

**Bhagavad Gita Chapter 8 online Part 6 dated 28/06/2020 by Swami Dayatmanada (Lecture delivered online from Bangalore, India)**

**Subject: Chapter 8, Verses 18-21**

ॐ वसुदेवसूतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम्  
देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जैगद्गुरुम् ॥

**Vasudeva sutham devam, Kamsa Chanura mardanam,  
Devaki paramanandam, Krishnam vande jagat gurum**

*I worship Lord Krishna, who is the spiritual master of the universe, who is the son of Vasudeva, who is the Lord, who killed Kansa and Chanura, and who is the bliss of Devaki.*



सर्वोपनिषदो गावो, दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः।  
पार्था वत्सः सूधीर्भक्ता, दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

**Sarvopanishado gaavo, dogdha gopala nandanah |  
parthovatsa: sudheerbhoktaa, dugdham gitamrutam mahat |**

*All the Upanishads are likened to cows. The milker is Krishna, the son of Nanda.. Partha (Arjuna) is likened to a calf, while the drinkers are the wise ones. The nectar of Gita is the milk.*

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिं ।  
यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥

**Mookam karoti vachalam pangum langhayate girim |  
Yat-krupa tamaham vande paramananda madhavam ||**

*I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.*

**Recollection:** (Please refer to the transcripts of Chapter 8 Part 4 and 5.)

We are studying the Eighth Chapter of the Bhagavat Gita, very aptly called as “**Akshar- Brah-Yoga** अक्षर ब्रह्म योगः In our last class we have discussed a wonderful concept:

**[Please note:** There are two very similar words in the Hinduism or Vedic Philosophy with totally different meanings.

Commented [1]:

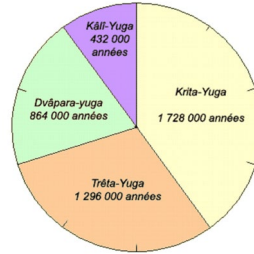
1. **Brahm** ब्रह्म or **Brahman** ब्रह्मन् is Eternal Unmanifest Being, also called as Sat-Chit-Ananda or God or *Parbrahm* परब्रह्मम्.
2. **BrahmA** ब्रह्मा or **BrahmA-Deva** ब्रह्मा देवा is not eternal, is temporary and has got two aspects a) Manifest State and b) Unmanifest state.]

**Life Span of Brahma-Deva and His Day and Night:**

Swami Vivekananda has explained this Micro-Cosmos and Macro-Cosmos in his Jyana-Yoga lectures.

- Brahma-Deva's (Synonym is Brahma) life span is one hundred years. (Like us)
- One year of Brahma-Deva has got 365 days. (Like us)
- Each day of Brahma-Deva has 12 hours of daytime and 12 hours of night-time. (Like us)
- Each day time (12 hours) of Brahma-Deva is one thousand *Yugas/Maha-Yuga*.
- Each night (12 hours) of Brahma-Deva is one thousand *Yugas/Maha-Yuga*.
- Every day of Brahma-Deva has got 24 hours. Brahma-Deva's 24 hours is equal to 2000 *Yugas* or called as महा युगा *Maha-Yuga*.
- What does this mean? When Brahma awakes then entire creation begins. When Brahma goes to sleep then entire creation subsides into Him. Here, Brahma does not mean an individual God but a 'collective soul' consisting of this entire universe. In Vedantic language, He is *Ishwara*. When a sadhaka reaches *Brahma-Loka*, he enjoys it there and when his merits exhaust then he comes back.

