

His words by using the term, 'Ṛtam' (True).

'Na hi te bhagavanvyaktim vidurdevā na dānavāḥ'—O Lord, You declared (in Gītā 4/5), "Arjuna, you and I, have passed through many births. I know them all, while you don't." Similarly, You declared (in Gītā 10/2), "Neither the gods nor the great sages, know the secret, of My birth." Thus, Arjuna believes as true, whatever the Lord declared about His manifestation. Though the gods, possess divine power, yet that power is perishable. So the gods cannot know, His manifestation. As far as, demons are concerned, they possess uncommon magical and fraudulent power, by which they cannot know the Lord's manifestation, because He, being eternal and limitless, cannot be known by perishable and limited power, of demons. It means, that the Lord cannot be known, by the power of men, gods and demons, because their power belongs to matter, while He is beyond Matter. Renunciation, dispassion, austerity and study of the scriptures etc., can purify the mind, but cannot enable a man, to know the Lord. The Lord, can be known, by His grace to the devotee who having exclusive devotion, depends on Him, only.

Appendix—No one can know God through his own endeavours, but He can be known only by His own grace—

'soi jānāi jehi dehu janāi,
jānata tumhahi tumhai hoi jāi.
tumharihi kṛpā tumhahi raghunandana,
jānahim bhagata bhagata ura candana. (Mānasa 2/127/2)

God is beyond the reach of miracles and occult powers and also scientific inventions.



स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।

भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥ १५ ॥

svayamevātmanātmānam vettha tvam puruṣottama
bhūtabhāvana bhūteśa devadeva jagatpate

You alone know Yourself by Yourself, O Supreme Person, O creator of beings, O Lord of creation, O God of gods, O Lord of the universe. 15

Comment:—

'Bhūtabhāvana bhūteśa devadeva jagatpate puruṣottama'—Being the origin, of all beings even through His thought, He is 'Bhūtabhāvana', being the Lord of beings He is Bhūteśa; being the Lord of the gods, He is 'Devadeva'; being the preserver of the universe He is 'Jagatpate', and being supreme, of all the persons He is known as 'Puruṣottama', in the world, and in the Vedas (Gītā 15/18).

In this verse, five vocatives have been used for the Lord. In no other verse, in the Gītā, so many vocatives have been used, at a time, because, he is enraptured by listening to His divine glories and His grace for the devotees.*

'Svayamevātmanātmānaṁ vettha tvam'—He knows Himself, by Himself, without any external help of instruments etc. This knowledge, is beyond instruments. It is transcendental, and comes not through, instruments.

A conclusion, from the verse can be drawn, that as the Lord knows Himself by Himself, the soul, a fragment of the Lord should also know itself, by itself, because it cannot be known, by senses, mind and intellect etc.

Appendix—'You alone know Yourself by Yourself'—it means that You are the knower, You are the entity to be known and You are also the act of knowing viz., You are all. When there is no one else besides You, then who should know and to whom should he know?

If an effort is made to know the Supreme Reality (Divinity),

* Here 'Bhūtabhāvana', 'Bhūteśa', 'Devadeva', 'Jagatpate' and 'Puruṣottama' can denote the sun, Lord Śiva, Lord Gaṇeśa, Durgā and Lord Viṣṇu, the five great deities of the rank of the Lord. By using those five terms Arjuna means to say that He has manifested Himself as these five deities.

we are distanced from that reality because when a striver holds that there is some entity to be known, then he wants to know it. That Divinity is the knower of all, He is not to be known. No one can be the knower of the Lord Who is the knower of all.* As with the eye everything can be seen but the eye can't be seen with the eye, because the power of seeing of the eye is not the sense-object viz., powers of senses themselves are beyond the reach of senses.† Therefore God Himself is known by Himself.



Link:—The Lord declared, "He who knows in reality this glory and power of Mine, gets established in Me, through unwavering devotion" (Gītā 10/7). So Arjuna, in the next three verses, requests Lord Kṛṣṇa to tell him of His divine glories in detail.

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥ १६ ॥

vaktumarhasyaśeṣeṇa divyā hyātmavibhūtayāḥ
yābhirvibhūtibhirlokanīmāṁstvaṁ vyāpya tiṣṭhasi

You alone, can describe in full Your divine glories, by which
You remain, pervading these worlds. 16

Comment:—

'Yābhirvibhūtibhirlokanīmāṁstvaṁ vyāpya tiṣṭhasi'—The Lord, in the seventh verse declared, that he who knows in reality His glory and power, gets established in Him, through unfaltering devotion. So, Arjuna wants to know His glories and power, so

* 'nānyo'to'sti draṣṭā' (Bṛhadāraṇyaka. 3/7/23)

† There is no one else the seer (onlooks) besides Him.'

Vijñātāramare kena vijānīyāt (Bṛhadāraṇyaka 2/4/14)

'How to know the knower of all?'

† 'It is the mind, not the senses, which sees the senses. It is intellect, not the mind, which sees the mind. It is ego, not intellect, which sees the intellect. It is the self, not ego which sees the ego. It is only the self which sees the self.'