

touch, talk etc., and later on, the practice of hearing, thinking, chanting and following His sport, lead people to salvation.

The Lord, comes to the mortal world in different incarnations, according to the need of the times. He remains perfect, during all the incarnations.

Though there is, nothing that should be done by Him, nor is there anything unattained that should be attained (Gītā 3/22), yet He performs all actions by manifesting Himself, from time to time, only for the welfare of the world. Therefore, human beings, should also perform their duty, for the welfare of others.

In response to Arjuna's question which he put in the fourth verse, the Lord explains the three main differences between men's births and His births (manifestations):—

(1) Difference in knowledge:—Many births of men, as well as of the Lord, have taken place. Men do not know them all, only the Lord knows.

(2) Difference in birth:—Men have to take birth, under the subordination of nature, (prakṛti), in order to reap the fruits of their virtuous and evil actions, and then to realize God. God manifests Himself of His own accord, governing His nature (prakṛti) through His divine potency (4/6).

(3) Difference in actions:—Men perform actions, in order to satisfy their desires, though it is not the aim of human life, while the Lord acts, only in order to enable beings to attain salvation (4/7-8).



Link:—In response to the question put, in the fourth verse, by Arjuna, the Lord started describing the divine character of His birth. Now in the next verse He, of His own accord, explains the merit of knowing the divine character of His birth, as well as actions, in order to explain the performance of actions without expectation of fruit (Karmayoga).

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥ ९ ॥

janma karma ca me divyamevaṁ yo veti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punarjanma naiti māmēti so'rjuna

He who thus knows in reality the true nature of My divine birth and action, (Karma) and he having abandoned the body, is not reborn; but he comes to Me, O Arjuna. 9

Comment:—

'Janma karma ca me divyam'— The Lord is beyond birth and death, He is birthless and imperishable. His manifestation in human body, is not like the birth of common men. He manifests Himself of His own accord* in order to stage the drama of human life, for the welfare of beings.

The form (body) of the Lord, unlike other beings, is not made of flesh and blood. The bodies of beings are full of virtues and vices. They are transitory, sick, mundane, changing, material and are born of ovum and semen, while the Form of the Lord, is free from virtues and vices. It is eternal, healthy, spiritual, unchanging, divine and is revealed. The bodies of gods, are also divine, but the Form of the Lord, is far superior to those of the gods and even the gods are ever eager to see this Form (Gītā 11/52).

When the Lord descended on the mortal world, as Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa, mother Kausalyā and Devakī, did not give birth to Them. First, He revealed to them His four-armed divine Form, with conch, disc, mace and lotus, and then staged the drama of a child, then the mother, requested Him to conceal that divine Form. The description has been, very clearly, given, in the Rāmācaritamānasa 1/192, as well as Śrīmadbhāgavata 10/3/30 and 10/3/46.

* Uddhava tells Lord Kṛṣṇa, "You are the Supreme beyond Nature (Prakṛti) and You are Brahma, the very embodiment of knowledge; even then You have manifested Yourself as a human being of Your own accord" (Śrīmadbhā. 11/11/28).

When Lord Rāma returned to His Abode, He, unlike common men, disappeared from this mortal world along with His body (Form), His body was not left on the earth. It is said in the Rāmāyaṇa by Vālmīki, that having heard the words of Brahmā, the creator the very wise Lord Rāma, having decided, entered the splendour of Lord Viṣṇu, with His three brothers, in His Form. As far as Lord Kṛṣṇa is concerned, the same fact, is mentioned about Him in Śrīmadbhāgavata that He also went to His Abode, in His Form (11/31/6).

The same sort of description is available in Rāmacaritamānasa, when sage Vālmīki says to Lord Rāma, that His Form is divine and unaltered, only a deserving one knows the reality about Him, when He manifests Himself as a human being, for protecting saints and gods, and preach and act as a worldly king.

Once, sages Sanaka etc., were going to the Abode of Lord Viṣṇu. The gatekeeper would not let them go in and they cursed him. Knowing that His gatekeeper had insulted the sages, Lord Viṣṇu Himself came to the entrance. Having a vision of the Lord, and receiving the divine smell of basil leaves and shoots, while bowing to Him, their bodies and hearts were thrilled, and excited, though such wise sages, ever remain established in the imperishable Lord (Śrīmadbhā. 3/15/43). As the smell of the Lord's lotus feet, is divine, His clothes, ornaments and weapons etc., are also divine, sentient and very singular.

