

Bhagavad-gita – Chapter 2, Text 17.

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Synonyms, Translation, Purport and Class by

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अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥ १७ ॥

*avināśi tu tad viddhi
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam
vināśam avyayasyāsyā
na kaścit kartum arhati*

SYNONYMS

avināśi—imperishable; *tu*—but; *tat*—that; *viddhi*—know it; *yena*—by whom; *sarvam*—all of the body; *idaṁ*—this; *tatam*—pervaded; *vināśam*—destruction; *avyayasyā*—of the imperishable; *asyā*—of it; *na kaścit*—no one; *kartum*—to do; *arhati*—is able.

TRANSLATION

That which pervades the entire body you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul.

PURPORT

This verse more clearly explains the real nature of the soul, which is spread all over the body. Anyone can understand what is spread all over the body: it is consciousness. Everyone is conscious of the pains and pleasures of the body in part or as a whole. This spreading of consciousness is limited within one's own body. The pains and pleasures of one body are unknown to another. Therefore, each and every body is the embodiment of an individual soul, and the symptom of the soul's presence is perceived as individual consciousness. This soul is described as one ten-thousandth part of the upper portion of the hair point in size. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (5.9) confirms this:

*bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya
śatadhā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvaḥ vijñeyaḥ
sa cānantyāya kalpate*

“When the upper point of a hair is divided into one hundred parts and again each of such parts is further divided into one hundred parts, each such part is the measurement of the dimension of the spirit soul.” Similarly the same version is stated:

*keśāgra-śata-bhāgasya
śatāṁśaḥ sādṛśātmakeḥ
jīvaḥ sūkṣma-svarūpo 'yam
saṅkhyātīto hi cit-kaṇaḥ
[Cc. Madya 19.140]*

“There are innumerable particles of spiritual atoms, which are measured as one ten-thousandth of the upper portion of the hair.”

Therefore, the individual particle of spirit soul is a spiritual atom smaller than the material atoms, and such atoms are innumerable. This very small spiritual spark is the basic principle of the material body, and the influence of such a spiritual spark is spread all over the body as the influence of the active principle of some medicine spreads throughout the body. This current of the spirit soul is felt all over the body as consciousness, and that is the proof of the presence of the soul. Any layman can understand that the material body minus consciousness is a dead body, and this consciousness cannot be revived in the body by any means of material administration. Therefore, consciousness is not due to any amount of material combination, but to the spirit soul. In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.9) the measurement of the atomic spirit soul is further explained:

*eṣo 'nur ātmā cetasā veditavyo
yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa
prāṇaiś cittaṁ sarvam otaṁ prajānām
yasmin viśuddhe vibhavaty eṣa ātmā*

“The soul is atomic in size and can be perceived by perfect intelligence. This atomic soul is floating in the five kinds of air (*prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *samāna* and *udāna*), is situated within the heart, and spreads its influence all over the body of the embodied living entities. When the soul is purified from the contamination of the five kinds of material air, its spiritual influence is exhibited.”

The *haṭha-yoga* system is meant for controlling the five kinds of air encircling the pure soul by different kinds of sitting postures—not for any material profit, but for liberation of the minute soul from the entanglement of the material atmosphere.

So the constitution of the atomic soul is admitted in all Vedic literatures, and it is also actually felt in the practical experience of any sane man. Only the insane man can think of this atomic soul as all-pervading *viṣṇu-tattva*.

The influence of the atomic soul can be spread all over a particular body. According to the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, this atomic soul is situated in the heart of every living entity, and because

the measurement of the atomic soul is beyond the power of appreciation of the material scientists, some of them assert foolishly that there is no soul. The individual atomic soul is definitely there in the heart along with the Supersoul, and thus all the energies of bodily movement are emanating from this part of the body. The corpuscles which carry the oxygen from the lungs gather energy from the soul. When the soul passes away from this position, the activity of the blood, generating fusion, ceases. Medical science accepts the importance of the red corpuscles, but it cannot ascertain that the source of the energy is the soul. Medical science, however, does admit that the heart is the seat of all energies of the body.

