



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता
पुरुषोत्तम योगः
Chapter 15
Volume 5

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In today's verses, Sri Krishna calls attention to the nature of every individual जीव. Every being endowed with both existence and consciousness in this creation is a जीव. Thus, every being, whether it is manifest or unmanifest, is a जीव. Sri Krishna is talking here particularly about every individual human being, every individual person as a जीव.

As we may recall from Chapter 13, every जीव as an individual person, is made up of a particular combination of स्थूल शरीर (gross physical body) सूक्ष्म शरीर (subtle body), अविद्या (self-ignorance) and आत्मा (the ever-existent, all-pervading परमेश्वर Itself, in the increasing order of subtlety in manifestation. Here, as already pointed out, आत्मा alone is सत्यं - Absolute Reality, never subject to change, and It is everywhere at all times, while the other three are only मिथ्या - transient realities ever subject to change



and ultimate disappearance. That is the लक्षण - the distinguishing mark of every individual person.

Until one gains आत्म ज्ञान - Self-knowledge, one does not really recognize both अविद्या and आत्मा. One recognizes oneself simply as a जीव - as a living being, somehow endowed with existence and consciousness, with all of one's sense faculties, or in a more popular language, one is merely a living being endowed with a body and a soul, whatever these words may mean.

In terms of Upanishad knowledge, when the gross physical body (the स्थूल शरीर) falls dead, the person does not die. The person continues to exist as an unmanifest individual जीव made up of सूक्ष्म शरीर (subtle body) अविद्या, (Self ignorance) and आत्मा (The Self I, The परमेश्वर already in oneself), until such time, the subtle body - the सूक्ष्म शरीर, along with its current state of अविद्या - Self ignorance, re-enters into another gross physical body (new स्थूल शरीर) appropriate to meet its current needs. How such transmigration of the subtle body, from one gross physical body into another takes place, is what Sri Krishna is talking here, in today's verses. भगवान् says:

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।

मनः षष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥ 15-7

जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ममः अंशः एवः

जीवलोके - In this जीवलोक - in this world of human beings

जीवभूतः means जीव स्वरूपः - every individual जीव - every individual person who considers oneself as a कर्ता, भोक्ता, etc - as a doer of actions and experiencer of सुख दुःख and other experiences of worldly life, every such individual person, which means every ordinary person, is, in fact,

सनातनः - eternal in existence and consciousness, because

मम अंशः एव - every ordinary individual person in this world is an अंश of Myself only, is a minute part of परमेश्वर only. Every individual person, which means every one of us has no existence as a separate entity. Every one of us is in fact an ईश्वर अंश - a minute part of परमेश्वर only, says Sri Krishna.



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Does that mean परमेश्वर exists in parts and pieces divided among all the जीवs in this world? No. Again such a division is only an appearance. Just as, while this great space is ONE and indivisible, it appears to exist as if divided among all individual spaces, such as building space, room space, pot space, etc., so also is परमेश्वर.

परमेश्वर, while being ONE and indivisible, appears to exist as if divided among all the objects in this creation. As भगवान् said earlier

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तं इव च स्थितं 13-16

आत्मा is ONE and indivisible (अविभक्तं), but it appears to exist as if divided among all beings, among all individual उपाधि - individual body vehicles (शरीरs) in this world. Even that appearance of division is illumined, is lighted up by The ज्योति स्वरूप आत्मा, The परमेश्वर only.

Therefore, every limited individual person is nothing but a part of That unlimited परमेश्वर, just as every limited space which we see, is only a part of the unlimited great space, which is again a manifestation of परमेश्वर only. All perceptions of limitations of space are limitations of the उपाधिस - the शरीरs, the objects in space. One's उपाधि itself, one's body vehicle itself, is मायाकल्पित उपाधि, an expression of माया, which is ever non-separate and inseparable from परमेश्वर.

Therefore, the very existence of any object, is itself the सत् स्वरूप - the existence nature of सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म, सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् - The परमेश्वर. In the case of any human being, in particular, both सत् स्वरूप (Existence nature) and चित् स्वरूप (consciousness nature) of परमेश्वर are manifest. That is what भगवान् points out by saying: ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः

Now भगवान् proceeds to point out how any जीव - any individual person, endowed with existence and consciousness, goes from one physical body into another.

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शरीरं यत् अवाप्नोति यश्चापि उत्क्रामति ईश्वरः ।
गृहीत्वा एतानि संयाति वायुः गन्धान् इव आशयात् ॥ 15-8



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All these lines go together. The words **यत्** and **ईश्वर** (in line 2) must be properly understood with reference to the context here. Here **यत्** means "when" and **ईश्वर** refers to **देहादि संघात स्वामी** - That which controls all the actions of the person who considers oneself as the **कर्ता भोक्ता** - the doer of **कर्म**s and experiencer of **कर्मफल**s in this ever changing worldly life. That **स्वामी** is only the **अविद्या रूप सूक्ष्म शरीर** of the person - the subtle body in the person in its current state of Self ignorance.

