

Link:— Every man is born with his own nature. Therefore, he has to act according to his nature. Now, the Lord in the next verse, explains how to purify one's nature.

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।
तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥ ३४ ॥

indriyasyendriyasyārthe rāgadveṣau vyavasthitau
tayorna vaśamāgacchetau hyasya paripanthinau

Attachment and aversion of man abide in each and every sense-object through the feeling of agreeableness' or disagreeableness towards its senses. Let no one come under their sway, for they are his waylayers and foes. 34

Comment:—

'Indriyasyendriyasyārthe rāgadveṣau vyavasthitau'—Each sense has attraction for a pleasant aspect (ear, eye, skin, tongue and nose for sound, sight, touch, taste and smell respectively), and aversion for an unpleasant one.

In fact, attachment and aversion do not abide, in the sense-objects. If they had abode in the sense-objects, the same objects might have been pleasant (desirable) or unpleasant (undesirable) equally, to everyone. But it does not happen. Rain is desirable for a farmer, but not so for a potter. Moreover, the same object is sometimes pleasant, while it is unpleasant at other time, to the same person. Cool air, is pleasant in summer but unpleasant in winter. Thus, we have attraction and aversion by regarding these as desirable and undesirable. Therefore, the Lord has declared, that attachment and aversion of man abide in the sense-objects.

In fact, attachment and aversion abide in assumed 'ego' ('I'ness).* The assumed affinity for the body is called 'ego'. So

* The term 'Asya' in the expression 'Rasavarjaṁ raso'pyasya (Gītā 2/59) used by Lord Kṛṣṇa also denotes that attachment and aversion abide in the assumed 'ego' (in a striver).

long as, there is assumed affinity for the body, attachment and aversion, exist in 'ego' and appear to be abiding in the intellect, mind, senses and objects of senses. These attachment and aversion in their gross forms have been called 'desire' and 'anger' (from the thirty-seventh to the forty-third verses of this chapter). In the fortieth verse, it has been said, that this desire exists in the senses, the mind and the intellect, because it appears to abide in them. As attachment and aversion appear to subsist in the sense-objects, similarly attachment and aversion appear to inhabit in senses, mind and intellect. In fact, the senses, the mind and the intellect are merely instruments. So, there is no question of the desire and anger or attachment and aversion existing in them. Besides this, the Lord declares in the fifty-ninth verse of the second chapter, "The objects of the senses turn away, from the man who abstains from feeding on them but the taste for them remains. Even the taste turns away when the Supreme is seen."

'Tayorna vaśamāgacchet'—The Lord assures strivers, that they should never be disappointed, in the means and ends, if attachment and aversion appear. The scriptures, rather than attachment and aversion, should be the authority for determining what should be done and what should not be done (Gītā 16/24). If a striver acts or abstains from action, with attachment and aversion, it means that he is affected by attachment and aversion. If a person performs actions, or abstains from actions with attachment and aversion, attachment and aversion, are strengthened. This strengthening, leads a man to a downfall.

When a striver starts worship, renouncing the worldly affairs, good and bad thoughts of the world come to his mind, and he gets perturbed. The Lord urges him not to be perturbed, because these are perishable, and appear and disappear. In fact, thoughts have no existence of their own, because as a rule what is born must die. In fact, these thoughts do not come to mind, these rather, slip away from the mind. Thoughts remain suppressed,

when a man is busy with worldly affairs, but when he stops his work, the suppressed thoughts, have an outlet. Therefore, a striver, without having attachment or aversion, should remain indifferent to these. Similarly, he should have neither attachment nor aversion, for persons and things etc.

The Means of Overcoming Attachment and Aversion

When actions are performed, out of attachment and aversion, attachment and aversion are strengthened and these are transformed into impure nature. This impure nature, brings a man under its sway. Then the actions performed by him, bind him. So, during the performance or non-performance of actions, a striver should not come under their influence. This is the means, to obliterate attachment and aversion, which is explained here. Previous to this, the Lord also declared, another means. The Lord said, "Those who constantly follow this teaching of Mine, are released from bondage of actions" (Gītā 3/31). So a striver should follow His teachings, so that he may get rid of attachment and aversion. When a striver surrenders, his actions, body, senses, mind, intellect and himself to God, and performs his duty free from desire, egoism and grief, his attachment and aversion perish. So a person should follow His teachings, while he performs actions or abstains himself from actions.

The entire universe is an evolute of nature and a body is a fragment of the universe. So long as a man is attached to a body, he comes under the sway of attachment and aversion, while acquiring and abandoning things etc. When actions are performed or abandoned with attachment and aversion, the performance or non-performance of those strengthen attachment and aversion. But if these are either performed or abandoned according to the scriptural injunctions, attachment and aversion perish. If a person does not know the ordinance of the scriptures, he should keep in mind, the great sage Vedavyāsa's teaching—"O men, listen to the gist of righteousness and follow it. The gist is—We should

not do to others, what we do not wish to be done to us (Padma Purāṇa, Sṛṣṭi. 19/355-56).

