

liberated from the cycle of birth and death. In the present verse, He concludes the topic, by declaring that, having known thus, he will be liberated. It means, that when a person performs his duty, only for the welfare of the world without expecting any fruit, he is liberated from the bondage of actions.

In the world, innumerable actions are performed, but a man is bound only by those with which he establishes his affinity. By having this affinity, he gets pleased or displeased, and thus he is bound by those actions. But when he renounces his affinity, for the body and actions, he is liberated, from the bondage of actions.



Link:—Having heard the description of sacrifice, a striver has a curiosity to know which one of the sacrifices is superior to the others. The Lord, answers the question, in the next verse.

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ ३३ ॥

śreyān-dravyamayādyajñājjñānayaajñāḥ parantapa
sarvaṁ karmākhilam pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate

Knowledge, as a sacrifice (yajña) is superior to any material sacrifice, O harasser of the foes (Arjuna). All actions and objects in their entirety, culminate in knowledge (jñāna). 33

Comment:—

'Śreyān-dravyamayādyajñājjñānayaajñāḥ parantapa'— Sacrifices, which require material objects and actions, are called 'Dravyamaya'. The suffix 'Maya' with the term 'Dravya', denotes large quantity. As with the preponderance of earth the earthenpot is called मृन्मय so with the preponderance of material the sacrifice is called material sacrifice. Knowledge as a sacrifice, is superior to any material sacrifice, because in knowledge-sacrifice, there is no need for material objects and actions.

The Lord, declares that all sacrifices are born of

action (4/32). But here He declares, that all actions culminate in knowledge i.e., knowledge as a sacrifice, is not born of actions but is born of discrimination. Therefore, knowledge, as a sacrifice, mentioned here, does not stand for knowledge, as sacrifice (described in 4/28). It stands for the process of acquiring knowledge from teachers, who are well-versed in the scriptures, as will be described in the thirty-fourth verse. Material sacrifice, described here, stands for the twelve forms of sacrifice already described. Having performed material sacrifice, the knowledge-sacrifice, is offered. If we consider minutely, we come to know that knowledge-sacrifice is also born of actions, but in knowledge-sacrifice, there is predominance of discrimination.

'Sarvaṁ karmākhilam pāṛtha jñāne parisamāpyate'—The terms 'sarvaṁ' and 'akhilam', both are synonyms. Therefore, the expression 'Sarvaṁ karma' should mean, all actions, while the word 'akhilam' would stand for, all material objects.

So long as, a man performs actions for himself, he has affinity for them, and consequently his mind remains impure. But, when he does not perform them for himself, his mind is purified.

The mind is tainted by three kinds of defects—sins, volatility of mind, and ignorance. When a striver performs actions, for the welfare of others without any selfish motive, his first two defects i.e., sins and volatility of mind, come to an end. In order to get rid of the third defect, having renounced actions, he goes to his preceptor, so that he may impart knowledge, to him. At that time, he does not aim at actions and material objects, but his aim is God-realization. This is known, as culmination of all actions and material objects, in knowledge i.e., God-realization through the attainment of true knowledge.

A Common Method to Attain Knowledge

In the scriptures, there are eight inward spiritual means to attain knowledge. These are —(1) Discrimination. (2) Dispassion.

(3) Six traits (Quietism, self-control, piety, indifference, endurance and composure). (4) Desire to attain salvation. (5) Listening to Vedantic texts. (6) Cognition. (7) Constant and deep meditation. (8) Self-realization.

Discrimination (viveka), consists in distinguishing, the real from the unreal. Renunciation of the unreal or having a disinclination for the world is called dispassion (vairāgya). Deviation of the mind from the sense object is quietism (śama). Control over the senses is 'dama'. Reverence for God and the scriptures is called 'piety' (Śraddhā). Total resignation from the world, is 'Uparati'. Forbearance in the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, is endurance (Titikṣā). Freedom from doubt is composure (Samādhāna). The desire for salvation, is called 'Mumukṣutā'.

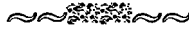
When desire for salvation, is aroused, a striver having renounced material objects and actions, goes to a learned God-realized preceptor. He hears the Vedantic texts, which remove his doubts, which is known as hearing (śravaṇa). Then, he thinks of the reality, about God which is known cognition (Manana). If he holds that the world is real and God does not exist— this is an opposite conception. Removal of this contrary conception, is called constant and profound meditation (Nididhyāsana). When, having renounced affinity for all material objects, one gets established in the self, it is called self-realization (tattvaṁ padārtha saṁśodhana).*

In fact, all these spiritual disciplines are practised, in order to renounce the affinity for the unreal. That which is renounced, is not for one's own self, but the result of renunciation (God-realization), is for one's own self.

Appendix—In 'Dravyamaya yajña' (material sacrifice), there is predominance of material objects and actions; therefore

* Those who hanker after worldly pleasures and prosperity hear the Vedantic texts, think over the sense-objects, have a constant and profound meditation on riches and attain pains and sorrows.

it is 'Karaṇa sāpekṣa' (dependent on sense & other organs). In Jñānayaज्ञा (Knowledge-sacrifice) there is predominance of discrimination. Therefore it is 'Karaṇa nirapekṣa (independent of sense and other organs). Therefore knowledge as sacrifice is superior to material sacrifice. In Jñānayaज्ञा, affinity for all actions and objects is renounced viz., after God-realization nothing remains to be done, to be known and to be attained because no other existence remains except God.



Link:—Arjuna wants to attain Self-realization. Therefore, the Lord, having described different methods as sacrifice for Self-realization, now explains, how to attain Self-realization, through the knowledge as sacrifice.

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ ३४ ॥

tadviddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ jñāninastattvadarśinaḥ

Learn that by your obeisance humble reverence, by questioning and by your service; the wise who have realized the truth, will instruct thee, in (that) knowledge (jñāna). 34

Comment:—

'Tadviddhi'—Arjuna, in the beginning declared, "I don't foresee any good by slaying my own people, in the fight" (Gītā 1/31) and "Only sin will accrue to us, if we kill these malignants" (Gītā 1/36). He also declared, "It is better to live in this world, even by begging, than to slay these honoured teachers" (Gītā 2/5). Thus, according to Arjuna, it is better to renounce fighting, which is his duty, rather than to fight. But, according to Lord Kṛṣṇa, it is not necessary to renounce actions in order to gain knowledge (wisdom) (Gītā 3/20; 4/15). Therefore, it seems that the Lord, warns Arjuna that if he, because of his