Until the person gains Self-knowledge, **पूर्ण ईश्वरज्ञानं, आत्म ज्ञानं**, the **स्वामी** in the person, the one who controls all the actions of the body, is really one's ego self, governed by self-ignorance.

Therefore, in the context here, **ईश्वर** is simply one's **सूक्ष्म शरीर** - subtle body, governed by **अविद्या** - Self-ignorance. Therefore

यत् (यदा) ईश्वरः (सूक्ष्म शरीरः) शरीरं उत्क्रामति - When the subtle body departs from the gross physical body, that means at the time of death

कर्षति means **आकर्षति** - the subtle body attracts to itself, it carries with itself

मनः षष्ठानि इन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि - the six sense organs including five **ज्ञानेन्द्रिय**s and **मनः** the entire **अन्तःकरण** - the five senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell together with all the internal organs of perception, namely mind, **बुद्धि**, **अहंकार** (ego), and **चित्तं** (the faculty of memory) - all in their subtle states which were in the body just before death, and then

संयाति च - departs from the gross physical body. Thus, at the time of death, the **सूक्ष्म शरीर** - the subtle body, attracts to itself all the above six senses of perception in their subtle forms, and also departs from the gross physical body, again in a subtle form. How does this happen?

आशयात् गन्धान् गृहीत्वा वायुः संयाति इव - Just as the wind attracts to itself the smells from their sources, from the objects in the environments, and moves from one place to another carrying that smell with itself, just as for example, the wind attracts to itself the fragrances of the flowers in a garden, and moves away from the garden carrying that smell with itself, similarly, at the time of death, the **सूक्ष्म शरीर** - the subtle body, attracts to itself all the six subtle senses of perception and departs from the gross physical body, carrying all the senses with itself. Then what happens?



अपि च यत् (यदा) ईश्वरः (सूक्ष्म शरीरः) शरीरं अवाप्नोति - Then, again, when the सूक्ष्म शरीर - the subtle body (carrying with it all the six subtle senses of perception), finds and gains another suitable gross physical body to occupy

एतानि इन्द्रियाणि गृहीत्वा संयाति (संयक् याति) - it goes into the new physical body, naturally, with the same six senses carried with it, in a suitable form

Thus, at the time of death of the gross physical body of a person, the subtle body of that person departs from the body, carrying with it the senses of hearing, touch, form, taste, smell and the entire अन्तःकरण, namely mind, बुद्धि, अहंकार (ego), and चित्तं (memory), all in their subtle states. And when that subtle body finds and gains another suitable gross physical body to occupy, it enters into the new physical body, naturally, with the same six senses carried with it, in order to continue its evolution. Thus, the subtle body of every person - a जीव, enjoys existence and consciousness, both before the death and after the death of the gross physical body. There is never any death for the जीव itself.

Next, भगवान् points out how an individual सूक्ष्म शरीर - the subtle body, the जीव, on gaining a new physical body, operates in the new physical body.

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणं एव च ।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयान् उपसेवते ॥

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अयं (जीवः) विषयान् (संसार विषयान्) उपसेवते - This जीव - this subtle body, in its new physical body, as a person, again experiences all the sense objects of this worldly life. How?

अधिष्ठाय - by pervading all over the new physical body, and presiding over all the subtle organs of perception, which have now taken their appropriate places in the new physical body. These organs of perception are:

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं रसनं घ्राणं मनः च - the ear, the eyes, the sense of touch (the skin), the sense of taste (the tongue), the sense of smell (the nose), and the entire अन्तःकरण, namely the mind, the बुद्धि, the ego, and the faculty of memory, all in their subtle states, in the respective organs of perception.

It is like one moving into a new house and getting settled there, putting all the appliances in their proper places and starting to live again as usual. By pervading all over the new



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physical body, and presiding over all the body elements with all the sense instruments in place, the जीव, as a new person, again experiences all worldly life, naturally.