Such atomic particles of the spirit whole are compared to the sunshine molecules. In the sunshine there are innumerable radiant molecules. Similarly, the fragmental parts of the Supreme Lord are atomic sparks of the rays of the Supreme Lord, called by the name *prabhā*, or superior energy. So whether one follows Vedic knowledge or modern science, one cannot deny the existence of the spirit soul in the body, and the science of the soul is explicitly described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* by the Personality of Godhead Himself.

CLASS

Prabhupāda:

*avināśi tu tad viddhi
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam
vināśam avyayasyāsyā
na kaścit kartum arhati*

So the distinction between the living soul and the dead body—anyone can perceive. What is the distinction between a living body and the dead body? When a man is dead, he, his relatives cry, lament: “Oh, my father has gone,” “My son has gone.” But the father, as we have seen, he’s lying on the floor. Where he has gone? He’s lying on the floor. Why you are crying: “Oh, my father has gone away”? That means the person who has gone away, who has left this body, you have not, never seen. You have seen this body. So the body is lying there, and why you are crying, “My father has gone away”? So any intelligent man can understand that the real father, within the body, was a different thing. But our ignorance is so great that we accept this body, this dead body, as my father. This body is not only dead now, it was always dead. Because the living soul was there, within this dead body, it was moving. This is the fact. Just like a nice motorcar is running. But when the driver is not there, the motor is lying there, idle. If one identifies with the motorcar, the driver of the car, that is foolishness. *Yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke* [SB 10.84.13]. Anyone who is identifying this dead body, or this material body, which is a composition of *tri-dhātuka*, *kapha-pitta-vāyu*, some blood, flesh, and some secretion, and some bones—if anyone identifies the self with this lump of matter, then he is described as no better than cow and ass.

*yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke
sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma ijya-dhīḥ
yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile na karhicij
janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ* [SB 10.84.13]

So at the present moment especially... This ignorance is there always, in the material world, that one is identifying this material body with the real self. The self, the soul is different. It is not this material body. But our modern education, everything, advancement of knowledge, philosophy, everything on the basis of, on this wrong conception of life. So to give an, a glimpse of idea what is that soul, how it acts, here Kṛṣṇa, Lord Kṛṣṇa informs us:

*avināśi tu tad viddhi
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam
vināśam avyayasyāsyā
na kaścit kartum arhati*

So the soul, the presence of soul is perceived by the consciousness. That consciousness... Just like the presence of sun, even I was blind, I could understand the sun is there because the sunlight and heat, I am experiencing. Without seeing the sun... When, as soon as I come to the sunshine, I feel light and heat; therefore immediately I can understand there is sun. It is not very difficult. Similarly just like we try to... When a man is dying, we try to feel whether the man is breathing, or he's feeling touch sensation. These are the tests. So the touch sensation is there so long the soul is there. Now I am living body. If somebody pinches my body, because the consciousness is all over the body, so I feel: "Somebody's pinching me." But when the conscious, consciousness is not there, if somebody chops up my body I will not protest. Therefore we should understand what is that living thing. That consciousness, which is spreading all over this body, that is living force. Kṛṣṇa says here: *avināśi tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idaṁ tatam*. *Yena*, by that consciousness. The consciousness is spread all over the body. So Kṛṣṇa says, "That consciousness is *avināśi*." After the death of, after the annihilation of this body, which we call dead, the consciousness is not dead. That we do not understand. There is no science; there is no philosophy. Everything based on a foolish assumption. They say the consciousness is made possible by combination of matter. The combination of matter, five elements, gross, the subtle elements, they cannot see. Even they see. So their... (aside:) Not now. Their proposition is that this consciousness is a symptom of combination of matter. That is Buddhist philosophy. They do not accept the existence of soul. "The consciousness is a combination of matter." But if it is a fact, then why don't you, if some matter is lacking, why don't you bring that matter or chemical and inject in the dead body and make it again conscious? Why it is not possible? What is your argument? If you say consciousness is combination of matter...

