

Link:—In the next verse, the Lord explains the purpose of the description of the tree of creation, mentioned in the preceding two verses.

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते
 नान्तो न चादिर्न च सम्प्रतिष्ठा ।
 अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूल-
 मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा ॥ ३ ॥

na rūpamasyeha tathopalabhyate
 nānto na cādirna ca sampratiṣṭhā
 aśvatthamenam suvirūḍhamūla-
 masaṅgaśastreṇa dṛḍhena chittvā

Its (of the world) real form is not perceived, neither its end or its origin, nor its foundation (resting place); so having cut off this firm and deep-rooted Pipala tree, with a strong sword of non-attachment. 3

Comment:—

'Na rūpamasyeha tathopalabhyate'—In the first verse of this chapter, the tree of creation, has been called imperishable, and in the scriptures also, it is mentioned, that persons who perform virtuous actions, in order to reap their fruit, enjoy mundane and heavenly pleasure, in abundance. Having heard such statements, a person, feels that the human world and paradise, are pleasant and permanent. So he desires sense-objects, and is filled with insatiable desires, he holds that there is nothing else, beyond sensual enjoyments (Gītā 2/42; 16/11). An ignorant person, has this feelings so long as, he has ego, attachment and desire with the world or body. But the Lord declares, that when a striver, perceives it, by separating the self from the world i.e., by renouncing his affinity for it, he does not perceive it as imperishable and pleasant, but he perceives it as perishable and unpleasant.

'Nānto na cādirna ca sampratiṣṭhā'—The world, has neither its end or origin nor, in space and time. As a person, while visiting an exhibition, being enamoured of its objects, does not know its beginning and end, without going out of it, so does a person not know the origin and end of the world, by having attachment to it.

All the means (senses, mind and intellect), to perceive the origin and end of the world, are fragments of the world. So they cannot know the world, in the same way as a jar of clay, cannot absorb the earth, within it. Therefore, when a man (the self), separates himself from the world (mind, intellect and sense), he knows the world, in reality.

In fact, the world has no independent existence. It is only a process of birth and death. This process, appears as its existence. If a further thought, is given to it, it will be experienced, that there is no birth, there is only decay. When it does not stay, in one form even for a moment, how can it be called existent? It seems to exist, because of a striver's attachment, to the world. As soon as, this attachment is renounced, the seeming existence, disappears and a striver realizes the self or God.

An Important Fact

No scientist has perceived the beginning, the middle and the end of universe, till today, nor can he perceive it. If a person, having attachment to the world and enjoying mundane pleasure, wants to perceive the beginning, middle and end, of it all, his efforts, are in vain.

In fact, there is no need to perceive the beginning, the middle and the end of this universe, there is need to renounce, the assumed affinity, for it.

Philosophers differ in their opinions, whether the universe is without beginning and perishable, or beginningless and infinite or illusory, but all of them agree, that our affinity for it is unreal

(assumed), which must be, renounced.

An easy way to renounce this assumed affinity, for the world is that materials (mind, intellect, senses, body, riches and property etc.,) acquired from the world, should be used in rendering service, to the world.

All mundane materials, such as women, sons, honour, praise, wealth, property, long life, good health and abundant pleasure cannot satisfy a person, because he (the self), is imperishable, while all the mundane pleasures are perishable. How can the imperishable be satisfied, by the perishable?

'Aśvatthamenam suvirūḍhamūlam'—It is because of ego, attachment and desire with it that the universe (having no foundation), seems firm rooted.

Attachment and senses of mineness to beings, objects and actions etc., strengthens worldly bondage. Because of his attachment one identifies himself, with them. After amassing riches he thinks "I am very rich" but when his wealth is lost he holds that he has been ruined. Out of greed, he performs forbidden actions and commits sins, in order to, hoard money. Then he has a conviction that he cannot earn money without foul means, as falsehood, fraud and dishonesty etc. He ceases to think, that the money earned by foul means, will have to be left behind it while evils, such as falsehood, fraud and dishonesty etc., will accompany him, to the next world* and will lead him to a miserable life, here as well as, hereafter. Not only this, but he also instigates other people, to earn money by foul means, calling it a business by justifying falsehood and fraud etc., for it. This evil feeling (faith), is a firm root of the branches of, ego, attachment and desire. This evil feeling (faith), makes him evil,

* When a person gives up his body, the wealth remains lying in shelves, animals remain tied here and there, his wife accompanies him to the gate, sons go upto the cremation ground, the body to the pyre while it is only one's righteousness (Dharma) which accompanies him to the next world.

because the Lord declares, "What a man's faith is, that verily, He is" (Gītā 17/3).

