

Link:—In the previous verse, Lord Kṛṣṇa declared the man of wisdom to be the best of all the four. The other three, are also not undervalued by Him. So He says in the next verse.

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।

आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥ १८ ॥

**udārāḥ sarva evaite jñānī tvātmaiva me matam
āsthitaḥ sa hi yuktātmā māmevānuttamāṁ gatim**

All these are noble, but the man of wisdom (jñānī) is verily My own self; this is my view. For, such a devotee steadfast in Me and established in Me alone who am supreme goal. 18

Comment:—

'Udārāḥ sarva evaite'—All these are noble. The term 'Udārāḥ' (noble), has several interpretations—

(1) In the eleventh verse of the fourth chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa declares, "Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I seek them." A devotee, likes God and so does God like a devotee. But, a devotee is noble, because he accepts his affinity and surrenders himself first to God. He does not bother, whether God calls him His own or not.

(2) Devotees of the gods (deva) perform oblation, charity, penance etc., following the rules for fruits. The gods, grant them boons, as desired by devotees, without thinking of the welfare of devotees. But, God grants only boons, which are for their welfare and which enhance their devotion. He does not grant boons, by which their devotion is not enhanced and they may be entangled in the world, because He is the supreme father and the greatest well-wisher. So, the devotees of God, worship Him, not caring whether their desires are satisfied, or not. Thus, they are noble.

(3) Worldly pleasure and prosperity, obviously seem pleasant, while adoration does not seem to bear immediate

fruit, yet devotees adore the Lord without caring for pleasure and prosperity. So they are noble.

(4) One, who wants anything from God is called noble. It is so, because God Himself is very much noble and He regards one who wants anything from Him, as noble.

(5) Devotees with an exclusive devotion, want their mundane as well as spiritual desires, to be satisfied only by God. Because, of their exclusive devotion, they are noble.

'Jñānī tvātmaiva me matam'—The other three devotees, are noble, but a man of wisdom, is the Lord's own manifestation, and so is naturally, loving to Him. The self, is naturally loving to everyone. It knows no motive or cause. So, the term 'Tu' (but), denotes singularity, of the man of wisdom.

In divine love, the lover surrenders himself to his Beloved and identifies himself with Him. Similarly, the Beloved also surrenders Himself to His lover. So they identify themselves, with each other. This union in the Discipline of Knowledge, remains calm and constant. But, in the Discipline of Devotion (love), it increases every moment, and in it the lover and the Beloved even having separate entities, are one and in spite of, being identified with each other, are two. This love cannot be expressed, in words. In this divine love affair, even in seeming separation, there is constant union, while in natural union there is also union.

When a river flows into the sea, both of them, become one. But, sometimes a river flows towards the sea and sometimes the sea flows, towards the river. Similar is the case in divine love, of the lover and Beloved. This drama of divine love, between a lover and the Beloved, continues for infinite years, in infinite forms. There develops such an intense love, between the two, that it becomes difficult to know, who is the lover and who the Beloved. Both of them

are Beloved, and both of them are lovers.

'Āsthitaḥ sa hi yuktātmā māmevānuttamān gatiṁ'—A man of wisdom by being steadfast in mind, remains established in God, who is supreme and above whom, there is none. Such a devotee remaining unaffected by favourable or unfavourable circumstances, is always absorbed in Him. He has a firm belief, that only God is his, and that affinity is enhanced in both desirable and undesirable circumstances. Thus, he remains firmly established in Him.

Appendix—The worldly seeker of wealth instead of yearning for God, wants only wealth, therefore he is a devotee of falsehood, fraud and dishonesty etc. From his heart he attaches much importance to wealth, therefore he is not generous (noble) but he is very miserly. Therefore the term 'generous' is not applicable to him. But the seeker of wealth, who is a devotee of God, from his heart does not attach importance to wealth but attaches importance to God. So he is not miserly but he is generous (noble). Therefore the Lord has called him noble. Here generous (noble) means renunciation. The seeker of wealth, the sufferer and the seeker of knowledge—all these devotees having renounced the world (pleasure and prosperity) have started worshipping God—this is their renunciation. Therefore all of them are noble—'udārāḥ sarve evaite'. Because of the predominance of their relationship with only God, the seeker of wealth, the sufferer and the seeker of knowledge also afterwards naturally become 'Jñānī' (devotees).

There is a vital point that atheism is more defective than a desire. Those who, instead of worshipping God, worship other deities, if they are desire-ridden, they follow the cycle of birth and death—'gatāgataṁ kāma kāmā labhante' (Gītā 9/21). But those who worship only God, if any desire remains in them, then by God's grace and by the influence of their worship, they attain God. The reason is that if a man is connected with

God in anyway, he attains only God* because basically he is a fragment of God.

