

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ १४ ॥

mātrāsparśāstu kaunteya śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkhadāḥ
āgamāpāyino'nityāstāṁstitikṣasva bhārata

O son of Kuntī, bodily sense-objects, which give rise to the feelings of heat and cold, pleasure and pain etc., are transitory and fleeting, therefore, Arjuna bear these patiently viz., remain unaffected by them or ignore them. 14

Comment:—

[Here a doubt arises that in the verses from the eleventh to the thirteenth and then again from the sixteenth to the thirtieth there is a context of the spirit and the body, why are then these two verses about contacts of 'senses with objects' inserted in between? The explanation is that in the twelfth verse as the Lord placed Himself also in the category of the other people, here He wants to say that the body is equally transient as other worldly objects are and therefore these two verses fit in the context.]

'Tu'—'Tu' (indeed), has been used to explain, that transitory things, such as bodies etc., are different, from the permanent soul.

'Mātrāsparśāḥ'—Senses, including the inner sense, are called 'Mātrā' and 'Sparsāḥ', means 'Contact'. Therefore, all objects which are perceived by senses, are called 'Mātrāsparśāḥ' (bodily senses). Can affinity with objects, also be included in 'Mātrāsparśāḥ'? No. The reason is, that it is not 'inner sense', but the 'self', which accepts this affinity and that affinity remains, even when the objects are lost.* A woman bereaved of her husband fifty years ago, and if anyone called her as the wife of her husband Mr. A, she becomes alert, even today. It shows that the assumed

* The affinity with the unreal can perish only if we deny it. Actually the self has no affinity with the unreal. But it has accepted this affinity. So it can't be rooted out by any other means such as penances etc. It will be rooted out only when we cease to accept it.

affinity, has not yet broken off. It means that though objects are lost, yet the assumed affinity persists.

'Śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkhadāḥ'—Here, 'Śīta' (cold) and 'Uṣṇa' (hot), stand for favourable and unfavourable circumstances. Favourable circumstances, give us pleasure while unfavourable ones give pain. If the terms 'Śīta' and 'Uṣṇa' mean cold and heat, then these will represent only objects of touch and their meanings will be limited. These will not represent all sense-objects, and circumstances. Therefore, it is proper to take their meanings, as 'favourable' and 'unfavourable' circumstances. The fact is, that the favourable (desirable) or unfavourable (undesirable) circumstances and things cannot give pleasure or pain, but it is the affinity with them, which is the cause of pleasure and pain. So the Lord has called the objects 'Sukhaduḥkhadāḥ' (producers of pleasure and pain).

'Āgamāpāyinaḥ'—All objects, have a beginning and an end, they are born and disappear. So they are 'Āgamāpāyī', i.e., they appear and disappear.

'Anityāḥ'—It may be said, that objects may not have pre-existence or post-existence, but in between, they do exist. The Lord declares, that as they are 'Anitya' (transient) they do not exist even, in the interim. They change, every moment. They change, so swiftly, that no one can see them, again in the same form, because they do not maintain the same shape, the next moment. Therefore, the Lord has called all objects, as 'anitya.'

It means, that all worldly objects are transitory and fleeting, and they change every moment. Not only objects, but the senses, including the inner sense with which we perceive objects, are also transitory. There is always a change, in them. For example, the senses get tired by the evening, while working throughout a day and get refreshed in the morning, after a night's sleep.

Here, all objects in a gross sense are called 'āgamāpāyinaḥ' (appearing and disappearing). In a finer sense, these are called,

'anityāḥ' (changing every moment). In a more fine way, they will be described in the sixteenth verse of this chapter, as 'asat' (non-existent), while the soul described earlier, as eternal will be called as 'sat', (ever-existent), in the sixteenth verse of this chapter.

Mere knowledge, of agreeable and disagreeable senses is not at all defective. But attachment with and aversion to them or pleasure and pain, in relation to them is a fault. Not to be affected by such an evil, is expressed by the expression 'tāmstītikṣasva'.

Secondly, the body and senses and their actions, have a beginning and an end, while you as a spectator, are different from them. They always change, but you never change. Therefore, you should remain unaffected by them i.e., you should ignore them. To remain unaffected (untainted) is called here, 'titikṣā'.

Appendix—As the body never remains uniform but changes every moment, similarly all the worldly objects (Prakṛti viz., Nature and its evolutes) which are perceived by senses-mind-intellect, never remain uniform, they undergo union and disunion. We feel happy with the union of those objects which we like and their disunion makes us sad. We feel happy with the disunion of those objects which we don't like and their union makes us sad. Objects are also fleeting and transient. Similarly the senses and the inner faculty are also fleeting and transient and the pleasure or pain caused by the union or disunion of these objects is also fleeting and transient. But the self ever remains the same, it is immutable and eternal. Therefore one should bear them (pleasure and pain) patiently viz., one shouldn't feel happy and sad by their union and disunion but remain unaffected by them. Pleasure and pain—both are different but their seer is one and he is separate (unaffected) from both of them. By seeing the changeable, the immutability of the self (soul) is naturally perceived as the unchangeable only can see the changeable.

Hence the term 'Śīta' stands for favourableness while 'uṣṇa' stands for unfavourableness. It means that when it is

very much cold, a tree dries up and when it is very hot, then also a tree dries up; therefore the result of both 'hot' and 'cold' is only one. Therefore the Lord orders to bear them viz., to rise above them.

Pleasure-pain, joy-grief, attachment-aversion, desire-anger etc., are fleeting and kaleidoscopic while the self (soul) remains the same. A seeker commits a blunder that he sees the changing condition but doesn't perceive the self. He accepts the condition but doesn't accept the self. The condition neither existed in the past nor will exist in future; therefore it doesn't exist at present also though it appears to exist. But in the self there is neither beginning nor end nor middle at all. A condition never remains uniform and the self never becomes multiform. Whatever is seen is a 'condition' and the intellect which sees it is also a 'condition'. The thing which is to be known is a 'condition' and the thing which knows it is also a 'condition'. In the self there is neither anything to be seen nor there is one who sees it; there is nothing to be known nor one who knows it. The object to be seen and he who sees it etc., are subject to conditions. The object to be seen and the seer who sees it—will not remain but the self will remain, because the condition will perish but the self will remain. It means that by having connection with the object to be seen (scene), the self becomes the spectator. If it has no connection with the object to be seen, the self will remain but it will not be named as the spectator. In the same way the self (pure consciousness) by having affinity for 'Śarīra' (body) is called 'Śarīrī'. If it has no relationship with the body, the self will remain but it will not be named 'Śarīrī' (Gītā 13/1). Therefore the Lord has used the term 'Śarīrī' for the self or pure consciousness in order to merely explain it to human beings.



Link:—In the next verse, Lord Kṛṣṇa talks of the result of remaining unaffected with objects.