

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५ ॥

yaṁ hi na vyathayantiyete puruṣaṁ puruṣarṣabha
samaduḥkhasukhaṁ dhīraṁ so'mṛtatvāya kalpate

O the best of men, a person to whom pain and pleasure are alike, and who is not tormented by these sense-objects, becomes eligible, for immortality. 15

Comment:—

'Puruṣarṣabha'—Men, generally try to change inevitable circumstances. But, Arjuna instead of trying to change these, has thought of attaining benediction, which shows, that he is the best of men.

'Samaduḥkhasukhaṁ dhīraṁ'—A resolute person remains alike in pleasure and pain. He experiences pleasure and pain, only when he is attached to three guṇas (qualities, modes) born of matter (nature) (Gītā 13/20-21). But when he gets immersed in the self, he does not experience pleasure and pain, and becomes unruffled.

'Yaṁ hi na vyathayantiyete puruṣaṁ'—To a man of steady wisdom, the sense-objects do not give pain. Pleasure, ensuing from the contact of sense-objects, is perturbing (Vyathā). Similarly, pain arising from their separation is also disconcerting. He who has an eye for equanimity cannot be happy or sad by these objects. Such a person knows what are favourable and unfavourable circumstances, but he remains unaffected by them. They do not leave any impression, on his mind.

'So'mṛtatvāya kalpate'—Such a man of steady wisdom, becomes eligible for immortality viz., he acquires the capability of realizing immortality. Being capable, he realizes immortality instantly, because his immortality is axiomatic. It was only because of one's affinity with objects (body etc.,) that it was obscure.

A special word

This human life, has not been bestowed upon man to experience pleasure and pain, but to attain the supreme bliss having obtained which, he has nothing else to seek (Gītā 6/22). If we remain greedy and desirous of acquiring favourable circumstances, we shall not be able to make use of those circumstances, because our energy will be wasted in the enjoyment of those circumstances, rather than in making proper use of these. Similarly, if we grieve over unfavourable circumstances or in their possibility, we will not be able to make use of them, rather we will be brooding over these. To get pleased over favourable circumstances is their enjoyment. The use of favourable circumstances, for mere maintenance of a body, and for the welfare of poverty-stricken people, is their proper use. Thus, riches in the form of favourable circumstances, should be considered, as property of the poor. We should neither be pleased with desirable circumstances, nor displeased with undesirable ones, but we should make the best possible use of these. Otherwise, we shall have to suffer pain.

It is a proper use of desirable circumstances, if having satisfied our needs, we use these to serve the needy and the destitute, instead of enjoying these ourselves. Actually, our riches are for the needy and the poor. So we should utilize these for their welfare. These are, the poor and the destitute, who have enabled the rich to be proud of, their riches. Had all others been multimillionaires could these millionaires have had pleasure and pride out of their being millionaires? No. The poor and destitute people, are the cause, of their pleasure and pride. Therefore, the rich people should serve the desolate and the destitute, as it is their duty to do so. But if they don't do so and enjoy the riches themselves they only are thankless.

Now, the question arises, how to make use of undesirable circumstances. The answer is that undesirable circumstances are painful, when there is desire for pleasure. If that desire is

renounced, then undesirable circumstances cannot be painful. If a patient is given bitter medicines and painful injections, he is not upset, rather he is pleased, because he knows that bitter medicines and painful injections, are cures for his disease. Thus, it is the proper use of undesirable circumstances, to bear pain, without having any grudge, against it. If one gets displeased with bitter medicines etc., then that is brooding over unfavourable circumstances. It will result in great misery.

If we enjoy pleasure and are tormented by pain, we may get heaven or hell but cannot be eligible for salvation, because salvation, is attained by those, who remain alike in pleasure and pain.

The Lord, in the fourteenth verse, has said that objects give rise to feelings of pleasure and pain, but these are transitory and fleeting. The moment we acquire them, their decay and parting starts. These were neither with us in the past, nor will remain in future and present, also they are going to be naught. But by enjoying these we are spoiling our nature, and are depriving ourselves of attainment of salvation. Therefore, if we make proper use of the available circumstances, we shall rise above pleasure and pain, and attain a state of the highest bliss.

Appendix—The self is in the form of an entity. In that entity there is no perturbation. When the self identifies itself with the body, then perturbation ensues. Therefore a person who assumes himself to be seated in the body can't be free from torment. Freedom from torment means—not to rejoice on obtaining what is pleasant and not to grieve on receiving what is unpleasant (Gītā 5/20). By being free from torment a man's intellect (understanding) becomes firm—'sthīrabbuddhirasammūḍhaḥ' (Gītā 5/20).

To rejoice and to grieve in favourable and unfavourable circumstances means to be tormented. To rejoice and to grieve is 'bhoga' of pleasure and pain. The seeker of pleasure and sufferer in pain can never be happy. A striver should not rejoice and grieve in favourable and unfavourable circumstances but

should utilize these circumstances. The favourable and the unfavourable circumstances are determined by fate; and to utilize those circumstances by regarding them as material for spiritual progress, is the real valour. This valour results in immortality. Utilization of favourable circumstances is to provide happiness to others and to render service to them; while the utilization of unfavourable circumstances is to renounce the desire for pleasure or favourable circumstances. By utilizing the unfavourable circumstances a striver discovers the reason for pain. The reason for pain is the desire for pleasure—‘ye hi saṁsarpaśajā bhogā duḥkhaṇayā eva te’ (Gītā 5/22). The person (bhogī) who enjoys pleasure and suffers pain has a downfall while he (yogī) who utilizes pleasure and pain, by rising above pleasure and pain, attains immortality.



Link:—In the next three verses also, the nature of the real (spirit), and the unreal (matter, body), is dwelt.

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।

उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ १६ ॥

nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ
ubhayorapi dr̥ṣṭo'ntastvanayostattvadarśibhiḥ

The unreal has no existence and the real, never ceases to be; the truth of both these, has been perceived by seers of truth. 16

Comment:—

'Nāsato vidyate bhāvo'—This body, neither existed in the past, before birth, nor will exist in the future after death, and is also perishing, at present. Thus, actually it is non-existent. This body is the world in miniature. The change in the body signifies the change, in the world. Similarly, the non-existence of a body signifies the non-existence of the world, in all the times.

The entire world is burning like wood continuously in the