The seeker of wealth, the sufferer and the seeker of knowledge—all the three have been called ‘noble’ by God. But those who don’t worship God but worship other deities, the Lord instead of calling them noble, have called them men of meagre intellect (Gītā 7/23) and their worship has been called as the worship in a mistaken manner (Gītā 9/23). Their worship is in a mistaken manner because they regard gods as different from God viz., they don’t regard gods as the manifestation of God and moreover they are desire-ridden. It means that ‘not to behold God in all’ is more harmful than ‘to work with an interested motive’ because in the former there is no relation with the sentient (divinity) (God).

An enlightened (self-realized) soul has his ‘tāttvika ektā’ (unity in essence) viz., ‘Sadharmatā’ (merger into God’s Being) with the Supreme but a devotee has his ‘ātmīya ektā’ viz., he becomes the Lord’s own self—‘Jñānī tvātmaiva me matam’. In ‘tāttvika unity’ (Sadharmatā), there is ‘abheda’ between the self and Brahma viz., as Brahma is truth, consciousness and bliss solidified, similarly he also becomes truth, consciousness and bliss solidified and nothing else remains besides the Supreme Reality. But in a devotee’s ‘ātmīya’ unity the self and God become ‘abhinna’ (inseparable). In this ‘abhinnatā’ the devotee and the Lord in spite of being one, become two in order to exchange love with each other. In this state both are lovers and both are beloved (Sometimes God is the lover and the devotee is the beloved and vice versa). Therefore in spite of

*kāmād dveṣād bhayāt snehād yathā bhaktyeśvare manah
āveśya tadaghaṁ hitvā bahavastadgaṁ gatāḥ

(Śrīmadbhā. 7/1/29)

“Not one, many men out of desire, malice, fear and love by concentrating (focussing) their mind on God and washing away all their sins, have attained God in the same way as a devotee attains Him by devotion.”

being two, they remain only one.

A man (the self) is a fragment of God. The more disinclination he has for God, the more his ego is inflated; and the more inclination he has to God, the more his ego is wiped out. Even after being established in the self, he can have an iota (trace) of subtle ego. But in devotion living in developed oneness with God through devotion, a devotee's attachment to the lower nature (aparā prakṛti) is totally renounced and his ego is totally wiped out because ego is the evolute of aparā prakṛti. Therefore the Lord declares—'jñānī tvātmaiva me matam' (a Jñānī viz., devout devotee is verily My own self).

A seeker of wealth, a sufferer and a seeker of knowledge, gradually lose their independent entity (ego), while a Jñānī (devotee) has no independent entity. Therefore the expression 'tvātmaiva' means that a lover (devotee with exclusive devotion) has no independent entity besides God and only God remains viz., the lover becomes the manifestation of God—tasminstajjane bhedābhāvāt (Nārada. 41). This 'ātmīyatā' (intimacy) with God is dualism for devotion which a devotee accepts himself in order to enhance devotion and it is far superior to the non-dualism of Jñānayoga—'bhaktyartham kalpitam (svīkṛtam) dvaitamadvaitādapi sundaram'* (Bodhasāra, Bhakti. 42).

'Māmevānuttamām gatim'—There is no other Supreme goal besides God. The term 'gati' has three meanings—knowledge, speed (act of going) and attainment. Here the term 'gati' has been used for attainment. Being the final attainable Reality, God is the Supreme goal to be attained.

'Asthitaḥ'—One steadiness is gained by practice and the other steadiness is natural. As every being feels 'I am'—this is natural steadiness in one's own self, similarly a wise devotee

* The non-dualism of devotion is not an imagination but it is an acceptance. The imaginative non-dualism is untrue and it is devoid of love.

(who has exclusive devotion) naturally remains established steadily in God.



Link:— In the next verse, Lord Kṛṣṇa describes, the man of wisdom, as mentioned in the previous verse, and indicates the kind of devotion he has.

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।

वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥ १९ ॥

bahūnām janmanāmante jñānavānmām prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvamiti sa mahātmā sudurlabhah

In the very last of all births viz., in this human form, when a man of wisdom (jñānī) takes refuge in Me, realizing that everything is God, such a great soul (mahātmā) is very rare, indeed. 19

Comment:—

'Bahūnām janmanāmante'—This human birth, is the last of all births. The Lord, has given man full right to be free, from the cycle of birth and death. But man, because of his attachment, for the world, failing to attain Him, returns to the path of the mortal world (Gītā 9/3). So Lord Kṛṣṇa, while describing men possessing demoniacal traits, declares that such fools, instead of attaining Him, sink into still lower and baser, depths (Gītā 16/20).

It is mentioned in the scriptures and in the utterances of saints, that the only aim of human life, is to attain salvation, it is not for enjoying the pleasures of the world, and heaven. Therefore, in the Gītā, such people who look upon heaven as a supreme goal are called unwise, (2/42) and of meagre intelligence (7/23).

This human life, is the very first and the very last, of all births. It is the first, because the actions performed during this human life lead him to, eighty-four lac forms of lives and hell and in these forms of lives and hells he has to suffer pains