



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

अक्षर ब्रह्म योगः

Chapter 8

Volume 5

- अव्यक्तात् व्यक्तयः सर्वाःप्रभवन्ति अहरागमे ।
रात्रि आगमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैव अव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥ 8 - 18
- भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्या भूत्या प्रलीयते ।
रात्रि आगमे अवशः पार्थ प्रभवति अहरागमे ॥ 8 - 19
- परः तस्मात् तु भावः, अन्यः अव्यक्तः : अव्यक्तात् सनातनः ।
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ 8 - 20
- अव्यक्तः अक्षरः इति उक्तः, तं आहुः परमां गतिम् ।
यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते, तत् धाम परमं मम ॥ 8 - 21
- पुरुषः स परः पार्थ, भक्त्या लभ्यः तु अनन्यया ।
यस्य अन्तःस्थानि भूतानि, येन सर्वम् इदं ततम् ॥ 8 - 22

Last time we talked briefly about Brahma ji's – प्रजापति's time scale, his day time, night time, life time, प्रलय, महाप्रलय and the cycle of creation. The purpose of talking about time is only to show that

- Anything born in time also ends in time
- However long it may be, time is always limited, there is no eternity in time
- There is eternity only in that which is not bound by time
- There is only ONE which is not bound by time, and That is ब्रह्मन् – the प्रत्यग आत्मा, the परमेश्वर

The purpose of talking about प्रलय, महाप्रलय and the cycle of creation is only to show that प्रलय does not mean मोक्ष – liberation for everybody. महाप्रलय does not mean the end of creation, or the cycle of creation, and the cycle of creation is a never-ending one.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

प्रलय is commonly described as “destruction and dissolution”. It is important to understand

- what is destroyed and
- what is dissolved in what?

जीव is never destroyed. Only its gross manifestation – the स्थूल शरीर is destroyed. The सूक्ष्म शरीर – the subtle manifestation of जीव is not destroyed. The सूक्ष्म शरीर – as long as it exists, remains dissolved in माया during प्रलय periods, and it goes through successive births and deaths – manifestation and de-manifestation, again and again, throughout the other periods in each cycle of creation.

सूक्ष्म शरीर disappears only when अज्ञानं – self-ignorance, ignorance of the nature of one’s own self disappears. Such अज्ञानं disappears and आत्मज्ञानं takes place only when one recognizes that

ब्रह्मैवाहं अस्मि – I am indeed ब्रह्मन्
आयं आत्मा ब्रह्म – this SELF is ब्रह्मन्

In order to reach that truth about oneself, in order to realize the truth of one’s own identity with ब्रह्मन्, one need not have to go through the cycle of birth and death again and again. One can gain that realization now, in this very birth itself, in one’s current manifestation itself, through ईश्वर भक्ति, which is identical with ईश्वर ज्ञानं. That is essentially Sri Krishna’s message in today’s verses. भगवान् says:

अव्यक्तात् व्यक्तयः सर्वाः, प्रभवन्ति अहरागमे ।
रात्रि आगमे प्रलीयन्ते, तत्रैव अव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥

8--18

अहरागमे, अहः आगमे – With the arrival of day time, when the day breaks, for ब्रह्माजी, He wakes up from his sleep state – अव्यक्तात् – from his state of unmanifestation and inactivity, and at the same time

व्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्ति – all स्थावर, जंगम, लक्षण सर्वाः प्रजाः all जीवs, all immovable and movable living beings wake up to re-manifest themselves again in their स्थूल, सूक्ष्म, कारण शरीरs – gross subtle ignorance states of existence. Similarly,

रात्रि आगमे – with the arrival of night time for Brahmaji

युक्तयः सर्वाः – all the जीवs in their manifest states of existence



प्रलीयन्ते - get dissolved, where?

तत्र एव - withdrawing themselves into the same state of unmanifestation they were in before.

अव्यक्त संज्ञके - such return to the state of unmanifestation is called the state of अव्यक्त for the जीवs.

भगवान् is going to talk about another kind of अव्यक्त – unmanifest state of existence. But before doing so, भगवान् wants to make clear what is said in this verse. Therefore, let us think about what is said in this verse, again.

Thus, every morning, all the जीवs wake up from the state of अव्यक्त – state of unmanifested existence and gain the state of manifested existence, and remain so throughout the day. At the end of the day, प्रलय sets in, and all the जीवs lose their state of व्यक्त - manifested existence, and they return to their prior state of अव्यक्त – state of unmanifested existence. This process of अव्यक्त, followed by व्यक्त, followed by अव्यक्त – unmanifestation, remanifestation, and de manifestation repeats itself every day in Brahmaji's life, in His own time scale, throughout the cycle of creation. Every such अव्यक्त – state of demanifestation, is प्रलय or dissolution for all the जीवs. That is what the verse says.