- **What is meant by a *MahaYuga*? A *Maya-Yuga Cycle* or time scale (Chatur *Yuga or Maha Yuga*) is a cyclic age (epoch) in Hindu cosmology. One *Maha-Yuga* consists four *yugas* : 1) *Satya Yuga*, 2) *Treta Yuga*, 3) *Dvapara Yuga*, and 4) *Kali Yuga*.) All these four *yugas* make one particular *Maha Yuga* of Brahma-Deva. Therefore, we can imagine one *Maha-Yuga* is like millions and millions of human years.**



#### What happens when an aspirant reaches *Brahma-Loka*?

- When a person reaches *Brahma-Loka* by doing *upasana* (means through contemplation) then such a person becomes one with Brahma. He enjoys uninterrupted happiness for a very long period. As we have discussed, the concept of time is very interesting. If we are aware of time, this means that we are not happy. If we are happy then we will not be aware of time. Therefore, we can understand that when we are happy and not aware of time then whether we are happy for one minute or a billion years, it really doesn't matter because it will be no more than one second as we are not aware of time. So, it is pointless to use the words - long or short period. When a person is in *Brahma-Loka* then he is only relatively free from fear, not completely free from fear. There is fear that my *Brahma-Loka* period will last only for a limited period. A day will come when I will fall from the state of *Brahma-Loka* to my usual miserable state and I will have to restart my same miserable life again!

The essence of this sloka C8, V16 is - all the fourteen *lokas*/worlds from Brahma-Loka to the lowest *loka* are subjected to birth and rebirth. So, even *Brahma-Loka* is not worth it. There is no respite even in the *Brahma-Loka*.

#### Is there something that is worth acquiring?

- The final point is - if these *lokas*/worlds are worthless then is there something that is worth achieving? Yes! *Brahma-Esthana* ब्रह्मस्थाना or Abode of Brahma is not worth achieving but *Brahman-Esthana* ब्रह्मन् स्थाना or *Brahm-Esthana* ब्रह्म स्थाना or

Abode of Brahman (means a realisation that I am eternal; I am infinite; I am *akshara*. As has been discussed.) is worth achieving. (Please note here, the difference between *BrahmA-Esthana* and *BrahmaN-Esthana*) This state will release us from limitations imposed by the body and mind.

### What is the role of Lord Brahma? What is the creation?

- When we wake up, we plunge ourselves into our activities. Our whole day passes with various types of activities and at the end of the day we get tired and withdraw ourselves into our nature at night. Lord Brahma also does the same thing. Lord Brahma's duty is creation; where there is creation there will be maintenance and dissolution. Just as we do activities, our activities are impermanent and the results of our activities are also impermanent. Similarly, Lord Brahma is impermanent and Brahma's creation is impermanent. How do we know? Creation/*Sristi*, *Esthiti*/ maintenance and dissolution/ *Pralaya* are one after the other like an inevitable circle.

सृष्टि स्थिति विनाशानां शक्तिभूते सनातनि । गुणाश्रये गुणमये नारायणि! नमोऽस्तु ते ॥२॥

[Divine Mother is *sanathani/eternal*. However, in Her aspect of creation - She has to go through creation, maintenance and dissolution.]

### What is creation?

Creation means cause and effect. Here, Lord Brahma is the cause and the entire cosmos is the effect. There is a law - cause and effect cannot be different. The entire world has come from Brahma. Brahma is the 'first spark' of परब्रह्म *Parbrahm*. This means, we are also coming from *Parbrahm*. So, our ancestry is like this -

- From *Parbrahma/Brahman* comes Lord Brahma. *Parbrahm/Brahman* is *anadi, shaswata, nitya, aja, puranas, purusha* and so many beautiful descriptions have been given.

अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥ Gita C2, V20  
ajo nityaḥ śhāśhvato 'yaṁ purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śharīre

- From Lord Brahma comes this world. Brahma is *adi*. He has a beginning and an end.

From the Vedantic *Parmartha* परमार्थिक point of view: *Parbrahm* is neither the cause nor the effect; there is really no creation. However, apparently there is a creation. This is absolutely true but we have to keep in mind that this is only true from the *Parmartha-View* - means for a person who has attained *Brahm-Jyana* or *Self-realisation*.

