

in Him but he has taken refuge in 'aparā prakṛti' viz., egoism. On the one hand the Lord inspires him to perform his duty to fight; and on the other hand his Kṣatriya nature compels him to fight. If he does not obey the Lord, his Kṣātra nature will force him to fight. If his nature compels him to fight, he himself will have to shoulder the responsibility; and if by listening to the Lord, he performs his duty, the responsibility will be shouldered by Him. If he himself shoulders the responsibility, it will lead him to bondage; but if the Lord shoulders the responsibility, it will lead him to salvation.



Link:—In the previous verse, the Lord described that nature would compel Arjuna, to perform action. In the next verse, He explains the same point.

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा ।

कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥ ६० ॥

**svabhāvajena kaunteya nibaddhaḥ svena karmaṇā
kartuṁ necchasi yanmohātkariṣyasyavaśo'pi tat**

O Arjuna, that action which through delusion you do not want to do, bound by your own acts born of your nature, you will helplessly perform. 60

Comment:—

'Svabhāvajena kaunteya nibaddhaḥ svena karmaṇā'—Svabhāva (nature), consists of a total sum of actions and inclinations of the previous birth, the influence of parents of this birth, the environment and the education, he receives. The same nature has been called Svadharma (own duty)—"Considering your own duty, you should not waver" (Gītā 2/31).

'Kartuṁ necchasi yanmohātkariṣyasyavaśo'pi tat'—Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, that endowed with martial qualities, such as prowess and valour etc., of the warrior class, being bound by

your Kṣatriya nature, you will have to do irresistibly, what you do not want to perform, out of delusion. The scriptures have also sanctioned the duties, according to one's own nature. Lord Kṛṣṇa declared, "One's own duty, though devoid of merit, is preferable to the duty of another, well performed" (Gītā 3/35; 18/47). So, he is bound to perform the act of fighting, born of his nature. It is out of delusion, that he is thinking not to fight.

The nature of liberated souls, is perfectly pure. So, they are not driven to action, by their nature. But still, they perform actions, according to their nature. Common people are driven to action, under the sway of their nature (3/33). So Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, that he will also have to perform action of fighting, according to the nature of a member of the warrior class, and that will not bear good fruit. As if he fights, by obeying either the scriptures or the saints or Him, it will lead him to salvation, because this action, will be free from attachment and aversion. When a man performs actions, in accordance with ordinances of scriptures, or His order, his attachment and aversion for actions, automatically melt away, as he has an eye on the ordinance or the order. Thus, he is not swayed, by attachment and aversion.

An Important Fact

In the Gītā, it has been mentioned several times, that men act, as swayed by their own nature (3/5; 8/19; 9/8). And it has been specially mentioned in 3/33 and here in 18/59.* This proves, the predominance of one's own nature. A being's nature, accompanies him to his birth, in good and evil wombs. If he is pure of nature, having no attachment to persons and things etc., he will not be reborn. It is attachment, to the modes of nature, which is the cause of birth of the soul (self), in good or evil wombs (Gītā 13/21).

* In Jñānayoga (the Discipline of Knowledge) the man of wisdom renounces his affinity with Prakṛti (Nature) and so he is not compelled to perform actions by Prakṛti (Nature).

Now, a question arises, when a man is compelled to perform actions according to his nature, how will prescription and prohibition of scriptures be applied? How will the preaching of preceptors, be translated into practice? How will strivers inculcate virtues, by discarding evils and vices?

The answer to the above questions is that, as a man cannot stop the flow of the Ganges, but can redirect it, similarly he cannot renounce the duty of his caste (Varṇa), but can purify his nature, by being free from attachment and aversion, by having the aim of God-realization. It means, that a man is powerful and free, in purifying his nature.

In the Gītā the Lord, has described two disciplines—of action and of devotion, to improve one's nature.