Now two questions may arise. First, does अव्यक्त or प्रलय for the जीवs mean मोक्ष for the जीवs? If so, where from do the new जीवs come, every time the प्रलय is over? If dissolution for the जीवs means मोक्ष for the जीवs, then all जीवs, irrespective of their पुण्य, पाप कर्म history can gain मोक्ष, just by waiting long enough for the प्रलय to take place. That would mean all जीवs can gain liberation without experiencing their कर्म फलs, and new जीवs can come into existence without any prior कर्म on their part, both of which are impossible, because they are against the very law of nature.

Therefore, dissolution for the जीवs does not mean मोक्ष for the जीवs. All जीवs will have to experience their कर्म फलs and gaining आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, is the only means for a जीव to gain मोक्ष. Consequently, the meaning of the above verse is simply this. What was manifest before, becomes unmanifest during प्रलय, and what was unmanifest during प्रलय becomes manifest when प्रलय ends. This meaning is made clear in the next verse.



भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।
रात्रि आगमे अचशः पार्थ प्रभवति अहरागमे ॥

8 -19

भूतग्रामः - means भूत समुदायः. The entirety of all जीवs in this creation

सः एव अयं, सः भूतग्रामः एव अयं - We are now talking about the same भूतग्राम - the entirety of जीवs in this creation. What about them?

भूत्वा भूत्वा - coming into being repeatedly in each cycle of creation

प्रलीयते - the जीवs dissolve, they go into प्रलय, they go into a state of अव्यक्त - unmanifestation

रात्रि आगमे अचशः प्रलीयते - when the night time comes for Brahmaji, the entirety of जीवs in this creation goes into a state of अव्यक्त - demanifestation, naturally and spontaneously

अचशः means in this process of demanifestation, the जीवs have no control. It is natural and spontaneous, just as one has no control in falling asleep.

प्रभवति अहरागमे - similarly, the same entirety of जीवs arise again in manifestation when the day breaks for Brahmaji. This process is also spontaneous over which the जीवs have no control.

This means प्रलय is not destruction of जीवs. It is only a state of unmanifested existence for the जीवs. The same जीवs which existed in the previous cycle, return in the next cycle of creation. The repetition of the word भूत्वा (as भूत्वा भूत्वा) indicates the cyclic nature of the कल्पाs - each part of the cycle of creation where the same जीवs assume the states of अव्यक्त and व्यक्त - unmanifestation and manifestation, alternately and repeatedly.

Since the same जीवs who became unmanifest return to manifest and experience their कर्मs and कर्मफलs, no destruction of कर्मs and कर्मफलs is involved. There is no creation of new जीवs also. Only the same old जीवs are coming back again and again. The exception is only with respect to जीवs who have gained knowledge, but do not exist at all as जीवs. Only those who go into प्रलय return.

Since जीवs are infinite in number, and their कर्मs are countless, they can appear in any form anywhere in the creation. भगवान् tells this explicitly to help one develop dispassion for संसार - this transient world. Repeatedly coming back to assume birth is



ब्रह्मचिद्या **Brahma Vidya**

संसार. संसार is endless. One's problems in संसार are not going to be solved by being in it again and again.

Therefore, भगवान् says, there is no escape from संसार unless you come to know Me, recognize Me – the परमेश्वर

मां उपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ।

8 – 16

Reaching me, The परमेश्वर, there is no rebirth for you. You can gain आत्म ज्ञानं now and you can gain मोक्ष now forever. There is no need to return to संसार again and again. That is the message here.

In the previous verse, the अव्यक्त of the जीव – the unmanifest state of existence of जीव was pointed out. We may recall that आत्मा also was pointed out as अव्यक्त in chapter 2:

अव्यक्तोऽयं अचिन्तयोऽयं अविकार्योऽयं उच्यते

2 – 25

Sri Krishna wants to point out now that the अव्यक्त of आत्मा is quite distinct and different from the अव्यक्त of जीव. Understanding the distinction and difference leads to a better appreciation of स्वरूप of अक्षर ब्रह्मन् – the true nature of अक्षर ब्रह्मन् – which is also the स्वरूप of ॐ कार मन्त्र – the true nature of sound OM – pointed out earlier. भगवान् says:

परः तस्मात् तु भावः, अन्यः अव्यक्तः, अव्यक्तात् सनातनः ।

यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु, नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥

8 – 20

अव्यक्तः अक्षर इति उक्तः, तं आहुः परमां गतिम् ।

यं प्रप्य न निवर्तन्ते तत् धाम परमं मम ॥

8 – 21

परः तस्मात् अव्यक्तात् – Different from that अव्यक्त, different from the अव्यक्त of जीवs described earlier

तु – quite distinct from That अव्यक्त of जीवs

अन्यः अव्यक्तः – There is another totally dissimilar अव्यक्त. It is distinct in an entirely different way. It is neither non-existence nor transient existence. It exists, and at the same time it is different from everything else that exists. It is