The branches of ego, attachment and desire, are so firmly rooted, that they cannot be, totally rooted out, through study of the scriptures, or by listening to divine discourses and thinking. Strivers, while listening to religious discourses, think of renouncing these evils, but in practical life they find themselves, unable to renounce these. The reason is, that they want to renounce these as well as enjoy mundane pleasures, from persons and objects etc., like a greedy person, who wants to relish a sweet dish mixed with poison and yet escape from poison. But it is impossible. When a striver, has no desire at all to derive any kind of pleasure from the world, this firm rooted tree of the universe is naturally rooted out.

Further, a striver believes that it is very difficult to get rid of these evils, of identification, attachment and desire. But the fact, is that these defects automatically, vanish, they cannot stay, as these are by nature transient. So a striver should never think that it is difficult to renounce, them.

'Asaṅgaśāstreṇa dr̥ḍhena chittvā'—The Lord declares, that though the tree of creation is firm rooted, it can be cut off with a strong sword (axe) of non-attachment. A man may be attached to a place, person, object or circumstance etc., because of their attraction, and because of the desire to derive pleasure out of these. Absence of attachment, is non-attachment or dispassion. This dispassion, can be of two kinds (i) Common (ii) Strong. Strong dispassion is also called 'Uparati' (indifference) or 'Para vairāgya'.

<p>An Important Fact Pertaining to Dispassion</p>
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A man, may abandon his house and property physically, but if he attaches importance to them, from his heart or if he feels proud that he is a renouncer, it means that he is not dispassionate.

When he has not the least attachment to them, and he has no attraction towards them—this is dispassion.

Secondly, he should be detached from his so-called parents, wife, sons, brothers and friends etc. He should accept his affinity, for them in order to render service to them, rather than to have a desire to acquire anything from them for his selfish motive.

Thirdly, there is detachment from the body. This is real detachment. If there is attachment for the body, it means that there is attachment for the entire universe, because the body is the seed, of the entire universe. Absence of identification with the body, is detachment (dispassion), from the body.

In order to renounce this identification with the body (egoism), first a striver, should renounce the desire for honour, praise and riches etc. Even when a striver, renounces the desire for honour, praise and fame etc., here, because of his subtle desire, he wants his name and fame to be maintained, through memorials etc., after his death. All these desires must be renounced. Sometimes a striver, is envious or jealous of others. That envy or jealousy should also be renounced.

Even when, these desires are renounced, a man may remain attached to his body, even after he has given up the body. So the bones of the dead body are immersed into the Ganges, after the body is burnt, so that one may meet with a good fate. When a man through discrimination, realizes, that the sentient soul is different, from the insentient body, his attachment or sense of 'mine', is renounced. When both desire and attachment are renounced, ego almost vanishes i.e., it remains, only in its, subtle form. It totally perishes, when a devotee attains God-realization or real exclusive devotion, to God.

When a man realizes, 'I am neither body nor the body is mine,' desire, attachment and identification—the three perish. This is real detachment or dispassion.

All desires (lusts) perish, from the inner sense of the striver,

who is dispassionate, from within. A devotee possessing strong dispassion, having no affinity for the insentient objects, such as the body, senses, mind and intellect etc., wishes everyone to be happy, free from disease and suffering and to attain benediction.

'I' is the knower and the onlooker, while the entire universe, including the gross, subtle and causal bodies, to be known and seen. 'I', is imperishable, while the universe and the body, are perishable. He who realizes this distinction, cuts off this tree of creation, with a strong axe of non-attachment. When a man, does not attach importance to this discrimination, the tree of creation, seems to be firm-rooted.