From our point of view/ *Vaivaharica* व्यवहारिक point of view: - the important message for us is - we must have absolute faith in the scriptural teachings, this world is a reality for us. Therefore, we must make the best of this reality.

### Illustration of a needle:

Suppose, you have got a sewing needle for mending your clothes. After using it, you have kept the needle in a very safe place. After some time, you need the needle again but have forgotten where you have kept it. You know very well that you have got the needle but cannot find it. What will you do? You will buy another needle and finish the job. After a few days, you find your original needle as well. (We have forgotten that we are divine.) What am I trying to talk about?

#### **Constant remembrance of God:**

We are bound creatures for all practical purposes. The only being who can really release us - is God. God is compassionate and if we surrender ourselves - means constant remembrance that I am helpless; You are the only one who can help Me; so, I take refuge in You. I obey your commandments. If we continue to do this (i.e. constantly practising the presence of God) then at the time when the body is about to fall because of its own *prarabhdha* karma, God out of His mercy will take us into His lap and we will become completely free.

#### **God is the cause and the world is an effect:**

We come from God; we are living in God and we will go back to God. The world is an effect and it will go back to its cause which is God. We have to understand that effect lies in a very potential state or subtle state which is called potential divinity. The unmanifest form is called a cause and the manifested form is called an effect. God is the cause, we have come from Him, and we will go back to our cause/God.

Our body has come from the earth. That is why in Christian funerals, the Priest will say, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust." This means - our body has come from the earth and is going back to the earth.

[A phrase from the burial service in the Book of Common Prayer: 'we therefore, commit this body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life.']

This is to remind us of the ephemerality or temporary-ness of our life. Death means to go joyfully into the lap of our Divine Mother. We all have come from the Divine Mother; She is playing with us; She gives birth to us and feeds us; when this divine play is over then She will take us back into Her divine lap. So, death is a joyful journey. This is the idea which is expressed in the above verse, "Brahma's activity is creation, sustenance and dissolution." This means - we have come from Brahma and will go back to Brahma. Eventually, Brahma will go back to *Parbrahm* परब्रह्मम्.

#### **Illustrations:**

I can give you two more illustrations to clarify this point. 1) Just like, when we are sleeping then we are not conscious about our body and mind. Everything is in a non-manifest state. (However, non-manifest does not mean destruction). 2) If a person is reading a book and falls asleep then the next day, he will start reading the book from the page where he stopped last night. Whatever we have acquired in our life will be with us forever. (These illustrations have been explained in detail in our previous classes.)

**The essence is -**

There is no death; there is no birth; there is no non-existence.

1. Death does not mean non-existence, death means going back to the state of non-manifestation.
2. We are all divine. We come from the divine; live in divine and go back to the divine.
3. Eventually, we will get disgusted and tired with this play of coming and going. Then we will develop a longing for eternal peace or God-realisation.
4. God-realisation will happen to all of us.

**Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 18**

अव्यक्ताद्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।  
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसञ्ज्ञके ॥ 18॥  
*avyaktād vyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ prabhavantyahar-āgame  
rātrīyāgame praliyante tatraivāvyakta-sanjñake*

**Meaning:** At the approach of Brahma's day, all manifest objects come forth from the unmanifest. At the approach of Brahma's night, they merge again into that which is called the unmanifest.

One point, we need to discuss before we go any further. When something is manifested then it is not a new thing but the re-manifestation of the same thing. It is just like - we get up every morning, acquire the same ego/ *ahamkara* and feel that it is the same house, same people, same relationships etc. Lord Brahma does the same thing, the only difference is that Lord Brahma does it at a cosmic level/at the universal level called as Macro-Cosmos, whereas we do it at an individual level called as Micro-Cosmos.

What is birth? To become manifested from the state of unmanifest. In other words, the unmanifest becomes visible, enjoyable, experienceable etc. and after a long time, the manifest becomes unmanifest again. This cycle of unmanifest to manifest and again to unmanifest goes on and on.

