

sinful and sensual person, who lives in vain by this verse.

Gosvāmī Tulasīdāsa also in the Rāmacaritamānasa, declares about such a person—His envy is like fire, anger like that of the god of death, sins and evils are like the treasure of the god of wealth and he does evil to others like the comet. It is good if such a person like Kumbhakarna goes on sleeping for a long time (1/4/3).

Appendix—The description, which has been given from the ninth to this verse, means only to render selfless service to others.



Link:—The Lord has condemned the person who does not perform his duty, in order to renounce his affinity with the world, in the preceding verse. Now, in the next two verses, He talks about the enlightened soul, who having performed his duty, has renounced affinity for the world.

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।

आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ १७ ॥

yastvātmaratireva syādātmatrptaśca mānavaḥ
ātmanyeva ca santuṣṭastasya kāryaṁ na vidyate

But, for a person who takes delight only in the self, is satisfied with the self and content in the self alone, verily there is no further work to be done by him. 17

Comment:—

'Yastvātmaratireva syādātmatrptaśca mānavaḥ ātmanyeva ca santuṣṭastasya'—Here the term 'tu' (but) has been used to differentiate, a person, who has become enlightened having performed his duty, from the person who does not perform his duty, as described in the preceding verse.

So long as a person assumes his affinity for the world, he rejoices in the sensual pleasures, wife, sons and family, remains

satisfied with food and is content in riches. But they cannot provide him with perfect and lasting rejoicing, satisfaction and contentment, because the world is ever-changing, insentient and perishable while the self is uniform, sentient and imperishable. So how can the self be satisfied and be contented with the world, when there is not even the least affinity between the two?

A man cannot take delight in the world constantly. A newly married couple take delight in each other but that joy or attraction does not continue to exist after the birth of one or two babies. Sometimes, an old woman is heard saying, about her husband, "It is good, if the old man dies." The satisfaction provided by food and riches etc., is momentary and temporary, also.

In fact, the worldly objects cannot provide lasting delight, satisfaction and contentment to man. If these had provided real delight, satisfaction and contentment, man would have never felt their absence. In the self, delight, satisfaction and contentment naturally exist because the self is real and the real never ceases to be (Gītā 2/16). As the real always exists, there is no deficiency in it and without that no desire is born. So there is no desire in the self. But when the self by an error assumes its affinity with the world, it seeks delight, satisfaction and contentment in the world, and has a desire for the worldly objects. When one desire is satisfied and the second is not born, at that time, he remains free from any desire and that state of freedom provides him with delight. But, man by error thinks that he has received delight, satisfaction and contentment by the satisfaction of desire. Had he got that delight by the satisfaction of desire, that delight should have continued unabated and there would have been no more desire for that object again. In fact, it does not happen so. When one desire is satisfied, another new desire is born and the process continues. When one has desire, it means he feels a deficiency and when he receives the desired object, he becomes a slave to it. Thus a man with a desire ever remains sad.

Here, a point needs attention. A striver rightly thinks that lack of desire is the root of delight, while desire is the root of sorrows. But the people attached to the world think otherwise. They think that they get delight in having received objects or things and they are, sad without them. If they realize the reality like the strivers, they could also get rid of desires.

People, who perform actions with the expectation of fruit, deserve, to follow the Discipline of Action (Śrīmadbhāgavata 11/20/7). Such people derive joy, satisfaction and contentment out of the world. So the Lord, having described such persons who perform actions without the desire, for their fruit declares that such strivers, unlike the worldly people, are delighted, contented and satisfied in the self (Gītā 2/55).

In fact delight, satisfaction and contentment are not different from each other, yet they seem to be different, because of a person's affinity for the world. As soon as this affinity is renounced, an enlightened soul is delighted, satisfied and contented in the self, their difference which seemed to exist, disappears.

The Lord in this verse, has used the terms 'eva' (Only) and 'Ca' (And) twice, while further in the eighteenth verse, He has used these terms, once. That shows, that a Karmayogī (One who follows the Discipline of Action) does not suffer a shortage of delight, satisfaction and contentment and needs no greater bliss than this one (Gītā 6/22).

'Tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate'—The aim of the performance of actions for a man, is to attain salvation or God-realization. When this aim is achieved by anyone following the Disciplines of Actions, Knowledge or Devotion, nothing remains to be done, known and acquired by him and that is the supreme achievement of a human life.

In the self, there is no shortage. But so long as a man because of his affinity for the world, feels shortage in him (self) he performs actions for himself by regarding the body as 'I' and

'Mine'. In that case there remains some work which needs to be done by him. But when he, instead of performing the actions for himself, performs them for others, such as body, senses, mind, intellect, life-breath, parents, wife, sons, family, society, country and the world, his affinity for the world is renounced. When his affinity for the world is completely renounced, nothing remains to be done by him, because there is no activity then in the self. Whatever action is performed, that is performed because of the affinity for the world, by worldly things. Therefore, work is to be done by those, who have affinity for the world.

An action is performed, when there is desire to acquire something, and desire is born of want. The enlightened souls have no want, so they have to do nothing.

When through the Discipline of Action, an enlightened soul is delighted, satisfied and contented in the self, and nothing remains to be done, known and acquired by him, he transcends prescription and prohibition. Though such a God-realized soul, rises above the ordinance of the scriptures, yet his actions are in accordance with the scriptural injunctions, and these are examples for others.

The expression 'Tasya kāryam na vidyate', does not mean that no action is performed by that God-realized soul. But it means that though no work remains to be done by him, actions are performed by him, for the welfare of others. As the activities such as lowering and raising of eyelids, breathing and digestion etc., go on automatically, similarly, all exemplary activities prescribed by the scriptures are automatically performed, by the enlightened soul, (as he has no sense of doership).

Appendix—A Karmayogī performs all actions with a selfless motive to serve the world. As the Ganges is worshipped with Ganges-water; similarly by applying the body, senses, mind, intellect and ego, which he has received from the world, in rendering service to the world, the connection with the body

and the world is snapped off and the Self or Divinity is revealed. Therefore he takes delight and is gratified and is contented in the Self alone.

The worldly injunction and prohibition—both are indeed prohibition (negation) because these two can't last (remain). A Karmayogī having renounced affinity for the world rises above all prescriptions and prohibitions. 'Tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate' (He has no duty to perform).



नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।

न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥ १८ ॥

naiva tasya kṛtenārtho nākṛteneha kaścana
na cāsyā sarvabhūteṣu kaścīdarthavyapāśrayaḥ

For him in this world, there is no gain whatsoever, in the performance of an action or its non-performance, nor does he have any self-interest in other beings. 18

Comment:—

'Naiva tasya kṛtenārthaḥ'—Everyone has a tendency to do some work or the other, for himself. So long as a man has the tendency to acquire worldly things, some work remains to be done by him. He is bound by the desire of acquiring something or the other. Performance of duty is inevitable in order to get rid of that desire.

Actions are performed in two ways—either in order to satisfy desire or to get rid of desire. Common men work in order to satisfy their desires, while a Karmayogī performs actions, in order to get rid of desires. Therefore, an enlightened soul being free from desire, has not the least affinity for the performance of duty. Actions are performed by him, automatically without any selfish motive, for the welfare of the entire creation.

Such a God-realized soul realizes that all the worldly objects,