

Śloka 14

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ १४ ॥

na *kartṛtvam* na *karmāṇi* lokasya *sṛjati* *prabhuḥ*
na *karma-phalasaṁ-yogam* *svabhāvastu pravartate*

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| न | <i>na</i> | not |
| कर्तृत्वम् | <i>kartṛtvam</i> | agency |
| न | <i>na</i> | not |
| कर्माणि | <i>karmāṇi</i> | actions |
| लोकस्य | <i>lokasya</i> | for this world |
| सृजति | <i>sṛjati</i> | creates |
| प्रभुः | <i>prabhuḥ</i> | the Lord |
| न | <i>na</i> | not |
| कर्मफलसंयोगम् | <i>karmaphalasaṁyogam</i> | union with the fruit of actions |
| स्वभावः | <i>svabhāvaḥ</i> | nature |
| तु | <i>tu</i> | but |
| प्रवर्तते | <i>pravartate</i> | leads to action |

VERSE 14

*If God Is Separate From Everything, Then
How Are Actions Performed?*

14

Neither agency nor action does the Lord create for the world, nor union with the fruits of action; it is nature that acts.

The supreme Self is pure intelligence and infinite consciousness. It is eternal unchanging reality. It is independent of *prakṛti* and the agents of *prakṛti* such as the ego, mind, and intellect. The Self neither performs action directly, nor does it permit action through any agency. The Self does not even connect any action with its appropriate result. For example, if someone makes plans to build a house and begins construction, the Self has no part in the planning or construction. If the house has a cracked wall after its completion, the Self has no responsibility for the poor result.

Now the question arises, if the Self has nothing to do with the actions, or with the favorable and unfavorable results of actions performed through the agencies of nature, are humans completely separate from the Self? Without the Self, no life, no activity, and no existence are possible. Therefore, the Self (*puruṣa*) and matter (*prakṛti*) must have some relationship.

In its primal form, *prakṛti* is the state of equilibrium of the cosmic forces called *guṇas*: *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (activity), and *tamas* (inertia). In the proximity of *puruṣa*, the equilibrium of the *guṇas* is unbalanced and evolution begins. The first evolute of *prakṛti* is cosmic consciousness (*chitta*). When the light of *puruṣa* reflects in *chitta*, the *jīvātma* or individual self is constituted. *Puruṣa* itself is free from action and reaction. However, when *puruṣa* reflects in *buddhi* (intellect) and *buddhi* reflects back in *puruṣa*, the sense of "I" arises. When this "I" sense functions through the agencies of the *jīvātma* (mind, body, senses), it becomes the ego (*aḥamkāra*). The ego is the performer of action and enjoyer of its fruit.

In the same way that a tree reflecting on a lake appears to move when there are ripples on the water, the Self appears as if it is acting when it reflects in the three *guṇas*. In reality the nature of the Self is absolute consciousness, existence, and peace.

The essence of this verse is that the agency of action, the action, and the fruit of action are creations of the human ego. By removing the ego from these three aspects of *prakṛti*, one can attain complete peace.

Śloka 15

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥ १५ ॥

nādatte kasyacitpāpaṃ na caiva sukṛtaṃ vibhuḥ
ajñānenāvṛtaṃ jñānaṃ tena muhyanti jantavaḥ

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------|--------------|
| न | <i>na</i> | not |
| आदत्ते | <i>ādatte</i> | takes |
| कस्यचित् | <i>kasyacit</i> | of any one |
| पापम् | <i>pāpam</i> | demerit |
| न | <i>na</i> | not |
| च | <i>ca</i> | and |
| एव | <i>eva</i> | even |
| सुकृतम् | <i>sukṛtam</i> | merit |
| विभुः | <i>vibhuḥ</i> | the Lord |
| अज्ञानेन | <i>ajñānena</i> | by ignorance |
| आवृतम् | <i>avṛtam</i> | enveloped |
| ज्ञानम् | <i>jñānam</i> | knowledge |
| तेन | <i>tena</i> | by this |
| मुह्यन्ति | <i>muhyanti</i> | are deluded |
| जन्तवः | <i>jantavaḥ</i> | beings |

VERSE 15

Who Reaps the Fruit of Virtuous and Sinful Action?

15

The Lord does not receive the virtue or sin of anyone. Knowledge is enveloped by ignorance and thereby beings are deluded.

The all-pervading supreme Lord is completely separate from all functions of nature. The association between the supreme Self (*puruṣa*) and nature (*prakṛti*) is strictly one of influence. It is by the mere presence of the supreme Self that nature is influenced to evolve. The sun is so far away and yet its reflection on different objects such as a solar heater, solar cooker, or solar car brings different kinds of activities that appear in the different objects. The sun does not create the activities; its mere presence brings activity in those objects. Similarly the mind, intellect, and ego are illuminated by the presence of the Self and yet the Self is separate. In reality, the omnipresent Lord does not take any active part in the evolutionary process, nor does the Lord take any interest in the virtuous and sinful actions of any living beings.