There is a parallel sloka in the Bhagvat Gita itself.

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।  
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥ C2, V28॥  
*avyaktādīni bhūtāni vyakta-madhyāni bhārata  
avyakta-nidhanānyeva tatra kā paridevanā*

O, Arjuna why do you grieve for Bhisma or Drona? They are not going to die. They were in their unmanifest forms before their birth just like a seed. When a seed comes in contact with the soul, water and sunlight then it manifests as a big tree. Similarly, parents are like the soul for a dormant un-manifest human seed. When a

*Jiva* dies then he becomes non-manifest. This cycle goes on. In the case of Lord Brahma, it is called *Pralaya* or Universal dissolution. At the next creation, the same beings will come into manifestation. This is what The Lord is telling us in the next verse.

Recording time 22 minutes.

### Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 19

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।  
रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ 19॥

***bhūta-grāmaḥ sa evāyaṁ bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate***  
***rātryāgame vaśhaḥ pārtha prabhavatyahar-āgame***

This verse shows the individuality of each one of us. It is not destroyed by the mere process of involution. The law of karma operates, the universe is in a state of evolution and involution.

***bhūta-grāmaḥ***—the multitude of beings including living and non-living for example, rivers, mountains etc.

***saḥ***—these; ***eva***—certainly; ***ayam***—this; ***bhūtvā bhūtvā***—repeatedly taking birth again and again for innumerable times. A time will come in the process of evolution when an inorganic matter will become organic; will evolve into a single cell organism with consciousness then will evolve into an insect, a bird, a lower animal and ultimately into a human being. A human being will evolve into a wise human being. This wise person will evolve further and will try to realise his true nature. Eventually, he will attain freedom. Until this time, the process goes on and on. (As has been discussed, there is nothing called non-living. In so-called non-living objects - the *prana* is in a dormant state. Logically also, Lord Brahma comes from *Parbrahm* and *Parbrahm* is Sat-Chit-Ananda. For a wise person - plant, water, river, mountain, air, water, fire etc. are all *devata* or divine.)

***pralīyate***—dissolves, goes back into the non-manifest form. This cycle goes on and on. Then what happens?

***rātri-āgame***—then the night of Brahma comes. In our life, when night comes then we resolve ourselves into a state of deep sleep or *shushupti*. *Shushupti* means we withdraw ourselves into our nature. This state of deep sleep is a state of great peace. This happens on a universal scale at the dawn of Brahma's day - creation starts. During Brahma's night - the entire universe goes back to its non-manifest form.

How many worlds or *lokas* are there? (Please refer to the transcripts of previous classes.) As many individuals are there, so there are as many *lokas*. We are all Brahmas/creators of our individual world. We are the architects of our future lives as well. So, we must do the right type of actions, develop the right understanding and right desires. We came from God and will go back to God only.

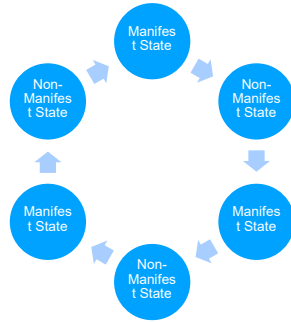
**Meaning of V19:** The same multitude of beings coming forth, again and again, merge despite themselves at the approach of the night and re-manifest themselves at the approach of the day.

### Two states of Brahma-Deva:

We are discussing Brahma's two states.

1. **State of manifestation:** We all come from Brahma. At the dawn of Brahma's day, innumerable worlds/universe come out. The same beings come out, not new beings. Why? Because, past beings did not attain liberation. They just went back to sleep with their old *samsakaras*. So, at the dawn of Brahma, these beings just wake up with their *samsakaras*.
2. **State of non-manifestation:** Brahma also needs rest, so He goes back to sleep and creation goes back to a non-manifest state. Brahma is a universal unmanifest *shushupti* state. When we go into *shushupti/deep sleep*, that is a temporary state of unmanifest. Similarly, at the cosmic level, when Brahma goes to sleep then the entire cosmos withdraws into Him and goes back into an unmanifest state. This unmanifest state is the counterpart of the manifest state. These manifest states and unmanifest states are the counterparts of each other. We need to know both states to understand each other. Just as we would never know what is light unless we know what is darkness; we would never know what is happiness unless we experience what is unhappiness.