Having heard, studied and recollected the pastime of the Lord, people's hearts are purified and they get rid of ignorance—this is the divine nature of His actions. Lord Śaṅkara, Brahmā, the creator, sages, such as Sanaka etc., divine sage, Nārada etc., who are the embodiments of knowledge, having sung and heard of His divine pastime, get absorbed in them. A person who visits the places, where the Lord staged the drama of His human life, with reverence and faith and resides there, attains salvation. It means that the Lord manifests Himself and carries on His pastimes

in order to enable the people to attain salvation. Therefore, people attain their aim by reading, hearing and thinking, of His divine pastimes.

In the fourth verse, Arjuna put the question to the Lord pertaining to His birth, but here, the Lord starts describing his action of his own accord. By doing so, it seems as if the Lord wants to emphasize the fact, that a man's actions can also be divine, though his birth cannot be divine as human life has been bestowed upon him only to perform, such actions. Actions are divine, when these are free from desire, for reward, attachment and a sense of 'mine.' Divine actions, lead to liberation from the bondage, of the present as well as past actions, and these naturally do good to others.

In fact, actions become impure, when a man accepts his affinity for perishable objects; and these lead him to bondage. This affinity, makes not only actions but also objects and mind, impure. As soon as, this affinity is renounced, all the three become pure. It is affinity for the perishable, which is the main obstacle to salvation.

'Evam yo vetti tattvataḥ'—God in spite of, being without, birth imperishable and the Lord of all beings, manifests Himself, of His own accord, and by keeping His nature (prakṛti) under control, for the welfare of all beings. He who knows this fact, realises the divine nature, of the births of the Lord.

Though all actions are performed by Him, yet He is a non-doer i.e., He has no pride of doership (Gītā 4/13), nor does He desire, the fruit of actions (Gītā 4/14). He who knows fact, knows the divine nature of the Lord's actions.

As the Lord manifests Himself, for the welfare of the entire creation and as He remains detached from actions, similarly, those people, who live for the welfare of the world, and remain detached from actions, know the divine nature of His births (manifestations) and actions.

'Tyaktvā dehaṁ punarjanma naiti'—There is nothing in the three worlds, that is to be done by the Lord, nor is there anything unattained, that should be attained by Him (Gītā 3/22), yet He manifests Himself in this mortal world, by His grace to inspire beings to attain salvation. He carries on His wonderful pastime, also for the same purpose. When a person recites, hears, reads or thinks of his pastimes, he is linked with the Lord. When he is connected with the Lord his tie with the world is cut off. When this bond with the world is snapped, he is not reborn i.e., he is liberated, from the bondage of birth and death.

In fact, it is not action but desire, which binds a man and this desire is man-made. In order to satisfy his desire, he performs actions with a selfish motive, being attached to these, they bind him. As desire is enhanced, he is inclined towards sinful actions, which lead him to his birth, in evil bodies and to hell. But, when he performs actions without a selfish motive for the welfare of others, his actions become divine and uncommon, they do not lead him to bondage and he is not reborn.

'Māmeti so'rjuna'—When a man assumes his affinity for perishable actions, the ever-attainable Lord, seems unattained, to him. But, when actions are performed without expecting any reward, for the welfare of others, their direction is towards the world and the ever-attained Lord, is realized.

It is because of the Lord's divine nature, that He descends to this mortal world, in order to shower His grace upon beings. Those who know this fact, become His devotees and then remain absorbed only in His adoration or devotion (Mānasa 5/34/2). This devotion, leads to salvation. Similarly, when a man knows the divine nature of His actions then his actions also become divine viz., pure and then these lead him, as well as others, to God-realization (salvation) as he renounces his affinity for the world. It is the affinity, which is an obstacle to salvation or God-realization.

A Vital Fact

Actions are transitory and perishable, and so is their fruit, while the self (soul) is uniform and eternal. Therefore, in fact the self has no affinity for actions, the affinity is merely assumed. While performing actions, if a man realizes that he has no affinity for them, his actions become divine. This is the reality, about actions and this is Karmayoga.