Liberated souls always follow the scriptural injunctions. That is why Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, offered food and water to the manes on kuśa grass, though his father's hand was clearly visible to him (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana. 84/15—20). Therefore, a striver should perform, all actions according to the ordinance of the scriptures.

For a striver who wants to get rid of attachment and aversion, the scripture is the authority for determining what should be done. The heart of an enlightened soul, totally free from attachment and aversion, is so pure, that his thoughts, feelings and actions are nothing but, the ordinances of scriptures,* even if he may be illiterate. Thus his words and actions are exemplary (Gītā 3/21) and by following such teaching and actions, strivers get rid of attachment and aversion.

Some people believe that attachment and aversion, are natural tendencies (natural inclinations of the mind) which cannot be wiped out, but it is wrong, as these appear and disappear. When a striver practises spiritual discipline, they become bearer—it is every striver's experience; and whatever grows scarce, may perish altogether. The Lord has declared, that these come to mind (Gītā 2/55) but do not stay there permanently. Moreover, He has called these as modifications, (Gītā 13/6) which have a beginning and an end, rather than 'Dharmas'. Evenness of mind, in the desirable and the undesirable, has been called spiritual discipline (Gītā 13/9). Had attachment and aversion, been permanent features of the mind, it could not have attained, the state of evenness. This means that they come to the mind and can be wiped out.

* The heart of the person who never renounces righteousness also becomes pure. Great poet Kālidāsa while describing king Duṣyanta declares—"Where there is doubt, there the inclination of the heart of a virtuous person is the testimony" (Abhijñānaśākuntalam 1/21).

A man, through discrimination, knows that nature (matter) prakṛti and Soul (spirit) are different from each other. But, the soul identifies itself with the body (born of nature), and this identification is called 'ego' (I) in which attachment and aversion exist, and both these strengthen egoism. These—(attachment and aversion) seem to abide in the intellect, because of which one's own beliefs appear pleasant, while the beliefs of others unpleasant. These seem to abide in the mind, and what one thinks as desirable, while what others think, is undesirable. These seem to also in senses, due to which favourable objects seem pleasant, while unfavourable ones appear unpleasant. These may also appear, in the objects of senses (sound, touch, sight, taste, smell), as favourable and unfavourable. When egoism (identification of the self with the body) is rooted out, attachment and aversion, totally perish, because egoism is their base.

'I am a servant', 'I am an inquisitive learner', 'I am a devotee' etc., this is how one may feel. These me—a 'servant', 'learner' and 'devotee', reside in the same 'I' in which attachment and aversion, co-exist. Attachment and aversion, abide neither exclusively in inert nor in conscious state. These live, only in assumed, relation between the inert and conscious, yet these live mainly, in the inert. In the state of identification of soul with the matter, the material part is attracted towards matter alone, but it appears also in the conscious soul, due to this identification. Attraction for the insentient (matter) is attachment. When a striver identifies the self with the body, he feels difficulty, in renouncing attachment and aversion. But when he has an eye on the Self, he has no difficulty in renouncing attachment and aversion, because these have no existence of their own. These are born, only when one identifies the self with the body etc.

If a striver has attachment for good company, adoration and meditation etc., he has aversion for the world. But if he has 'love' (devotion) for God, he will have no aversion for the world, but

he will be indifferent to the world.*

If a man has attachment for one object, he has aversion for an other, but when he has love (devotion) for God, he develops dispassion. Dispassion, leads to selfless service by wiping out desire for pleasure. Then the body, senses, mind, intellect and ego, are automatically engaged in the service of the world. Consequently, attachment and aversion, which abide in ego, totally perish when affinity to the self for the body etc., along with ego, is renounced.

All actions of a person, are performed according to his nature or according to scriptural injunctions. If something is done, with a view to spiritual progress only, it is done in obedience to the above rule. Nature, can be pure (free from attachment and aversion) and impure (with attachment and aversion). It cannot be totally renounced, but it can be purified i.e., made free from attachment and aversion. As the course of the Ganges cannot be forcibly obstructed, but its direction can be changed, similarly, action cannot be totally renounced, but their flow (course) can be changed i.e., can be made free from attachment and aversion. This is a vital teaching of the Gītā. It is, neither the performance nor non-performance of actions, but attachment and aversion, which are the stumbling blocks to a striver's spiritual progress. So, the Lord declares, that a wise man, is he who has neither attachment for agreeable actions nor aversion for disagreeable ones (Gītā 18/10). Generally, strivers

* Whether a striver has attachment or love (devotion) to holy company can be illustrated by the following example:—If anybody creates an obstacle to a striver's good company, adoration or meditation and he gets angry with him, it means that he has attachment. But if he feels sad, it means that he has love. The reason is that there are obstacles to the spiritual discipline when his determination is not firm. So he is sad because of his shortcoming. Similarly, if he is biased against any religion or sect, it means that he is attached to his own religion or sect.

In fact even attachment to the good company, adoration and meditation is not bad because this spiritual practice leads the mind to the thought of God (Śrīmadbhā. 7/1/31).

are not on their guard against attachment and aversion. Their activities come under the sway of these. Therefore, a striver should perform actions, according to scriptural ordinances in order to be free from attachment and aversion. By doing so his nature will automatically, be improved.

