

How does it come about? This is being answered:

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

21. Since the Ātman is seated in Nature, therefore it experiences the qualities born of Nature. Contact with the qualities is the cause of its births in good and evil wombs.

Hi, since; *purusah*, the Ātman, the experiencer; is *prakrtisthah*, seated in Nature, which is characterized as ignorance and gets transformed into body and organs, that is, (since the Ātman) has become identified with Nature; therefore, *bhunkte*, (112) it enjoys, that is experiences; *gunān*, the qualities—manifest as happiness, sorrow and delusion; *praktijān*, born of Nature, thinking thus, ‘I am happy, sorrowful, deluded, learned.’ Even though ignorance continues as a cause, still the main cause of worldly existence, of birth, is the contact, the self-identification, with the qualities—happiness, sorrow, and delusion—when they are experienced, as is affirmed by the Upanisadic text, ‘What it desires, it resolves’ (Br. 4.4.5) (113). That very fact is stated here: *Gunasangah*, contact with the qualities; is *kāranam*, the cause; *asya*, of its, the Ātman’s, the experiencer’s; *sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*, births in good and evil wombs. Self-identification with the qualities is the cause of the experience of births in good and evil wombs. Or the meaning is, ‘Self-identification with the qualities is the cause or its worldly existence through birth in good and evil wombs,’ where the words ‘of worldly existence’ have to be supplied. The good wombs are the wombs of gods and others; evil wombs are the wombs of beasts etc. From the force of the context it is to be understood that there is no contradiction in including even human wombs among ‘good and evil wombs’.

It amounts to saying that ignorance—called ‘being seated in Nature’—and the contact with, that is the desire for, the qualities are the causes of worldly existence. And this is said so that they can be avoided. And in the scripture *Gītā* it is a well-known fact that knowledge and dispassion, accompanied with renunciation, are the