Knowledge is enveloped by ignorance - The Self is pure consciousness. However, when the reflection of the pure Self gets rooted in *buddhi* (the intellect), it becomes obscured and through ignorance develops the ego that thinks, "I receive," "I give," and "I eat." It is that ego sense in human beings that veils the true knowledge, and consequently develops the perception of merits and demerits. For the supreme Self there are neither merits nor demerits.

Śloka 16

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥ १६ ॥

jñānena tu tadjñānaṁ yeṣāṁ nāśitamātmanaḥ
teṣāmādityavajjñānaṁ prakāśayati tatparam

| | | |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------|
| ज्ञानेन | <i>jñānena</i> | by wisdom |
| तु | <i>tu</i> | but |
| तत् | <i>tat</i> | that |
| अज्ञानम् | <i>ajñānam</i> | ignorance |
| येषाम् | <i>yeṣāṁ</i> | whose |
| नाशितम् | <i>nāśitam</i> | is destroyed |
| आत्मनः | <i>ātmanaḥ</i> | of the Self |
| तेषाम् | <i>teṣāṁ</i> | their |
| आदित्यवत् | <i>ādityavat</i> | like the sun |
| ज्ञानम् | <i>jñānam</i> | knowledge |
| प्रकाशयति | <i>prakāśayati</i> | reveals |
| तत्परम् | <i>tatparam</i> | that highest |

VERSE 16

True Knowledge Leads to God-Realization

16

But to those whose ignorance is destroyed by the knowledge of the Self, like the sun, knowledge reveals to them the supreme.

When egoism (“I” sense) identifies the Self with the mind-body complex, it creates ignorance. Ignorance creates egocentric concepts and desires, and as a result the ego flourishes in the mind, body, and intellect. That same ignorance becomes the cause of separation from God (Self) and it is also the cause of all human suffering. In the same way that darkness is removed by the appearance of the sun, all misery ends for one who removes the veil of ignorance by achieving Self-knowledge. Through that knowledge the supreme is revealed to the yogi.

How is it that the ego sense, which pales in comparison to the light of the Self, obscures the Self? The answer is that the ego is like a small cloud which is insignificant in comparison to the vastness and glow of the sun. But, when that cloud appears directly in front of the sun, it veils the sun completely. In reality the sun is not actually veiled by the cloud, but when the cloud passes between the observer and the sun, for that person the sun disappears.

The Self is infinite and unchanging reality. By contrast, ignorance is finite, always changing and unreal. The cloud of ignorance manifests due to the wrong identification of the Self with the mind-body complex. The ego self (*jīva*) cannot see through the cloud of ignorance and consequently experiences a feeling of separation from the Self. When the ignorance is removed, the Self is recognized in its real sense, just as the sun is seen clearly when the cloud has moved away.

The light of the sun is the only means by which the sun can be seen and recognized. In the same way the light of the Self, which is pure consciousness, is the only means by which the Self can be recognized. As soon as the veil of ignorance is removed, the ego self finds itself merging in the light of the Self, and it becomes one with the Self.

When there is no “I” there is liberation. When there is “I” there is bondage.

Śloka 17

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञान निर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥ १७ ॥

tadbuddhayastadātmanas----tanniṣṭhāstatparāyaṇaḥ
gacchantyapunarāvṛttiṃ jñāna nirdhūtakalmaṣāḥ

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|---|
| तद्बुद्धयः | <i>tad buddhayaḥ</i> | intellect absorbed in that |
| तदात्मानः | <i>tadātmanaḥ</i> | their self being that |
| तन्निष्ठाः | <i>tanniṣṭhāḥ</i> | established in that |
| तत्परायणाः | <i>tatparāyaṇāḥ</i> | with that for their supreme goal |
| गच्छन्ति | <i>gacchanti</i> | go |
| अपुनरावृत्तिम् | <i>apunarāvṛttim</i> | not again returning |
| ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः | <i>jñānanirdhūtakalmaṣāḥ</i> | those whose sins have been dispelled by knowledge |

VERSE 17

One Who Has Obtained the Supreme Has No More Births

17

Their intellect absorbed in That, their self being That, established in That, with That for their supreme goal, they go from where there is no return, their sins dispelled by knowledge.

A yogi who attains the supreme lives in union with the Self in every aspect of life. The yogi's intellect is absorbed in the Self, and the yogi's mind rests firmly in identity with God. All actions and emotions of the yogi cherish God and the yogi is absorbed in the infinite bliss of the absolute Brahma. The yogi's goal is nothing but the Self, which is realized as limitless or infinite. The yogi who attains the reality of life and truthfully identifies the Self within, will not be charmed by the world of duality with its pleasure and pain, likes and dislikes. Nor is there any chance that such a yogi will ever come back to that world of duality.

from where there is no return - This means falling back into ignorance. Since the yogi's ego has already been transcended, the yogi will have no desire of any kind for the objects of the senses. Sins are nothing but the desire for sensual objects, which block one's self development and bind a person in ignorance. Those sins are eliminated by knowledge of the Self.

When, to the knower of Brahma, everything has become Self, what else will be desired? For such a person, all dualities subside.