

Chapter 13 (Of Religion by Separation of Matter and Spirit)

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Arjuna. Now would I hear, O gracious Kesava!

Of Life which seems, and Soul beyond, which sees,

And what it is we know — or think to know.

Krishna. Yea! Son of Kunti! for this flesh ye see

Is Kshetra, is the field where Life disports;

And that which views and knows it is the Soul,

Kshetrajna. In all "fields," thou Indian prince!

I am Kshetrajna. I am what surveys!

Only that knowledge knows which knows the known

By the knower! What it is, that "field" of life,

What qualities it hath, and whence it is,

And why it changeth, and the faculty

That wotteth it, the mightiness of this,

And how it wotteth — hear these things from Me!

The elements, the conscious life, the mind,

The unseen vital force, the nine strange gates

Of the body, and the five domains of sense;

Desire, dislike, pleasure and pain, and thought

Deep-woven, and persistency of being;

These all are wrought on Matter by the Soul!

Humbleness, truthfulness, and harmlessness,

Patience and honour, reverence for the wise.

Purity, constancy, control of self,

Contempt of sense-delights, self-sacrifice,

Perception of the certitude of ill

In birth, death, age, disease, suffering, and sin;
Detachment, lightly holding unto home,
Children, and wife, and all that bindeth men;
An ever-tranquil heart in fortunes good
And fortunes evil, with a will set firm
To worship Me — Me only! ceasing not;
Loving all solitudes, and shunning noise
Of foolish crowds; endeavours resolute
To reach perception of the Utmost Soul,
And grace to understand what gain it were
So to attain, — this is true Wisdom, Prince!
And what is otherwise is ignorance!
Now will I speak of knowledge best to know —
That Truth which giveth man Amrit to drink,
The Truth of HIM, the Para-Brahm, the All,
The Uncreated; not Asat, nor Sat,
Not Form, nor the Unformed; yet both, and more; —
Whose hands are everywhere, and everywhere
Planted His feet, and everywhere His eyes
Beholding, and His ears in every place
Hearing, and all His faces everywhere
Enlightening and encompassing His worlds.
Glorified in the senses He hath given,
Yet beyond sense He is; sustaining all,
Yet dwells He unattached: of forms and modes
Master, yet neither form nor mode hath He;

He is within all beings — and without —
Motionless, yet still moving; not discerned
For subtlety of instant presence; close
To all, to each; yet measurelessly far!
Not manifold, and yet subsisting still
In all which lives; for ever to be known
As the Sustainer, yet, at the End of Times,
He maketh all to end — and re-creates.
The Light of Lights He is, in the heart of the Dark
Shining eternally. Wisdom He is
And Wisdom's way, and Guide of all the wise,
Planted in every heart.
So have I told
Of Life's stuff, and the moulding, and the lore
To comprehend. Whoso, adoring Me,
Perceiveth this, shall surely come to Me!
Know thou that Nature and the Spirit both
Have no beginning! Know that qualities
And changes of them are by Nature wrought;
That Nature puts to work the acting frame,
But Spirit doth inform it, and so cause
Feeling of pain and pleasure. Spirit, linked
To moulded matter, entereth into bond
With qualities by Nature framed, and, thus
Married to matter, breeds the birth again
In good or evil yonis.
Yet is this —

Yea! in its bodily prison! — Spirit pure,
Spirit supreme; surveying, governing,
Guarding, possessing; Lord and Master still
PURUSHA, Ultimate, One Soul with Me.
Whoso thus knows himself, and knows his soul
PURUSHA, working through the qualities
With Nature's modes, the light hath come for him!
Whatever flesh he bears, never again
Shall he take on its load. Some few there be
By meditation find the Soul in Self
Self-schooled; and some by long philosophy
And holy life reach thither; some by works:
Some, never so attaining, hear of light
From other lips, and seize, and cleave to it
Worshipping; yea! and those — to teaching true —
Overpass Death!
Wherever, Indian Prince!
Life is — of moving things, or things unmoved,
Plant or still seed — know, what is there hath grown
By bond of Matter and of Spirit: Know
He sees indeed who sees in all alike
The living, lordly Soul; the Soul Supreme,
Imperishable amid the Perishing:
For, whoso thus beholds, in every place,
In every form, the same, one, Living Life,
Doth no more wrongfulness unto himself,

But goes the highest road which brings to bliss.

Seeing, he sees, indeed, who sees that works

Are Nature's wont, for Soul to practise by

Acting, yet not the agent; sees the mass

Of separate living things — each of its kind —

Issue from One, and blend again to One:

Then hath he BRAHMA, he attains!

O Prince!

That Ultimate, High Spirit, Uncreate,

Unqualified, even when it entereth flesh

Taketh no stain of acts, worketh in nought!

Like to th' ethereal air, pervading all,

Which, for sheer subtlety, avoideth taint,

The subtle Soul sits everywhere, unstained:

Like to the light of the all-piercing sun

[Which is not changed by aught it shines upon,]

The Soul's light shineth pure in every place;

And they who, by such eye of wisdom, see

How Matter, and what deals with it, divide;

And how the Spirit and the flesh have strife,

Those wise ones go the way which leads to Life!

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER XIII OF THE

BHAGAVAD-GITA,

Entitled "Kshetrakshetrajanavibhagayog,"

Or "The Book of Religion by Separation of Matter and Spirit."