

To be born, to exist, to grow, to change, to decay, to perish—these are the six kinds of modifications undergone by the body constituted of elements. But the Atman remains unaffected by these changes.

Be not Attached to Karma — 21

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यम् य एनमजमव्ययम् ।

कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ २१

वेद अ-वि-नाशिनम् नित्यम् यः एनम् अ-जम् अ-वि-व्ययम् ।

कथम् सः पुरुषः पार्थ कम् घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥

*vedā 'vināśinam nityam ya enam ajam avyayam ।*

*katham sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kaṁ ghātayati hanti kaṁ ॥*

वेद *veda* knows अविनाशिनम् *avināśinam* indestructible नित्यम् *nityam* eternal यः *yaḥ* who एनम् *enam* this (self) अजम् *ajam* unborn अव्ययम् *avyayam* inexhaustible कथम् *katham* how सः *saḥ* he (that) पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* man पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha कम् *kaṁ* whom घातयति *ghātayati* causes to be slain हन्ति *hanti* kills कम् *kaṁ* whom

He who cognizes the Atman as indestructible, eternal, unborn and changeless, how can he slay, O Partha, or cause another to slay? 21

Atman is actionless. The knower of Atman is free from egoism; therefore the feeling of agency is not in him. Karma does not, for that reason, taint him. Slaying and causing to slay are apparently terrible actions. But because of the absence of egoism in an enlightened person, even such evil actions do not tarnish him. An aspirant tries to be free from egoism while discharging his duty.