This *Brahma-Chakra* goes on and on. We have to jump out of it if we would like to attain liberation



### Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 20

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।

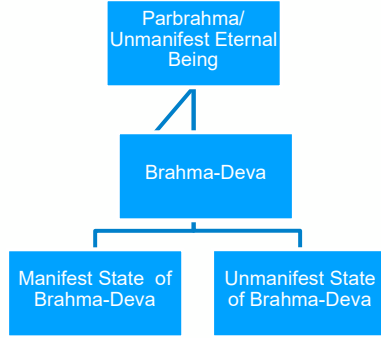
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ 20॥

***paras tasmāt tu bhāvo nyo vyakto vyaktāt sanātanaḥ  
yaḥ sa sarveṣhu bhūteṣhu naśhyatsu na vinaśhyati***

The Lord is saying, "Beyond this unmanifest state (of Brahma), there is another 'Unmanifest Eternal Being', who does not perish even when all beings perish."

There are two types of unmanifest beings or two states of unmanifest.

1. Eternal Unmanifest Being or Parbrahman or Parmatman or Brahman or God.
2. Unmanifest state of Brahma.



Shri Ramakrishna has said it very beautifully:

1. Do not try to define God because a limited mind can never understand what is unlimited.
2. Never say that God is “only this much”. Because our mind can know a little bit only. Just like when a blind man touches the leg of an elephant then he thinks that this is the entire elephant.

So, manifestation and non-manifestation are the two states of mind. The mind is made up of duality. If we would not know one side of duality then we would never know the other side - like light and darkness, happiness and unhappiness etc. Shri Ramakrishna has said so beautifully, “God is with form; God is also without form.” This means - at the concrete level of the mind, God may appear with various names and forms but when the mind reaches an abstract level then the mind will experience God with no form. These experiences are all at the level of mind. However, there is a true state of God that is beyond mind -*mano-vacha- atita*. यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते। अप्राप्य मनसा सह। yato vāco nivartante | aprāpya manasā saha| (Taittiriya-Upanishad) - the mind can never reach that supreme state.

God is beyond the mind, beyond speech and beyond everything. This is called a true unmanifest state. Brahman in a non-manifest state can never be experienced, an aspirant can become one with Brahman. What is the difference? When we experience an object then we are different from the object, we are the experiencer and the object is experienced. As soon as we go beyond the mind (just like in deep sleep) then this difference does not exist. The true unmanifest state of God is beyond the body and mind.

Coming back to Verse 20:

**paraḥ tasmāt tu bhāvaḥ** - there is another state of experience which is completely different and much superior to the unmanifest state of Brahma-Deva. As we have discussed - Brahma has got two states - manifest state which is *sristi/creation* and *esthiti/maintenance*, the unmanifest state is called *laya/dissolution*. However, Brahma Himself has come from an eternal completely unmanifest state. Brahma is the *manas-putra* of Parbrahm. (*Manas* means mind and *putra* means son.) This has been graphically described as Maha-Vishnu is *Parmatma* and Brahma is originating from His navel - called as *Nabhi-Kamala*. Beyond Brahma, there is a true unmanifest state.



