



Janma mrithyu jara: vya:dhi duhkha do:sha:nudarsanam:



- Sanila

Meaning: Perception of the sorrow and evil of birth, death, old age and disease.

There is profound wisdom in this quality as it is the very basis and foundation for beginning a Spiritual journey. Verse 13.08 of the Gita formed the foundation of Buddhism. A clear understanding of this truth is necessary. A disgust and discontent for the meaninglessness and unreality of the world and its objects become a necessary prelude to the spiritual journey. As birds seek the shelter of a tree when tired; similarly, human beings seek the divine shelter after discovering the frustrations and joylessness of the material existence.

Most of the classical Indian schools present veritable world views—comprehensive philosophies formed by interlocking positions of the main branches of philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics). Although systematic philosophies are intended to stand as whole bodies of thought, it is often desirable to separate and delineate issues within them. Religious, or spiritual, metaphysics, a field that currently receives little attention among philosophers in academia in the West, considers the question of the nature of a Supreme Being and its relation to the world. Advaita Vedanta, and theistic Vedanta all have contributed to this debate. Within spiritual metaphysics, an insistence on spiritual monism (only one spiritual being ultimately exists) is probably the most important consideration that Indian thought upholds, though with numerous variations. Visishtadvaita unfolds the concept in a broader sense in a more detailed method.

There is a beautiful verse from the Katha Upanishad which informs us and bears on us the importance of realizing the Self.

Know the Self as lord of the chariot, the body as the chariot itself, the discriminating intellect as charioteer, and the mind as reins.

The senses, say the wise, are the horses; selfish desires are the roads they travel. The Self with the sense of ego, having body, mind, and senses, enjoys pleasure and

suffer sorrow. - Katha Upanishad. One should try to understand the distress of accepting birth, death, old age and disease. There are descriptions in various Vedic literatures. In the Srimad-Bhagavatam the world of the unborn, the child's stay in the womb of the mother, its suffering, etc., are all very graphically described. It should be thoroughly understood that birth is distressful. Because we forget how much distress we have suffered within the womb of the mother, we do not make any solution to the repetition of birth and death. Similarly at the time of death there are all kinds of sufferings, and they are also mentioned in the authoritative scriptures. And as far as disease and old age are concerned, everyone gets practical experience. No one wants to be diseased, and no one wants to become old, but there is no avoiding these. Unless we have a pessimistic view of this material life, considering the distresses of birth, death, old age and disease, there is no impetus for our making advancement in spiritual life.

Chapter thirteen might be called "The Creation and the Creator". Lord Krishna reveals the distinction between the physical body and the immortal soul as an analogy between the perishable and the eternal. The Blessed soul who understands the difference between the cause of creation who is the Creator and what is created is liberated. In other words.....They who understand the difference between the creation (which is our body) and the creator (or the Atma) and knows the technique of liberation (of Jiva) from the trap of rebirth, death, old age and disease with the help of knowledge and by understanding the meaninglessness and unreality of the world and its objects attains the Supreme.

There is a path to follow which can help us avoid the extremes of both self-indulgence and self mortification of asceticism. The path to adopt is one which incorporates both intellectual progress plus spiritual progress with practice that reflects compassion, morality, wisdom and concentration while we can see and understand



the world of existence as it truly is. There is no happiness or joy that can be gained from what is impermanent. The thoughts should dwell on the evidence which lays before us in the process that perpetuates continuous rebirth and the pain of old age and disease which arise as a result of sense cravings, for becoming something, from suffering delusions and from ignorance. The answer lies in seeking the True Permanent Bliss

The awareness and perception of the sorrow and evil of birth, death, old age and disease makes us note that materialistic

pleasures and sense feelings are an addictive lure to perpetuating false realities within the fabricated realms of existence. The realization helps us wean away from these desires which are artificial, transitory and fictitious states of existence.

The goal is to destroy these cravings and free the mind from this bondage of constant rebirth. This quality helps us dwell on the dynamics underlying these evolving patterns and provides a path to attain boundless freedom and joy.