

that if Prakṛti is said to be endless (eternal), then the discipline of knowledge will be refuted because from that point of view Prakṛti has no existence at all—‘nāsato vidyate bhāvaḥ’ (Gītā 2/16). If Prakṛti is stated to be ‘an ending one’ (transient), the principle of devotion will be refuted because from the devotion point of view, Prakṛti being the potency of God is inseparable with Him—‘sadasaccāham’ (Gītā 9/19). If we perceive from the real point of view, it is clear that though the nature of Prakṛti is different from that of Puruṣa, yet both are integral.

In fact the form (nature) of God is ‘entire’. It is not possible that there is no potency in God. If God is regarded to be totally powerless, then God will be proved to be unipresent. In Him power may change its form or may remain unmanifest but there can never be negation of power. Power abides in Him in its causal form, otherwise where will potency (Prakṛti) abide besides God? Therefore here both Prakṛti and Puruṣa have been called ‘beginningless’.



Link:—In the preceding verse, the Lord mentioned the Puruṣa, as the cause of the experience, of pleasure and pain. The question arises, how the Puruṣa, is the cause. The answer follows.

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान् ।
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥ २१ ॥

puruṣaḥ prakṛtistho hi bhuṅkte prakṛtijānguṇān
kāraṇaṁ guṇasaṅgo'sya sadasadyonijanmasu

When the spirit (puruṣa) seated in matter (prakṛti) enjoys the modes born of prakṛti (matter), attachment to the modes becomes the cause of its birth, in good and evil bodies. 21

Comment:—

'Puruṣaḥ prakṛtistho* hi bhuṅkte prakṛtijānguṇān'—In

* Here the term 'Prakṛtistha' (seated in the Matter) denotes 'Śaīrastha'

fact, the spirit is not seated in Matter (body). But because of its identification with a body, it assumes the body as 'I', and 'Mine', and is thus said to be seated in the body. Such a spirit, experiences pleasure and pain, in agreeable and disagreeable circumstances. This is said by the way that the spirit enjoys the modes born of Matter.

As in a bus accident, the bus driver is held responsible for an accident because of his attachment (responsibility) to the bus, and so he is punished. It is because of the spirit's attachment to the body, that it (the spirit) enjoys the fruit of action performed by the body. If it is not attached to a body and it feels all actions to be performed by Prakṛti alone, (Gītā 13/29), it will not have to accept the fruit of actions.

'Kāraṇaṁ guṇasaṅgo'sya sadasadyonijanmasu'—Good wombs are those, in which there is abundance of pleasure, while bad ones are those, that bear much pain. The spirit, takes birth in good and evil wombs, because of its attachment to the modes, born of Prakṛti.

The three modes—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, are born of Prakṛti. All the worldly objects and actions, are born of the modes of Prakṛti. When the spirit attaches itself, to these modes, it has to take birth in good or bad wombs. If it is not seated in the body and has no feeling of 'I'ness and 'Mine'ness in this body, but remains established in the self, it will not be an enjoyer of pleasure and pain. It will become equanimous in pleasure and pain i.e., will become 'Svastha', (Gītā 14/24). It can establish a relationship with Nature, or it can get fixed in the oversoul. It cannot merge in the non-self, because non-self (Matter) is perishable, while the self is eternal. Both, belong to two different

(seated in the body). Here is the context of 'Puruṣa and Prakṛti'. So the Puruṣa is said to be seated in Prakṛti. In fact the spirit is not seated in the body, but by not realizing its situation in the self, it assumes its identification with the body.

classes. But its getting established in the oversoul, is axiomatic, as both are of the same class. Bondage is unnatural to it, while identity with the oversoul is natural to it. Bondage is painful to it, while merger in the oversoul is pleasant to it.

In the ego of the self, where there is discriminative faculty, to know a distinction between, Prakṛti and Puruṣa, there only exists ignorance to assume identity, with Prakṛti. By assuming identity, this Puruṣa, is called 'Prakṛtistha' (seated in Nature), and the sense of 'I' and 'mine' increases. This is attachment, to the modes of Prakṛti. This attachment binds him (Puruṣa) (Gītā 14/5) and therefore, he meets with destiny, according to predominance of the modes, of Nature (Gītā 14/18).

Appendix—The Lord in the second half of the nineteenth verse and in the first half of the twentieth verse has described 'Prakṛti', and in the second half of the twentieth verse and here in this verse, He has described 'Puruṣa'.

Attachment to objects, persons and actions is 'guṇasaṅga' (attachment to modes) which is the cause of birth and death. Attachment to the modes is transient while detachment from the modes is eternal. Detachment is nature of the Self—'asaṅgo'hyayaṁ puruṣaḥ' (Bṛhadā 4/3/15). If we are not attached to the transient or the modes, we can't follow the wheel of birth and death.

'I' is inert (non-self) (Prakṛti) and 'am' is sentient (self) (Puruṣa) and 'I am'—this is the identification of the Self with the non-Self. In 'I am' there is the sense of doership and enjoyership. If 'I' does not remain, then 'am' will not remain but 'is' will persist. As there is no identification of a lump of iron with fire, so the lump of iron remains lying on the earth, while fire from this hot lump of iron merges into the formless fire-element, similarly 'ego' persists in Prakṛti and 'am' (being a form of 'is') merges into 'is'. In 'is' there is neither doership nor enjoyership. It means that 'am' is attracted towards pleasures, 'is' is not attracted; 'am' becomes the doer and enjoyer, 'is' does not become the

doer and enjoyer. Therefore a striver instead of assuming 'am' should assume only 'is' viz., he should realize it.

Everyone realizes that pleasures and pains appear and disappear while the Self ever remains the same. Even the most sinful person realizes this fact. In spite of realizing this fact, a man feels happy and sad with the fleeting pleasures and pains. The reason is that attachment to pleasure and fear of pain do not let him realize that he is different from pleasure and pain—this discrimination does not work. In fact a man (the Self) does not feel happy and sad at all but he, identifying the Self with the body, assumes himself to be happy and sad. It means that pleasure (happiness) and pain (sadness) are based on his indiscriminative assumption only.



Link:—In the preceding three verses, Prakṛti (Matter) and Puruṣa (Spirit), were described. In the next verse, there is a description of Puruṣa, in particular.

उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥ २२ ॥

upadraṣṭānumantā ca bhartā bhoktā maheśvaraḥ
paramātmēti cāpyukto dehe'sminpuruṣaḥ paraḥ

The Soul (Puruṣa) having been vested within the body is called a 'witness', because he gives consent, he is called a 'permitter'; as he assumes that he sustains the body, he is called a 'sustainer'; as he experiences pleasure and pain, he is called 'experiencer'; being the master of the body he is 'Great Lord' (Maheśvara). Really speaking, this Puruṣa by his own nature is the Supreme Soul. In spite of, His residence in the body; he is untainted and unattached. 22

Comment:—

'Upadraṣṭānumantā ca bhartā bhoktā maheśvaraḥ'—The