Just like our motorcar is being driven. So when the petrol is finished, matter... Because motorcar running means combination of matter—some machine, made of matter, and some oil, acting—so it is running. Of course, the driver is there. But foolish persons, they do not understand, simply combination of matter will not act. There must be a driver, a living person. Then the motorcar will go. So supposing the combination of matter, that the petrol is finished. So we can bring petrol. Again the motor runs. So if this body was running simply on combination of matter, and some matter is lacking, so why not bring that matter and put into it, and it will run? But that is not possible. That is, that was... The living force which was

running this body was a different element, spirit. *Nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ*. We have discussed this verse. That is living force. And Kṛṣṇa says, *vināśam avyayasya asya*. This consciousness has no annihilation. *Vināśa*. Nobody can kill this consciousness, or the soul. One can do harm to this material body, but not to the spirit soul and consciousness. *Vināśam avyaya*. *Avyaya* means which is never deteriorates. That is *avyaya*. *Vināśam avyayasya asya na kaścit kartum arhati*. Nobody can kill. Nobody can kill consciousness, nobody can kill the soul. Therefore it is said, *na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre* [Bg. 2.20]. “The consciousness, or the spirit soul, is never killed, never annihilated, on the destruction of this body.”

So this is a great science. Unfortunately, the so-called scientist, he has no idea. He does not know. They simply say that “We do not know, but we are trying to know.” That’s all right. But here is the knowledge, perfect knowledge, in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Why don’t you take it? That they will not take. They’ll go on speculating and promise falsely that “In future we shall be able to inject some matter within the body and the body will again become alive.” That is their dream. In the past history, it was never possible; at present also, it is not possible. How you can expect in future? But they are under illusion. They think like that, that “We are making progress.” At all, no progress, practically. They have no knowledge. That is their position. They have no knowledge. So we have to understand from the authority. There are so many arguments. Now, if you say “This body’s dead because the blood has become white. Blood corpuscles, they are now become white instead of becoming red.” So if that is the possible, so why don’t you make the blood red? By some chemical injection or by adding some color, as soon as the blood becomes red... Why don’t you do that? No. If you say “That was ‘natural’ redness. That natural redness cannot be brought,” then your science is defective. And even if we accept that natural redness is the cause of living force, there are many natural redness in the flower, in the jewels. Why does it not move? So all the arguments of these foolish scientists, or so-called logicians, that can be, I mean to say, nullified, if you are intelligent. We have to take..., accept it, because it is said by Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality. Because we cannot say anything, why it is *avināśi*, why this body’s not *avināśi*, but the consciousness is *avināśi*, that we cannot explain; therefore we have to accept the version of the supreme authority. That is education. That is education. We, we cannot deny. Because we cannot give any counterproposal. So how we can deny Kṛṣṇa’s proposal? *Avināśi tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idam tatam*. *Yena sarvam idam tatam*. This is also very significant. *Idam śarīram*.

So I am individual spirit soul. I am conscious. My consciousness is spread all over the body. But my consciousness is not spread over your body. If you are pinched by somebody, I don’t feel. Because your consciousness is different from my consciousness. You cannot say that the consciousness is the same in you and me. No. Everyone is individual. Therefore there is another consciousness. That is explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Kṣetra-jñam cāpi mām viddhi sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata*. I am *kṣetra-jña*, conscious. I know about the pains and pleasures of my body. You know about the pains and pleasures of your body. I do not know about your pains and pleasure. You do not know about my pains and pleasure. Therefore you are individual soul. I am individual soul. But there is another soul, Supersoul. That is Kṛṣṇa. *Īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām ḥṛd-deśe arjuna tiṣṭhati* [Bg. 18.61]. That Supersoul is present both in you and in me.

Kṣetra-jñāṁ cāpi mām viddhi sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata. Sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata. In every living entity. *Sarva-kṣetreṣu.* It is confirmed in the Vedic *sūtras*, *Brahma-sūtra: aṅdāntara-stha-ṣaramāṇu-cayāntara-sthaṁ govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi **.* *Eko 'py asau racayitum jagad-aṅda-koṭim* [Bs. 5.35]. That Supersoul is present within this universe. Because that Supersoul is present within this universe, Kṛṣṇa says, *viṣṭabhya aham:* “I enter within this world.” *Ekāṁśena sthito jagat:* “I do not enter, but My plenary portion, *ekāṁśena*, Paramātmā...” The Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, He enters. The Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, He enters within this universe. And the Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu enters into everything, even in the atom. Therefore it is working. So that consciousness is there. Because the universal consciousness of Viṣṇu is there, therefore everything within the universe is working so nicely. Not that nature... Nature, you can compare with your body... The material nature is there, but without the soul's presence, the consciousness being there, it will not work.

