

Link:—To confirm something, it is necessary that one should view the pros and cons of a matter. In the previous three verses, there is the description of the infirm-in-mind who are obsessed by desires. Now, Lord Kṛṣṇa inspires Arjuna, to attain the ideal by being established in the Eternal Existence (God), transcending the three guṇas (attributes), and being free from all desires.

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ ४५ ॥

traiguṇyaviṣayā vedā nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna
nirdvandvo nityasattvastho niryogakṣema ātmavān

O Arjuna, the Vedas deal with the three Guṇas (attributes) and their evolutes. Be free from those attributes, rise above the polarity of opposites, remain balanced, be unconcerned about the meeting of wants and preservation, of what has been already attained and get established in the self. 45

Comment:—

'Traiguṇyaviṣayā vedā—Here, the reference, is to the ritualistic portions of the Vedas, which deal with the three guṇas (attributes) and their evolutes, in the form of worldly and heavenly enjoyment. The purpose is not to censure the Vedas, but to glorify the selfless spirit. In reference to a diamond a piece of glass is compared the aim is to eulogize the diamond, rather than to censure glass. The Vedas do not only deal with means to satisfy desires of the worldly minded people, but they also contain sublime and elevating ideas on God and the means to realize Him.

'Nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna'—O Arjuna, be free from the evolutes of these attributes viz., be free from worldly enjoyment, as well as, means of attaining such enjoyment.

'Nirdvandvaḥ'—For a striver to transcend the worldly enjoyment, it is inevitable to be free from the pairs of opposites such as attachment and aversion etc., because these

are his real enemies and are the stumbling block, in his spiritual progress (Gītā 3/34).*

Here, Lord Kṛṣṇa orders Arjuna to rise above the pairs of opposites, because through their deluding nature, human beings are enveloped in utter ignorance (Gītā 7/27). When a striver gets rid of this delusion, he can worship Him with a firm resolve (Gītā 7/28). By transcending these pairs of opposites, he is easily freed from bondage (5/3), one becomes undeluded (15/5) and he is not bound (4/22). So the Lord, wants him to be free from the pairs of opposites.

Another aspect is that if a person develops attachment for one person or a thing, he is sure to develop aversion to other persons or things. By having such attachment to the world, an aspirant turns indifferent to God. This indifference is a sort of aversion to God. But if one develops true devotion to God, without having any attachment or aversion to the world, he develops total disinclination for it.

This total disinclination has three stages. In the first stage, the aspirant has no hatred for unfavourable circumstances but there is 'Upekṣā (neglect), in the second stage, there is 'Udāsīnatā' (unconcernedness), while in the third stage, there is total disinclination. In the last stage, (total disinclination), attachment and aversion, are totally wiped out. If this process is considered minutely, we find that in 'Upekṣā' there remain impressions of attachment and aversion, in 'Udāsīnatā' the feelings of attachment and aversion remain, while in total disinclination there are neither impressions nor feelings of attachment and aversion. In this state, attachment and aversion are totally wiped out.

'Nityasattvasthaḥ'—The advice is to rise above the pairs of opposites and to get established in the omnipresent and everlasting God.

* 'Dvandva' means having opposite feelings for something as the feelings of attachment and aversion, pleasure and pain etc., for the world. This misleads an aspirant to bondage.

'Niryogakṣema*'—Do not have the desire even for the provision of the means required (Yoga) and the preservation of what has already been attained, because I provide for and preserve all for those who have exclusive devotion for me† (Gītā 9/22).

'Ātmavān'—Having the aim of God-realization, get established in the self (Eternal existence or God).

Appendix—'Nirdvandvaḥ'—In fact the discrimination between the insentient-sentient, real-unreal, eternal-transitory, perishable-imperishable etc., is also a pair of opposites. The desire for gain and security is also a duality. Because of duality 'All is God'—this reality is not realized. The reason is when all is God, then how can duality between the sentient (self) and the insentient (Matter) subsist? Therefore the Lord has declared Himself both immortality as well as death, and 'Sat' as well as 'Asat' (unreal)—'amṛtaṁ caiva mṛtyuśca sadasaccāhamarjuna' (Gītā 9/19).



Link:—In the next verse, Lord Kṛṣṇa explains what one achieves by transcending the three guṇas (attributes).

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वतः सम्प्लुतोदके ।

तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥ ४६ ॥

yāvānārtha udapāne sarvataḥ samplutodake
tāvānsarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ

As on obtaining a reservoir of water flooded on all sides there is no use for a small reservoir of water. So A Brāhmaṇa, who obtains enlightenment, has the same use for all the Vedas, or say no use at all. 46

* 'Yoga' means providing unacquired things and 'Kṣema' means preservation of the things procured.

† Though here it is the context of the Discipline of Disinterested Action, yet it seems proper to take it as the Discipline of Devotion because Lord Kṛṣṇa, time and again, orders Arjuna to be His devotee and He also accepts him as His devotee in 4/3. He also takes the responsibility of provision and protection (9/22).