

duty, he is full of Self-respect that he can't perform any action which is an obstacle to his spiritual progress. Being proud a man can perform an action contrary to his spiritual practice; but if the striver has Self-respect, he will feel shy in performing any action which is contrary to his spiritual discipline. 'Svābhimāna' will lead him to the 'Sāttvika' faith while 'Abhimāna' (pride) will lead him to the 'Rājasika' and 'Tāmasika' faiths.



Link:—The Lord, in the next verse, explains the means of ascertaining the conviction (state of being), of a person by his worship.

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।

प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः ॥ ४ ॥

yajante sāttvikā devānyakṣarakṣāṁsi rājasāḥ
pretānbhūtagaṇāṁścānye yajante tāmasā janāḥ

Good (sāttvika) men worship the gods; the passionate (rājasika) worship the gnomes (yakṣa) and the demons; the ignorant (tāmasika) offer sacrifices to the spirits and ghosts. 4

Comment:—

'Yajante sāttvikā devān'—The sāttvika (good) people, possessing divine nature, worship the gods. Here, the term 'Devān' denotes the five chief deities—Viṣṇu (the preserver), (Rāma or Kṛṣṇa etc.), Śiva (the destroyer), Gaṇeśa, Durgā (Power) and the Sun, because the term 'Deva', stands for God (Divinity) and His nature viz., divine nature, which is conducive to liberation (16/5). Thus, strivers possessing the sāttvika (good) faith worship, anyone of five chief deities, according to their natural faith. The worship of twelve Ādityas, eight Vasus, eleven Rūdras, and two Aśvinī Kumāras, without any selfish motive, is also regarded as sāttvika worship.

'Yakṣarakṣāṁsi rājasāḥ'—The passionate, worship the gnomes

and the demons. They are included among the gods. The gnomes, hanker after the accumulation of wealth, and then guard it, while the demons are bent upon the destruction, of others. The passionate, worship them, to satisfy their own desires and to destroy others.

'Pretānbhūtagaṇāṁścānye yajante tāmasā janāḥ'—The ignorant people, worship spirits and ghosts. Those, who are dead are called 'Preta', while those who are in the forms of the life of ghosts, are 'Bhūta'.

Here, the manes should not be included in the term 'Preta' (spirit), because those, who worship the manes as a part of their duty without any desire for the fruit of their actions (worship), are sāttvika (good). The Lord in the Gītā, has not prohibited the worship of manes (Gītā 9/25). Those who worship the manes, having a desire for fruits, such as their own safety and reward etc., go, to the manes. Such worshippers, regard their manes as their favourite deities, who hold the highest positions. So, they go to the abode of the manes, they cannot go to higher regions, which are beyond the abode of the manes. But, those who worship the manes as a part of their duty, without having any desire for fruits, are sāttvika (good or pure), they are not rājasa (passionate).

Those, who feed dogs and crows selflessly, obeying the ordinance of scriptures, do not attain these. Similar, is the case with those, who worship the manes, without any desire for fruits. Their worship, leads them to salvation. Similarly obsequies, such as Nārāyaṇabali and Gayā-Śrāddha (offering of water, food etc., to the Brāhmaṇas in honour of the manes), which are sanctioned by scriptures, are indispensable. These must be performed, so that the soul of the dead persons, may attain higher states, such as salvation etc. Such actions, are sāttvika.

Those, who while performing (yajña) sacrifice, worship Lord Gaṇeśa and Navagraha (nine planets) etc., according to

ordinance of scriptures, without any desire for fruit, actually worship the scripture, in the same way, as a chaste wife of even a demon, attains salvation, not because, she has served her demon-husband but because, she has obeyed the Lord, the saints and the scriptures. In the twenty-fifth verse of the ninth chapter, the worship of gods, has been mentioned to outline the fate of worshippers, while in this verse the worship of gods, has been mentioned to judge, the faith of a worshipper. So the term 'Yajante', has been used here. Thus the Lord, explained that a man worships, a deity according to his conviction, or faith.

Appendix—The 'Sāttvika' persons who worship the gods, go to the gods after death, the Rājasa persons who worship demigods (gnomes) and demons, go to them and the 'Tāmasa' persons who worship ghosts and evil spirits, join the ghosts and evil spirits (Gītā 9/25).

In the Gītā, the term 'Yajña' has a wide range, within which religious sacrifice, charity, austerity, vow and performance of duty etc.,—all are included (Gītā 4/24-25). Therefore here also within the term 'Yajante'—performance of all duties and actions should be included, out of which, Yajña (religious sacrifice) is important. 'Pretānbhūtagaṇāṁścānye'—Our manes are ghosts for others and the manes of others are ghosts for us. Worship to manes is not 'Tāmasika', but worship to ghosts is 'Tāmasika'.



Link:—The Lord in the preceding verses, described those people, who casting aside ordinances of the scriptures, offer worship with faith. They neglect the ordinances because they do not know them. Now He, in the next two verses, describes those who intentionally neglect the ordinances of scriptures, and are also lacking, in faith.

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः ।

दम्भाहङ्कारसंयुक्ताः कामरागबलान्विताः ॥ ५ ॥