(1) Discipline of Action:—In the thirty-fourth verse of the third chapter, the Lord declared, "Attachment and aversion are a man's foes. So a man, should never come under their sway." It means, that instead of performing actions out of attachment and aversion, he should perform these according to the ordinance of scriptures. If a disciple, carries out the behest of his preceptor, with zeal and pleasure, his attachment and aversion get obliterated. Similar, is the case with a son in relation to his parents, a wife to her husband and a servant in relation to his master. By doing so happily, a man becomes free from attachment and aversion. But, if he performs action according to his own sweet will, attachment and aversion are firmly established. When he performs only prescribed actions happily though his mind misguides him to do otherwise, his attachment is rooted out. When one is prompted not to do some action but if he does it according to the ordinance of the scripture his aversion vanishes.

(2) Discipline of Devotion:—When a man takes refuge in God, and becomes merely an instrument in His hand, he performs actions, as sanctioned by Him and so attachment and aversion of his nature, are rooted out.

It means, that in the Discipline of Action, when a striver does

not come under the sway of attachment and aversion, his nature is purified (Gītā 3/34). In the Discipline of Devotion, when a striver takes refuge in Him, his nature is purified (Gītā 18/62). When nature is purified, there remains no ground for bondage.

A man performs actions, either after being swayed by attachment and aversion, or by following scriptural injunctions. Attachment and aversion, are strengthened if he performs these under the sway of attachment and aversion. Thus, his nature becomes impure. But, if he acts according to the set principles, his nature, is purified. Strivers, who act according to ordinance of scriptures, advice of great men and liberated souls, having only an aim of God-realization, set examples and standards, for others. So do, great men and emancipated souls (Gītā 3/21).

Appendix—Nature is of two kinds—(1) Nature of performing prescribed actions (2) Nature of performing forbidden actions. Out of these, the nature of performing prescribed actions, being natural, is ‘sva’—one’s own nature; while the nature of the performance of forbidden actions, being ‘āgantuka’ (visiting nature) is ‘para’ (not one’s own). The nature of the performance of prescribed actions, being natural, is not ‘janya’ (born); but the nature of the performance of forbidden actions being alien is ‘janya’ (born of attachment, born of bad company). A man’s main duty is to improve and purify his nature viz., he should give up the nature of performing forbidden actions and he should conduct himself well according to the nature which he has formed by performing the prescribed actions. The Lord has ordered Arjuna to perform his prescribed duty according to his ‘varṇa’ (order of life) (caste) sanctioned by the scripture.

The Lord says to Arjuna that either as a matter of duty, or as obedience to His order, he will have to fight. Without taking refuge in Him, his egoism will persist by which even the prescribed actions will lead him to bondage. But if he takes refuge in Him, he will get rid of egoism. It is egoism which leads to bondage. When even a wise man, who is not swayed by nature and whose

nature is perfectly pure, acts in accordance with his nature, then how can a man, who is swayed by his nature and whose nature is impure, act contrary to (against) his nature?



Link:—Soul (the self) is a fragment of God, and is sentient, while nature is self-made and insentient. So how does soul, come under the sway of nature? The Lord answers the question, in the next verse.

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥ ६१ ॥

īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānām hṛddeśe'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmayansarvabhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā

The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, causing them by His illusive power, to revolve, in accordance with their nature, as if they are mounted on a wheel of the body. 61

Comment:—

'īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānām hṛddeśe' rjuna tiṣṭhati bhrāmayansarvabhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā'—The Lord, Who is an impartial controller, sustainer and conductor, of all beings, causes those beings to revolve like wooden dolls, mounted on a wheel, who have assumed their body, as 'I' or 'mine'.

Just as, a man boarding a train goes only to stations, where it arrives and when he gets off it, he has not to go to those other stations where the train further goes; similarly, so long as a man assumes his affinity of 'I'ness and 'mineness', with this body, the Lord conducts him, according to his nature* and he revolves, following the cycle of birth and death.

This affinity of 'I'ness and mineness, gives birth to attachment and aversion, which make the nature impure. This impurity of

* Nature dwells in the causal body. The same nature is revealed in subtle body and physical body.