam**

**O Pārtha, How can, a man who realises this soul to be imperishable, eternal and free from birth and decay, slay, anyone or cause anyone to be slain? 21**

*Comment:—*

'Vedāvināśinam nityam ya enamajamavyayam katham sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kaṁ ghātayati hanti kam'—The man, who realizes this soul to be imperishable, eternal and free from birth and decay, can have no inclination to slay, anyone or cause anyone, to be slain. He is free from egoism i.e., he has no feeling of an agent in him, and so actions do not taint him.

Here, Lord Kṛṣṇa has explained that the soul is free from six kinds of modifications (i.e.) to be born, to exist, by the term 'Aja', to change, to grow by the term 'nitya', to decay by the term 'avyayam' and to perish by the term 'avināśī'.

Now, a question arises, If the Lord by the terms 'na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre' and 'kaṁ ghātayati hanti kam' had merely to tell Arjuna that the soul is neither a doer nor an object of action then why he used words 'not a slayer' or 'not a slain' for the soul. The answer is that the theme is of a war, so it is necessary to say so. But He means, that the soul, is neither the agent (doer), nor the object of action. Therefore, one while discharging duty, should not grieve, while slaying anyone or causing anyone to be slain, but should discharge one's duty, in accordance with the ordinance of scriptures.

**Appendix—**A thing which is produced (born) certainly perishes, it has not to be perished (destroyed). But the thing which is not born, never perishes. We passed through eighty four lac forms of bodies but no body stayed with us and we didn't stay with any body; but we remained the same and apart. Those bodies didn't possess this power of discrimination but only this human body has been endowed with it. If we don't realize it, we disregard the discrimination bestowed upon us by God.