When a man identifies himself, with active nature (prakṛti), it gives an impetus to action. He can never remain even for a moment, without performing action (Gītā 3/5). He thinks, that as worldly objects are acquired by performing actions, so can the Lord be realized through them. But, it is an error of judgement, because only perishable objects, rather than the imperishable, Lord, can be acquired through perishable actions. The imperishable Lord, can be attained by renouncing affinity for actions. This affinity for action can be renounced more easily, through the Discipline of Action, than through the Discipline of knowledge. It is so because when all action with gross, subtle and causal bodies is performed, for the welfare of the world without any selfish motive, their flow is towards the world, and so affinity for action is renounced.

The Lord, by using the terms 'Māmeti' wants to explain, that He whom, a man wants to attain through the performance of actions is ever attained. What efforts are required to attain Him who is ever attained and ever-existent? Whatever was not otherwise attained is attained, by effort?

Two aspects are noteworthy in this regard—origin and discovery. Originated, is that which has no independent, existence, and which was absent in the beginning and perishes in the end. Discovered, is that which has a separate existence forever. But God seems to get concealed, when importance is attached to mundane actions and objects. When one uses actions and objects

in rendering service to others, his affinity for actions and objects is automatically renounced and ever attainable God is revealed. This is called discovery of the ever attained.

Carelessness and indolence, in the performance of actions and the desire for fruit of actions are the main stumbling blocks to God-realization. If actions are performed without the desire for fruit in rendering service to others, the affinity for actions is renounced and we realize our affinity for God which is naturally eternal.

Appendix—If actions are performed for the welfare of others in a disinterested way or they are performed for the Lord's sake, those actions become divine and lead to salvation. But the actions performed ridden with desire for one's own self become impure and lead to bondage.

Actions done without the sense of doership are of divine character. When actions are not performed for one's own self, the sense of doership is wiped out.

The Lord's most insignificant action as well as the most significant action is His 'pastime'. In His pastime the Lord while acting like common men remains untainted (Gītā 4/13). The Lord's drama of life is divine. This divine nature of His drama is singular and is different from the divine nature of gods. The divine nature of gods in comparison with men is relatively divine and is limited while the Lord's divinity is absolute and infinite. Though the actions of liberated, enlightened and God-loving exalted souls are also divine but they are not like the Lord's pastimes. Even the common pastime of the Lord is very uncommon (unworldly). As the Lord's 'Rāsālīlā' seems worldly yet by reading it and by listening to it, a striver's lust (sex) is wiped out (Śrīmadbhā. tenth canto, thirty-third chapter, fortieth verse).

This world is the beginningless incarnation of God—'ādyo'vatāraḥ puruṣaḥ parasya' (Śrīmadbhā. 2/6/41). It means that God has manifested Himself in the form of the world.

But the embodied soul, because of his attachment to pleasures without recognising it as the manifestation of God, has sustained it as the world—‘jīvabhūtām mahābāho yayedam dhāryate jagat’ (Gītā 7/5). In order to wipe out this notion, a striver should firmly believe that whatever is perceived (seen) is the manifestation of God and whatever is happening is the pastime of the Lord. By assuming (accepting) this, the world will not remain as the world and ‘there is nothing except God’—this truth will be realized. In other words the world will disappear and only God will remain. The reason is that by thinking (accepting) everything and person as the manifestation of God and every action as the Lord’s pastime, attraction for pleasure and also attachment—aversion will not persist. When attachment to pleasure is wiped out the actions which seemed worldly, will appear divine as the pastime of the Lord and the attachment to pleasure will be transformed into love (devotion) for God.

