

Appendix—One is 'Kriyā', one is 'Karma' and one is 'Karmayoga'. The body passes from babyhood to youth and from youth to old age—this is 'kriyā'. By this 'Kriyā' a man neither incurs sin nor virtue, it neither leads him to salvation nor to bondage. Similarly the flow of the river Ganges is mere a 'kriyā'. If a man gets drowned in its current or it may prove helpful in farming etc., the Ganges does not incur any sin or virtue. When a man by assuming affinity with 'kriyā' becomes a doer viz., he does 'kriyā' for himself, then this 'kriyā' bears fruit and it becomes 'Karma' (action). Karma leads to bondage—'yajñārthātkarmaṇo'nyatra loko'yaṁ karmabandhanaḥ' (Gītā 3/9). In order to be free from the bondage of actions, when a man does nothing for himself but works for the welfare of others in a disinterested way, it is 'Karmayoga'. By Karmayoga bondage for actions is destroyed—'yajñāyācarataḥ karma samagraṁ praviliyate'. With the annihilation of bondage 'yoga' is attained viz., eternal union with God is realized.

This twenty-third verse is the main verse of Karmayoga. As the Lord by the expression 'jñānāgniḥ sarvakarmāṇi bhasmasāt kurute' (Gītā 4/37) has declared that the fire of knowledge reduces all actions to ashes and by the expression 'ahaṁ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ' (18/66) He has declared He will liberate a devotee from all sins, similarly in this verse He has declared by the expression 'yajñāyācarataḥ karma samagraṁ praviliyate' that all the actions including past ones of a karmayogī melt away.



Link:—In the preceding verse, the Lord declared, "All actions of a man, who works for the sake of sacrifice, are dissolved." The term 'sacrifice', in this context, stands for duty, according to a person's caste and order of life etc. Therefore, the Lord, in the next seven verses, explains several forms of sacrifice as duties, for the strivers, according to their inclination, faith and qualification.

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥ २४ ॥

brahmārpaṇam brahma havirbrahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam
brahmaiva tena gantavyam brahmakarmasamādhinā

For him, the ladle with which yajña offering is made is Brahmana, the fire and the act of offering oblation, is also God. By God, as offeror of sacrifice, is the oblation poured into the fire of God. God shall be attained by him who is absorbed in God, in the act of such sacrifice (yajña). 24

Comment:—

[Oblation, is important in sacrifice. The oblation becomes one with fire, when it is poured into fire, it has no separate existence of its own. Similarly, when all the means of God-realization, have no existence apart from God, these become sacrifice.

To perceive, God in all sacrifices, is to see reality, as it is not a conception. Actually objects are not real, and to visualize these as real, is an error.

All, the sacrifices described, from the twenty-fourth verse to the thirtieth verse, are included in 'Karmayoga', because the Lord at the beginning of this context, declared, "I shall teach thee, what action is (the nature of action and inaction), knowing which, thou shalt be delivered from evil" (4/16). At the end, He declared, "Know all sacrifices as born of action, and thus knowing, thou shalt be liberated" (4/32). In the middle, also He declared, "To one who works for the sake of sacrifice, the whole action is dissolved" (4/23). The important factor, is that all actions of a person, who performs them for the sake of sacrifice, are changed into inaction. Therefore, in all these sacrifices, there is a description of, inaction in action.]

‘Brahmārpaṇam brahma haviḥ’—The ladle, with which an oblation is poured into the fire, has been called 'arpaṇam'—that is God.

Sesame seed, barley and ghee, which are poured as oblation into fire, are also God.

'Brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam'—He, who performs the sacrifice, is God (Gītā 13/2), the fire into which the oblation is poured, is God and the act of pouring oblation, is also God.

'Brahmakarmasamādhinā'—Just as person while offering sacrifice, looks at the ladle, the sacrificial oblation, and fire etc., as Brahma, similarly in every action, he who regards the doer, the action, the instrument and matter as Brahma, for him all actions are Brahma and thus he is merged in Brahma.

'Brahmaiva tena gantavyam'—When he views everything, as no other than God, he attains Him.

Cultured people, recite this verse while having meals, so that this activity may be changed into a sacrifice (yajña). When a striver has his meal, he beholds God, in the following way:—

(i) The hand, with which the food is put into the mouth, is God. "With hands and feet everywhere, He exists" (Gītā 13/3).

(ii) The food is God. "I am the melted butter" (Gītā 9/16).

(iii) He who eats the food, is also God. "The soul is a fragment of Mine" (Gītā 15/7).

(iv) The fire, that abides in the stomach, and by which food is digested, is also God. "I am the fire, lodged in the body of all creatures" (Gītā 15/14).

(v) The action of offering food, to the fire, which abides in the stomach, is also God. "I am the offering" (Gītā 9/16).

(vi) The fruit of eating, the remnants, (residual food) of the sacrifice, is also God. "Those who eat the sacred food that remains, after a sacrifice, attain to the eternal Absolute" (4/31).

A Vital Fact

The world, which is an evolute of nature (prakṛti), is in fact, seen in the form of objects and actions. The world, in the

form of objects and actions is ever-changing and ever undergoes modifications. But, due to attachment, we do not perceive the changing nature, of objects; we perceive these chiefly, as objects. All objects and activities are going to naught. Therefore, the world is practically, a naught. There is existence, only of the transcendental Absolute. In fact the world does not exist, but it seems to exist, in the light of the eternal Absolute. The non-existence of the world is explained below—

The world appears in three states—birth, life and death. But, actually there is no life. What seems life, is nothing but the process from birth to death.

A man (or an object), starts to die the day, he is born, though it is said that he is born, he lives and he dies. If a man, has to live alive say for fifty years and he is twenty years old, it means that he has to be alive only for thirty years i.e., he has died forty percent, and his life remains, only sixty percent. In fact, he is dying every moment the seen is changing into the unseen. But the world seems to exist, in the light of the Absolute Who is eternal. Lord Kṛṣṇa declares, "All is God" (Gītā 7/19) (Chāndogya. 3/14/1).



दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।

ब्रह्माग्रावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥ २५ ॥

daivamevāpare yajñam yoginaḥ paryupāsate
brahmāgnāvapare yajñam yajñenaivopajuhvati

Some Yogīs offer sacrifice to God alone; while others offer the self as sacrifice by the sacrifice of discrimination in the fire of the Supreme. 25

Comment:—

'Daivamevāpare yajñam yoginaḥ paryupāsate'—In the preceding verse, the Lord described, a striver who beholds God,