As भगवान् said earlier, every जीव, every living being in this creation is ईश्वर अंशं, which means परमेश्वर is already in every person, as the ONE because of whom alone, each of the sense organs has the capacity to function naturally as they do. As we have already seen in Kenopanishad, परमेश्वर is already in every जीव - in every person, as श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं - ear of the ear, मनसो मनः - mind of the mind, चक्षुषः चक्षुः - eyes of the eyes, etc., which means, परमेश्वर is the ONE which is all इन्द्रियs without Itself being an इन्द्रिय, and परमेश्वर is all organs of perception and action in ONE, as भगवान् said earlier:

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत् सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखं ।

सर्वतः श्रुति मल्लोके सर्वम् आवृत्य तिष्ठति ॥

13-13

Thus, the ONE presiding over all the organs of perception and action in one's physical body is indeed परमेश्वर, and that which is behind all the experiences of a person in one's worldly life is also परमेश्वर. That is आत्मतत्त्वं - the Truth about The Self in oneself in every जीव - in every person. Even though that is the case, भगवान् points out:

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितं ।

विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥

15-10

उत्क्रामन्तं - whether one departs from the physical body or

स्थितं वा अपि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितं - whether one remains in the body enjoying worldly experiences and one's स्वभाव गुणs such as likes and dislikes of various kinds, That one, That Self in the body, must be other than the body itself. This fact about the nature of the Self in oneself must be obvious to every person, but it is not so.

विमूढाः - Those who are deluded, those who are confused about one's पुरुषार्थ - the ultimate goal in life, and those who cannot discriminate between नित्यं and अनित्यं - the Eternal and the transient, those who do not have विवेक ज्ञानं, such deluded people



न अनुपश्यन्ति - they do not see the fact as it is. They confuse one's physical body as oneself, and they are incapable of recognizing the true nature of themselves. On the other hand

ज्ञान चक्षुषः पश्यन्ति - Those who have the eyes of wisdom, only those who have विवेक ज्ञानं, आत्मतत्त्व ज्ञानं - knowledge rooted in Self enquiry, only such people see the truth about the true nature of जीव - true nature of every person as ईश्वर अंशं and सनातनं - as परमेश्वर Itself and hence eternal.

Who are those people who do have such ज्ञान चक्षुषः - eyes of wisdom? भगवान् says:

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्ति आत्मनि अवस्थितं ।

यतन्तोऽपि अकृतात्मानः नैनं पश्यन्ति अचेतसः ॥

15-11

यतन्तः, ध्यानपराः निदिध्यासन पराः - Those who put forth efforts striving to gain and absorb ईश्वर ज्ञानं in daily life through diligent and continued Upanishad studies and contemplation on परमेश्वर, and also

योगिनः च, समाहित चित्ताः कर्म योगिनः - those who constantly seek ईश्वर ज्ञानं through undistracted कर्म योग बुद्धि and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति, such people

आत्मनि अवस्थितं एनं (आत्मानं) पश्यन्ति - they see, they recognize the आत्मा - The Self abiding in oneself as अयं आत्मा अहं अस्मि इति - I am That आत्मा.

Thus they gain अपरोक्ष ज्ञानं - direct and immediate knowledge of आत्मा - The Self I as परमेश्वर Itself, already in oneself. That knowledge takes place in their बुद्धि. Such people have ज्ञान चक्षुषः - they have eyes of wisdom. On the other hand, there are others who

यतन्तःअपि - even though they put forth lots of efforts, striving to gain ईश्वर ज्ञानं through Vedantic studies and seeking the help of आचार्यs - teachers of various kinds, etc., they are still

अकृतात्मानः means असंस्कृतात्मानः - their mind and बुद्धि are not ready for gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं, because they do not have अन्तःकरण शुद्धि - purity in thought, word and deed, and



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they are still governed by their राग-द्वेष forces, forces of likes and dislikes. They have not yet gained mastery over their senses. They have not yet gained mastery over their राग-द्वेष forces, and consequently they have not yet withdrawn themselves completely from all improper or unbecoming activities. They have not yet cultivated the necessary self-discipline and all the other personal qualities necessary for gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं आत्मज्ञानं – Self-knowledge. Further, they are:

अचेतसः अविचेकिनः – in spite of all their studies and efforts, they still do not have विवेक ज्ञानं – clarity of knowledge and steadfastness of pursuit, on one's overriding पुरुषार्थ – ultimate goal in life.

Such people do not have ज्ञान चक्षुषः – eyes of wisdom, eyes of बुद्धि, capable of recognizing आत्मा – The Self I, The परमेश्वर already in oneself as ONESELF Itself.

न एनं पश्यन्ति – They do not see, and hence they cannot recognize the truth about the nature of जीव – the nature of oneself as a person, the nature of Self I as परमेश्वर Itself already in oneself. Naturally, therefore, they do not recognize that every जीव is ईश्वर अंशं and सनातनं – the real unchanging nature of every person is indeed परमेश्वर Itself, and hence Eternal, both in existence and in consciousness.

So much about जीव, every individual human being in this creation. We will continue next time.