Worldly objects cannot be totally destroyed, but attachment to these can be totally, renounced. This detachment, is known as cutting of this tree.

The universe ceases, to be, when attachment to it, is renounced. Only a thing or person, we have no real affinity for, can be renounced (cut off). A man (the self), is sentient and imperishable, while the universe is insentient, and perishable. So his affinity for the universe is unreal, it is assumed, by an error. He, who is really detached, gets detached. We should accept the fact, that we have no attachment for the universe. Howsoever, firm-rooted the world may be, if we do not accept our affinity for it, it is naturally cut off, because this affinity, is merely assumed. So a striver, should doubtlessly believe, that he has no affinity at all for the world, even though he may not perceive it, in practical life.

A man, himself has accepted this affinity for the body, and the world. So, it is his responsibility, to cut it off. Therefore, the Lord is exhorting us, to cut it off.

<p>Some Easy Means of Renouncing this Affinity for the World</p>

- (1) Render service to the world, with the material acquired

from the world, without any selfish motive.

- (2) Renounce desire, for mundane pleasure and prosperity.
- (3) Renounce dependence, on the world totally.
- (4) Renounce a sense of 'I' and 'mine, with the body and the world.
- (5) Stick firmly to reality, "I am God's; God is mine."
- (6) Have a resolve, "I have to realize God."
- (7) Perform your duty, sanctioned by the scriptures scrupulously (Gītā 18/45).
- (8) Attach importance, to your own experience, that your body, circumstances, strength, ability etc., are not the same, as they were, in your childhood, they have all changed, while you are the same.
- (9) Do not accept your assumed affinity, for the world.

Appendix—The Lord has declared about Himself—"I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of the entire creation" (Gītā 10/20, 32) and here about the world He declares, "It has neither its end nor origin nor existence." It means that God exists in the beginning, in the middle and in the end of the creation while the world has no existence either at the beginning or in the middle or in the end viz., the world does not exist—'nāsato vidyate bhāvaḥ' (Gītā 2/16). Therefore there is nothing else besides God.

'Asaṅgaśastreṇa dṛḍhena chittvā'—Here the term 'chittvā' does not mean 'to cut' or 'to destroy' but it means 'to be detached'. The reason is that this world being God's 'aparā prakṛti' is imperishable. The Self is detached—'asaṅgo'hyayaṁ puruṣaḥ' (Bṛhadā. 4/3/15). The Self is free from attachment to the modes. Attachment to the modes is the root of birth and death—'kāraṇaṁ guṇe saṅgo'sya sadasadyonijanmasu' (Gītā 13/21). Therefore having realized the detached, untainted, undecaying and immortal nature of the Self, getting established in it, is 'to cut off the world-tree'.

The world seems to exist owing to attachment. The thing, to which a man is attached, seems to be existing and valuable. Without attachment, the world may appear to exist but it is not of any value. Therefore the expression 'asaṅgaśastreṇa dr̥ḍhena chittvā' means—to wipe out attachment to the world totally viz., not to be attached to anyone else besides God and not to assume anything of the entire creation as one's own and for one's own self. In fact the existence of the world does not lead to bondage but attachment to the world leads to bondage. Existence is not an obstacle but attachment is the obstacle. Therefore other philosophers call the world real or unreal etc., but the Lord says that attachment to the world should be renounced. Having given up attachment to the world, the world in its seeming form disappears and it is revealed as the manifestation of God—'Vāsudevaḥ sarvaṃ'.



Link:—In the next verse, the Lord explains what a striver should do, after cutting off the tree of creation.

ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं
 यस्मिन्नाता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।
 तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये
 यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥ ४ ॥

tataḥ padam tatparimārgitavyam
 yasmingatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ
 tameva cādyam puruṣam prapadye
 yataḥ pravṛttiḥ prasṛtā purāṇī

Then that supreme goal (God), should be sought after having reached which none returns again, saying, "I seek refuge, in that Primal Person, from whom has originated this ancient creation of the world." 4

Comment:—

'Tataḥ padam tatparimārgitavyam—In the preceding verse,