Therefore as this universe, material cosmic manifestation is working very nicely, you have to accept there is God. You cannot deny. So that consciousness, superconsciousness, that is different. You cannot say that “I am the same. I have got superconsciousness.” That is not possible. Then, if you have got superconsciousness, why don't you feel about my pains and pleasure? The superconsciousness is of Viṣṇu. That is all-pervading consciousness. That is also the same. Nature is the same. As I have got my consciousness all over this body, similarly, the superconsciousness is there all over the universe. As I feel pains and pleasure on account of some disturbance on this body, similarly, as soon as we create some disturbance with this universal atmosphere, the supreme consciousness is disturbed. That disturbance is going on. Therefore, in spite of all arrangement... *Pūrṇam idaṁ pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate* [Īśopaniṣad, Invocation]. That, by God's creation, everything is complete. There is no flaw. But because we are creating disturbances, the world situation is different.

We are creating disturbances. By God's creation, everything is nice. Everything is fine. Take, for example, within this planet, there is sufficient place to grow food for all the population. Not only all the population at the present moment, but if the population increases ten times, twenty times, still, there is sufficient place to produce food for them. We are traveling all over the world three times a year, and we see in Australia and Africa and other countries, there are so much vacant places. And food can be produced, enough food can be produced. Enough milk can be available for feeding all this population. That is God's arrangement. But the difficulty is that we are quarreling amongst ourselves. I am thinking Indian. Somebody's thinking “I am an American.” Somebody's thinking “I'm Australian.” “You cannot come here. You, I cannot allow you to come to my country.” The immigration department. Therefore, the difficulty. By God's arrangement, there is everything complete. But I am disturbing. I am encroaching upon God's property: “This is mine.” Therefore there is disturbance. Therefore the only solution of the whole world problem is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There is no other solution. The only solution. Kṛṣṇa consciousness means when people will be educated to understand that this planet does not belong to America or India and Africa. Everything belongs... *Sarva-loka-maheśvaram.* As Kṛṣṇa says, “I am the proprietor of all the planets.” When you understand this, that is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then there will be peace.

Therefore this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is very important. To educate people. Because foolishly they are claiming God's property his property. Nothing belongs to us. Even this body does not belong to us. As soon as the time factor is finished, my body's finished... So I have got this body, say, for seventy-six years, age, and, say, after ten years, or five years, it will be finished. So before my body was created, the world was there, and when my body will be finished, the world will remain there. Then how can I claim that this world belongs to me? This is called illusion. This is called ignorance. *Mūḍha*. *Mūḍha* means one does not know to whom the property belongs, but foolishly he's claiming that "It is my property." This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, in other words, it is spiritual communism. The material communism, which is going on, that is defective, because this Communist movement is centered around the state. But when there will be perfect communism—*īśāvāsyam idam sarvam*, the center will be God, Kṛṣṇa—that will be perfect. When everyone will understand that Kṛṣṇa is the central point, Kṛṣṇa is the proprietor, Kṛṣṇa is the enjoyer, when perfectly we come to that Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there will be peace and prosperity. Otherwise it is not possible. Therefore our... Of course, it is not possible that because the number of fools are greater.

But still, as it is suggested in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhaḥ. Yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad eva itaraḥ janaḥ*. If the so-called leaders, they become Kṛṣṇa conscious, they understand the philosophy, then others will follow. As, at the present moment, because the leaders are foolish, blind, they have no spiritual knowledge, all the population of the world becomes godless. Therefore our appeal is to the leading personalities to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Try to understand its philosophy, apply in life, and try to distribute this knowledge. Automatically others will accept. *Sa yat pramāṇam kurute lokas tad anuvartate*. If Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is accepted by the leading personalities... Why they shall not accept unless they are ignorant and less intelligent? Everything is there. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is left for this purpose. It was instructed not to Arjuna, but to the whole world, in the midst of Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. So the whole world is a battlefield now. They should learn the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* and thus become happy within this world.

Thank you very much. Hare Kṛṣṇa. (end)

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