The Lord carries on this pastime according to the Form in which He manifests Himself.* When He takes the form of an

* Lord Kṛṣṇa says to the sage Uttanka—

dharmasamrakṣaṇārthāya dharmasamsthāpanāya ca
taistairveśaiṣca rūpaiṣca triṣu lokeṣu bhārgava
(Mahābhārata, āśva. 54/13-14)

“For the protection and establishment of righteousness I manifest Myself in many species and act according to those Forms and Guises.”

yadā tvaham devayonau vartāmi bhṛḡunandana
tadāham devavat sarvamācarāmi na samśayaḥ
yadā gandharvayonau vā vartāmi bhṛḡunandana
tadā gandharvavat sarvamācarāmi na samśayaḥ
nāgayonau yadā caiva tadā vartāmi nāgavat
yakṣarākṣasayonyostu yathāvad vicarāmyaham
(Mahābhārata, āśva. 54/17—19)

‘O Bhṛḡunandana! when I manifest Myself as a deity, then I behave and act like deities, there is no doubt about it. When I incarnate as a ‘Gandharva’ (celestial singers & musicians), I behave and act as a Gandharva, there is no doubt about it. When I manifest Myself as a ‘nāga’ then I behave like ‘nāgas. I by manifesting Myself as a gnome or as a devil, I behave and act just like them.’

us, we regard these as of others and for others, and render service to others with these, attachment perishes because in fact, we have no affinity for such objects and actions.

The Lord, without any selfish motive descends to the mortal world, in order to inspire beings to attain salvation, as He is a disinterested friend, of all beings. When a man has a firm belief that He is the disinterested friend of all beings, he is attracted towards God. The attraction for Him wipes out attraction, (attachment) for the world. For example, in childhood children play the game of marbles and have attraction for the same. They ever quarrel for their possessions. But, when they grow old, instead of having attraction for marbles or toys they have attraction for money. But, when they are inclined towards God, they have no attraction for mundane objects and riches etc. Their attachment for them, is renounced. As soon as it is renounced, fear and anger are rooted out, because both of these depend on attachment.

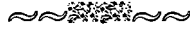
'Mānmayā'—When, a man knows the truth about the divine nature of the Lord's birth and actions, He becomes, dear to him. So he takes refuge in Him, and gets absorbed in Him.

Those, who have attraction for mundane pleasures get absorbed in the desire for pleasure (Gītā 2/43), while those, who have attraction for God ever remain absorbed in Him (Nārada-Bhaktisūtra 70). They lose their individuality, because of their exclusive devotion to Him, and identify themselves with Him.*

'Māmupāśritāḥ'—The expression, 'Vitarāgabhayakrodhāḥ' denotes, total severance of connection with the world, while it also indicates that a striver taking refuge in Him, gets absorbed in Him.

* Cowherdesses became just like their loving Lord Kṛṣṇa in gait and manners, laughter and merriment, glance, speech, inclination and facialexpression etc. They having forgotten themselves totally became the embodiment of Lord Kṛṣṇa and copying His pastime began to utter, "I am no one else but Lord Kṛṣṇa (Śrīmadbhā. 10/30/3).

idol, he like a picture carries on the drama (pastime) of being motionless. If He doesn't remain immovable, how will His manifestation as an idol be proved? The Lord descended to this world as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa etc., and also as a fish and a tortoise etc. He carried on His pastime according to His Form. As in 'varāhāvatāra' (incarnation as a boar) he played the drama as a boar and in 'Vāmanāvatāra' (incarnation as a dwarf) he carried on the pastime as a celibate. Therefore a striver should hold that whatever is happening now is only the Lord's pastime.



Link:—The Lord, in the next verse, describes the traits of those devotees, who know the divine nature of His birth and action.

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ १० ॥

**vītarāgabhayakrodhā manmayā māmupāśritāḥ
bahavo jñānatapasā pūtā madbhāvamāgatāḥ**

Freed from attachment, fear and anger, absorbed in Me and taking refuge in Me, purified by the penance of knowledge, many have attained union with My Being. 10

Comment:—

'Vītarāgabhayakrodhāḥ'—When a man, has disinclination for God, he gets attached to the perishable objects. It is, because of his attachment, that he has the sense of 'mine,' for the objects acquired and a desire for those unacquired. He has greed for the acquired objects and gets angry with those who are obstacles to the acquisition of those objects. If persons, who are obstacles, are stronger than him, it causes fear. Thus, attachment to perishable objects gives birth to fear, anger, greed, desire and feeling of 'mine,' and such other vices. If attachment is renounced, all these vices perish. If instead of regarding the objects as ours and for