भावः means सदा सर्वत्र अस्ति. It exists always everywhere



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

सनातनः - It is eternal. It is not bound by time

यः सः - That which is so, That अव्यक्त

न चिनश्यति - never changes, never decays, and is never subject to destruction

सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्यु (सति) - while all the लोकs, including ब्रह्म लोक, and also all beings in all the लोकs change, decay, and ultimately get destroyed

अव्यक्तः अक्षर इति उक्तः - That सनातन अव्यक्त - That Eternal अव्यक्त which is not available for perception as an object - That Eternal, ever-existent, अव्यक्त is called अक्षर - the same अक्षर which was pointed out earlier as

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं 8 - 3

यत् अक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति 8 - 11

ॐ इति एकाक्षरं ब्रह्म 8 - 13

That अव्यक्त is indeed अक्षरं ब्रह्म. That अव्यक्त is the स्वरूप - The true nature of ॐ कार शब्द - the sound OM, the word OM.

तं अहुः परमां गतिं - The शास्त्रज्ञः ब्रह्मविदः people who understand and appreciate the real meaning, the content of Upanishad knowledge, people who recognize ब्रह्मन् as प्रत्यग आत्मा - the innermost self of all beings, those people call that अव्यक्त - That अक्षरं ब्रह्म, ॐ कार शब्द रूप, वाचक रूप, प्रत्यक्ष ब्रह्मन्, अक्षर ब्रह्मन् directly and immediately recognized by the sound OM as

परमां गतिम्, प्रकृष्टां गतिम् - as the ultimate destination of all existence, as well as the most exalted means to reach that destination.

That destination is the ultimate abode of all beings, indeed of all existence. All other means and ends, end at some time. That परमां गतिं - That ultimate destination, That ultimate abode never ceases to exist.

That परमां गतिम् - That ultimate destination, that ultimate abode of all existence is ब्रह्मानन्द, Absolute Happiness, which is the abode of all आनन्दs, all forms of happiness.

यं प्राप्य, यं परमां गतिम् प्रप्य - Having reached that ultimate destination, that ultimate abode of all existence

न निवर्तन्ते - people do not come back, because it is not an end other than oneself. Reaching yourself, you remain yourself. There is no question of coming back.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

तत् धाम परमं मम, तत् परमं धाम, मम धाम – That exalted abode of all existence, that abode of ब्रह्मानन्द is My abode, the abode of परमेश्वर. It is तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं – It is the abode of प्रत्यग आत्मा – The innermost Self of oneself.

Thus Sri Krishna tells here:

यः अव्यक्तः अक्षरः इति उक्तः, तं आहुः,
परमां गतिम्, तत् परमं धाम, मम धाम

That which is called अव्यक्त, अक्षर or ब्रह्मन् is the ultimate end, and that end is My abode, and that abode is your abode, and the abode of every being.

There are three distinct messages here

आत्मा अक्षरः, आत्मा is अक्षर

अक्षरः परमा गतिः That अक्षर आत्मा is both the means as well as the ultimate end –परम पुरुषार्थ – the ultimate goal of life
अक्षरं परमं धाम, मम धाम – that अक्षर आत्मा is My abode विष्णोः परमं पदं the abode of परमेश्वर. परमेश्वर itself is अक्षरं and भगवान् says: That अक्षरं is My abode. My abode means My स्वरूप, My real nature.

मां उपेत्य पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते – Reaching Me, there is no question of coming back, because one becomes one with oneself, one with अक्षरं परमेश्वर itself. How does one reach That परं धाम – that abode of परमेश्वर in oneself ? भगवान् says:

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ, भक्त्या लभ्यः तु अनन्यया ।
यस्य अन्तस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वं इदं ततम् ॥

8 – 22

पुरुषः – That परं धाम, that abode of the परम पुरुष the परमेश्वर
यस्य अन्तःस्थानि भूतानि – within whom all beings in this creation have their ultimate abode
येन सर्वं इदं ततम् – by whom this entire creation, this entire universe is pervaded
पार्थ – O! Arjuna

सः परः – That परम पुरुष indicated above as अक्षरः, अव्यक्तः, भावः, सनातनः etc.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

लभ्यः तु अनन्यया भक्त्या - can be gained , can be reached naturally, directly and immediately, only by अनन्य भक्ति, which means

परम प्रेम स्वरूप ज्ञान लक्षण एक भक्ति - unqualified love and devotion for परमेश्वर and परमेश्वर only, imbued with one's total identity with परमेश्वर, which means परमेश्वर can be reached in oneself as oneself itself, naturally and spontaneously by everybody, only through unqualified भक्ति योग, love and devotion to परमेश्वर, and परमेश्वर only, at all times.

This is Sri Krishna's message today. We will complete this chapter next time.