**anyaḥ**—another one, no relationship with anything else. This state is beyond bondage and liberation; **avyaktaḥ**— this state remains unmanifest; **avyaktāt**—to the unmanifest; What is His nature? **sanātanaḥ**—eternal, He is neither the cause of anything neither the effect of anything, He is *eternal, avayaya, akshaya, aja unborn etc.*

**yaḥ**—who; **saḥ**—that; **sarveṣhu**—all; **bhūteṣhu**—in beings; **naśhyatsu**—cease to exist, both experienter and experienced are perishable. How? If there is no subject then no object can be experienced and if there are no objects then the subject cannot experience anything. The 'Eternal Unmanifest Being' becomes Brahma and Brahma is our *sristi-karata/creator*. In other words - Brahma has not created this world but manifesting in various names and forms just like an actor puts on various types of costumes.

- All this *Prakriti* is called *Adhibhutam*.
- *Jivatma* is called *Adhyatman*.
- These two are related to each other as object and subject. What is its nature?

**naśhyatsu**—cease to exist, the world is perishable and changeable, it is changing all the time. It is manifesting for some time and then going back to its unmanifest state. However, *Parmatma* in the form of Pure Existence, Pure-Knowledge and Pure-Bliss never changes.

“Arjuna, beyond the state of unmanifest (means unmanifest state of Brahma) there is yet another 'Unmanifest Eternal Being (*Parbrahma*)' who does not perish when all beings perish.”

Just like gold and a gold ornament, when the gold ornament is melted then gold exists. There is no permanent destruction of gold. The pure existence without any manifestation is called 'Unmanifest Eternal Being'.

### **Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 21**

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।

यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्भ्राम परमं मम ॥ 21॥  
*avyakto kṣhara ityuktas tam āhuḥ paramām gatim*  
*yam prāpya na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama*

**Meaning:** This (second) eternal unmanifest (*Paramatma*) is called imperishable or *akshara*. This *Paramatma* is the ultimate supreme goal, and upon reaching it, one never returns to this mortal world. This is My Supreme Abode.

**tat**—that; **dhāma**—Abode - the (second) highest unmanifest state. **paramam**—the supreme; **mama**—My - it is imperishable and that is My Supreme nature.

**yam**—which; **prāpya**—having reached - a person who attains Me, gets the experience of pure realisation and there will be no rebirth. Even Brahma's state is not permanent. Once you attain Me then there will be no rebirth and this journey will come to an end. Here, Shri Krishna is categorically declaring, "I am not a person. I am the 'Eternal Supreme State' which aspirants have to realise through spiritual practices."

**The summary of all these verses is:** The Lord is telling us:

- Life in this world is very temporary. It is full of sorrow/*dukha* and is ephemeral.
- O, Arjuna (spiritual aspirant) claim your own true nature. You are none other than *Parbrahma - Tat-Tvam-Asi* Thou-Art-That.
- O, Arjuna try to understand that this coming and going goes on and on. Nothing is permanent; it is only apparently permanent. Your true goal is to realise your true nature. Just as My true nature is *Parbrahma* and you are none other than Me. You must realise your true nature. You should go on praying and remembering Me. If you practice this then you will remember Me at the time when your body falls (at the time of death). You will attain Me and there will be no rebirth.
- Arjuna asks seven beautiful questions at the beginning of the Eighth Chapter. (Please refer to the transcripts of the Eighth Chapter Part 1 and 2) All these *sloka* are to answer the seventh question of Arjuna. The seventh question of Arjuna is, "What is the way to remember You, so that I can attain You when this body falls down." In other words, how can I make this life as my last birth? Or How are You to be known at the time of death by those who have practised mind-control?

सर्वधर्मन्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।  
अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ C18, V66॥  
*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śharaṇam vraja*  
*ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣhayiṣhyāmi mā śhuchaḥ*

I will remove all your sins (which means remove all your ignorance). I will lift you. I will liberate you. Do not worry. Surrender onto Me.

These are the most beautiful verses which we will discuss in our next class.

**Vasudeva sutham devam kamsa Chanoora mardhanam,  
Devaki paramanandam Krishnam vande Jagat Gurum.**

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।  
देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

**May Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda bless us all.**

**Om Shanti Shanti Shanti**

**With kind regards**

**Mamta Misra**