

Link:—In the preceding verse, the Lord explained that the three guṇas bind the spirit to a body. Now, in the next verse, he explains the essential character of sattva and the way in which, it binds the spirit.

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।
सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ ॥ ६ ॥

tatra sattvaṁ nirmalatvātprakāśakamanāmayam
sukhasaṅgena badhnāti jñānasaṅgena cānagha

Of these, Sattva, being pure illuminates and is flawless. It binds, (O sinless one) by creating attachment for happiness and knowledge. 6

Comment:—

'Tatra sattvaṁ nirmalatvāt'—In the preceding verse, the Lord described the three guṇas. Out of these three, Sattva is stainless and so it is conducive to, the knowledge of God-realization.

'Prakāśakam'—Sattva being stainless and pure is illuminating, and free from morbidity, of any kind. As in light, all objects are clearly visible, with the predominance of Sattvaguṇa, all the propensities of Rajoguṇa and Tamoguṇa, are clearly seen. Desire, anger, greed, pride and envy etc., which evolve from Rajoguṇa and Tamoguṇa, are clearly seen in that light. With the predominance of Sattva, the senses become animated and the mind, works more promptly in understanding mundane, as well as, the spiritual, topics.

The quality of Sattva (mode of goodness) can be divided into two parts—(i) Pure Sattva (ii) Impure Sattva. The former aims at God-realization, while the latter at mundane pleasures and prosperity.*

With the predominance of the mode of pure Sattva, a striver,

* The impure Sattva is called so because it does not aim at God-realization. This impure Sattva has 'Rājasa' in it.

having the aim of God-realization, has a natural inclination for spiritual progress, while a person possessing the mode of impure Sattva, hankers after worldly pleasures and prosperity, which lead him to bondage. Even in the impure Sattva the intellect scans and grasps worldly objects properly and minutely. Having this mode, scientists make inventions, but having no aim for God-realization, because of their pride of success and desire for praise and money etc., get bound.

'Anāmayam'—In fact, the quality of Sattva is not totally flawless, but it is more flawless than either Rajoguṇa or Tamoguṇa. Only the Lord, or the self, is totally flawless, but Sattvaguṇa has been called flawless, because, it is conducive to God-realization.

'Sukhasaṅgena badhnāti jñānasaṅgena cānagha'—Due to predominance of Sattva, a striver experiences, joy and peace. He is attached, to joy and peace, and he does not want to be deprived of these. This attachment, leads him to bondage.

During this period, his faculty of knowledge develops. He comes to know, several wonderful facts and topics, never known before. So he is attached to this knowledge, and he has a desire to maintain it forever. This attachment is the cause of his bondage. Moreover, his pride of superiority, that he knows more than others, also leads him to bondage. Thus he cannot transcend, the three guṇas. This attachment, is the quality of Rajas, which binds a striver (Gītā 13/21). If the striver, is not attached to joy and knowledge, he transcends, the three guṇas, including the Sattvaguṇa and realizes, the self.

A striver, should not enjoy that pleasure and knowledge, nor should he aim at them. He should think, that they are not conducive to attainment of his goal. Moreover, he has to attain that goal, which is an illuminator of pleasure and knowledge. Knowledge and pleasure, are mental projections during the preponderance of Sattva. These wax and wane, they come and

go, while the self remains uniform, and constant. It knows no increase or decrease. Therefore, a striver should remain quite unconcerned and indifferent, to these modifications. He should not enjoy them. Thus he will not get entangled, in pleasure and knowledge, the evolutes of Sattva. If he is not attached to them, he realizes, God quickly. Even if he does not renounce this attachment, by having an aim of God-realization, in course of time, he develops a disinclination for pleasure and knowledge, and then he attains, God.

Appendix—Here the Lord has declared that Sattvaguṇa is flawless—this is singularity of Sattvaguṇa. The reason is that Sattvaguṇa is very close to the transcendental position (state). Though Sattvaguṇa is flawless, but because of attachment it becomes full of flaws—‘sukhasaṅgena badhnāti jñānasaṅgena cānagha’; because attachment is the nature of Rajoguṇa—‘rajo rāgātmakam viddhi’ (Gītā 14/7). Happiness and knowledge are not obstructive to the transcendental position. But attachment to them is obstructive. Attachment means to assume them one’s own. In fact Sattvaguṇa is not one’s own, but it is of ‘Prakṛti’.

A man has the predominance of Rajoguṇa—‘rajasi pralayaṁ gatvā karmasaṅgiṣu jāyate’ (14/15), ‘madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ’ (14/18). Therefore so long as attachment persists, salvation is not attained; the Real Self being totally detached, complete detachment is essential for salvation.

The Lord has said Sattvaguṇa ‘anāmaya’ (free from blemish or flaw) and also the Supreme State as ‘anāmaya’—‘padam gacchantyanāmayaṁ’ (2/51). By this it should be understood that Sattvaguṇa is relatively flawless while the Supreme State is absolute flawless.

Though all the three modes are born of ‘Prakṛti’, yet Rajoguṇa evolves from longing and attachment and Tamoguṇa is born of ignorance (14/7-8), but Sattvaguṇa is born only of ‘Prakṛti’. It means that ‘Sattvaguṇa’ is born of ‘Prakṛti’ but it does not evolve

from any flaw. Therefore it has said to be 'anāmaya'.

Sāttvika happiness and Sāttvika knowledge are also not the nature of the self but being born of 'Prakṛti', are of others (alien) viz., are dependent. Sāttvika happiness is dependent, it is not one's own nature, it is not bliss of the self.

Difference between Sāttvika knowledge and divine knowledge (self-realization)—In Sāttvika jñāna "I am Jñānī (wise)"—this attachment persists but 'Tattvajñāna' is totally free from attachment viz., on self-realization, wisdom persists, but 'I am wise'—this (sense) does not remain. In Sāttvika knowledge the onlooker remains and he is conscious of his speciality but in 'Tattvajñāna' there is no spectator, the self-realized soul becomes perfect but he is not conscious of his speciality because he loses his individuality. This consciousness of speciality is attachment. When he accepts 'I am wise', then he is conscious of his speciality. On self-realization, the self-realized soul realizes the bliss in the self. In the twenty-seventh verse of the thirteenth chapter, there is the description of 'Sāttvika jñāna' and in the twenty-eighth verse of the same chapter, there is description of self-realization.



Link—In the next verse the Lord describes the characteristic of rajoguṇa and shows how, it binds, the spirit.

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।
तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥ ७ ॥

rajo rāgātmakaṁ viddhi tṛṣṇāsaṅgasamudbhavam
tannibadhnāti kaunteya karmasaṅgena dehinam

Know rajas to be of the nature of passion, the source of longing and attachment. It binds the spirit through attachment to action, O son of Kuntī. 7

Comment:—

'Rajo rāgātmakaṁ viddhi'—This quality of rajas, manifests