

etc. The 'Kriyā' which is free from the sense of doership and from the desire for fruit, and also divine, and for the welfare of the world, is called 'Līlā'. Actions done by worldly people are karma and by liberated people are kriyā* and by God they are mere sports or say 'Līlā'—'lokavattu līlākaivalyam' (Brahmasūtra 2/1/33) viz., as the world without real existence appears to be existing, similarly the Lord's activity such as the creation of the universe etc., is merely His pastime. It means that the Lord in spite of being the non-doer seems to be a doer because of His pastime.

'Cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ'—this expression proves that according to the Gītā a person's caste is determined by his birth. A person's caste or Varṇa (order of life) is determined by the caste of his parents. The word 'jāti' is made from the root 'janī prādurbhāve' which proves that the caste is determined by birth. By 'Karma' there is the word 'kṛti' which is made from the root 'ḍukṛñ karane'. But the caste is fully preserved by only discharging the duty prescribed for one's own caste.



Link:—Describing the divine character of His actions, in the preceding verse, and citing examples of ancient seekers of liberation, in the next verse, the Lord advises Arjuna to perform his duty disinterestedly.

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥ १५ ॥

evaṁ jñātvā kṛtam karma pūrvairapi mumukṣubhiḥ

kuru karmaiva tasmāttvaṁ pūrvaiḥ pūrvataram kṛtam

Having known this, the ancient seekers of salvation also

* The Lord has also called it 'Ceṣṭā' in the Gītā—Sadṛśam ceṣṭate' (3/33)

performed action (Karma); therefore, do thou also perform action, as the ancients did, in former times. 15

Comment:—

[The Lord here, concludes the topic of the divine character of actions, which He began in the ninth verse.]

'Evaṁ jñātvā kṛtaṁ karma pūrvairapi mumukṣubhiḥ'—Arjuna was a seeker of liberation (salvation), but he did not think that the performance of his duty (of fighting) would lead him to salvation. So he wanted to renounce the duty, as to him it was horrible (Gītā 3/1). Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa urges Arjuna to attain salvation, through performing his duty, and cited the example of ancient seekers of liberation, who attained salvation by performing their duty.

The Lord, is emphasizing the same fact here, which He mentioned, in the twentieth verse of the third chapter, by citing the example of Janaka and others, and, in the first and second verses of this chapter, by citing examples of Vivasvān, Manu and Ikṣvāku etc.

It is mentioned in the scriptures, that when desire for liberation is aroused in a striver, he should abandon actions, because in that case, he becomes eligible to attain knowledge (wisdom), rather than to perform actions.* But here, He urges Arjuna, a seeker of liberation, to perform his duty in a disinterested manner, and cites the example of other ancient seekers of liberation.

Karmayoga (Discipline of Action) consists, in remaining established in Yoga (union with God) while performing duty, and in performing duty while remaining firm in Yoga. Actions are performed for the world, while Yoga (union with God) is for one's own self. Performance of actions and non-performance of actions, are two states. A Yogī, transcends the two, without

* Actions should be performed so long as a striver does not develop dispassion or has no reverence to listen to My (God's) life-history (Śrīmadbhāgavata 11/20/9).

being attached to either of the two. This Yoga is detachment incarnate. This is not a state. It is God-realization.

The Lord, in the fourteenth verse, declared, "Actions do not taint (bind) Me, since I have no craving for the fruit of actions." A person, who having known this skill (Karmayoga) performs actions, by renouncing the desire for fruit, is not bound by actions, as the Lord declares, "He who is attached to the fruit of action, is bound" (Gītā 5/12). Actions, which a man performs, in order to gain pleasures or wealth or honour and praise or paradise etc., bind him (Gītā 3/9). But, if he performs actions, for the well being of others, without any selfish motive, to renounce his affinity for the world, the actions do not bind him (Gītā 4/23). The reason is, that when actions are performed for others, the flow is towards the world and thus attachment for them perishes. No new affinity for them is born, because there is no desire for the fruit.

'Kuru karmaiva tasmāttvaṁ pūrvaiḥ pūrvataraṁ kṛtam'—

The Lord orders Arjuna to perform actions, for the welfare of the world, like other seekers of liberation, because he is also a seeker of liberation.

All the mundane materials, such as, the body, senses, mind and intellect etc., required for the performance of actions, have their identity with the world, while they are different from the self. They have been acquired from the world, so that service to the world may be rendered, with them. If they are used by a person in performing actions for himself, he gets attached to those actions, but if all actions are performed for the welfare of others, he is not attached to them. As soon as, this attachment is renounced, he realizes his Yoga i.e., union with God, which is eternal.

Appendix—In the thirteenth and fourteenth verses the Lord declared, "I perform actions such as the creation of the universe etc., but those actions don't bind Me because I am free from

the sense of doership and the desire of fruit.” Here the Lord declares that the seekers of salvation have also performed actions by renouncing the sense of doership and the desire for fruit. The reason is that actions performed with the sense of doership and with the desire for fruit alone lead to bondage. Therefore the Lord asks Arjuna to perform actions in the same way as the seekers of salvation have performed.

In Jñānayoga first there is renunciation of the sense of doership and then the desire for fruit automatically disappears. In Karmayoga first there is renunciation of the desire for fruit and then the sense of doership easily get extinct.



Link:—In the preceding verse, the Lord explained that having known the divine character of actions, the ancient seekers of liberation performed actions. Now, the Lord in the next verse, starts the topic of, knowing the truth about action.

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १६ ॥

**kiṁ karma kimakarmeti kavayo'pyatra mohitāḥ
tatte karma pravakṣyāmi yajjñātvā mokṣyase'subhāt**

What is action? What is inaction? As to this, even the wise are confused. Therefore, I will explain to you what action is, by knowing which, you shall be liberated, from its evil effect (i.e.,) worldly bondage. 16

Comment:—

'Kiṁ karma'— Common men believe that activities done with the body and senses are mere actions, while non-performance of an act, is inaction. But, the Lord declares that activities performed with body, speech and mind, are actions (Gītā 18/15).

An action, is determined by the motive by which, it is performed. An action, such as adoration of a goddess, is of the