When desire mixed with attraction or aversion, is born, and we act according to its dictates, attraction and aversion, get strengthened and if we act according to the principles enunciated these get wiped out.

When good and evil thoughts come to the mind of a striver, he should neither have attachment nor aversion for these, he should neither support nor oppose these. He should remain indifferent by thinking that he (the self) is different and so the self has no affinity, for these.

If a striver finds himself helpless, in renouncing attachment and aversion, he should take refuge in the omnipotent Lord, Who is his most disinterested friend. By His grace, he overcomes attachment and aversion (Gītā 7/14) and attains supreme peace (Gītā 18/62). The assumption is that the body, senses, mind, intellect, ego and all the worldly objects belong to the Lord, take refuge in Him. So, a striver should serve Him, in order to please Him offer the materials provided by Him, without expecting any reward. Expectation of a reward leads to affinity for the insentient (matter).

'Service to others, without expecting any reward', is the means to wipe out attachment and aversion. All our possessions, including the physical, subtle and causal bodies, as well as ego, are to render service to the world, because these are essentially the same, as is the world. An assumption, that these are different from the world, leads to bondage. A striver, should not derive pleasure out of things and actions, with a physical body, out of thinking, with the subtle body and out of trance with the causal body. In fact, this human body is not for pleasures (Mānasa 7/44/1).

Secondly, the body, senses, mind, intellect and objects etc., with which service is rendered, are fragments of the world. How can fragments of the world be ours when the world is not ours? We cannot render service to others with these in a disinterested way, if we regard these as ours. Therefore, we should regard these as, of those whose service is rendered with these. A devotee surrenders these to God, by regarding these as His. Similarly, a Karmayogī surrenders these to the world, by regarding these as the world's.

A Vital Fact Pertaining to Service

He alone can render true service to others, who never requires anything for himself. The desire for money in lieu of service, is no doubt a desire, but an inclination to serve, is also a desire, because it results in a desire for riches. A striver, should not have a desire to acquire money, even for rendering service, to others. If he gets an opportunity, he should render service according to his resources, but he should have no desire to render service. He who derives pleasure by rendering service to others, or has the sentiment that people are benefited by him, or expects honour and praise, or gets pleased by receiving honour and praise, in reality enjoys pleasures, instead of rendering true service. If a striver derives pleasure out of this, it gives birth to attachment and desire. In fact, the objects with which he renders service to others, belong to them. So, there is no obligation if their trust property is returned to them. Does anyone want reward for having washed his face with his own hands?

Question:—How can service be rendered without objects and money etc? So, what is the harm if anyone desires money and objects, in order to render service to others?

Answer:—Service, with material objects is, a gross type of service. Real service is a sentiment or feeling, and not an action. Action leads to bondage, while service, releases from bondage.

A sense of service impels a man to use his possessions, in the service of others. Real service is rendered through feelings, rather than through actions. A man of generous feelings can render service even with limited resources, he has. He, who attaches importance to objects cannot render service, with these, because he has pride in doing so, and thus he derives pleasure out of his action, whether he knows it or not. A shopkeeper, gives articles to others, but he does not render service, because he has a desire to receive money in exchange. Similarly, money which is paid as tax to the king (state), cannot be called, charity. If a person offers charity or food or water to someone, in order to reap its fruit, his affinity for the object is not renounced. But, if he offers the articles, without expecting any reward, it means that he renders service and his affinity for those objects, is renounced.

Only he who lays claim to a thing i.e., is the real owner of a thing, can receive such a thing given by us. We, repay debt, by offering the thing back to him. He, who is in greater need of something actually, is a deserving hand to receive it. He takes it from us, only if it is his, otherwise not.

He, who renders service to others from his heart, arouses feelings of service in their hearts also. If, this feeling is not aroused in their hearts, it means that there has been a flaw (such as of reaping the fruit) in the service. A striver, should be on the alert, in this respect. While rendering service, he should never expect to be called, virtuous or good, because this feeling develops pride in him.

A striver, should live in the world, in order to render service to others by performing his duty. He should never cause any harm to anyone, in the least. He should share the joys and sorrows of others, because that gives them moral strength, that there is someone who is sharing their joys and sorrows. In this way, happy men will become happier and the sad will be consoled. He should console the sad, by quoting Lord Rāma, king Nala and

king Hariścandra etc., who had to face adverse situations, though they were very noble and virtuous. Moreover, there are many others who are in a more pitiable condition. Thus one should try to console them, be prepared to help them and remain engaged in their welfare, by having good feelings. Those, who share the pleasures and pains of others, are saints (Māṇasa 7/38/1).

Now a doubt may arise, that we shall never be free from sorrow, if we share the sorrow of other people, because the world is full of it. To share, the sorrow of others, means to have the feeling to alleviate their suffering and to make efforts for it. This will give us happiness, rather than make us sad. The explanation is, that other people will also share our sorrows i.e., they will try to help us, in doing away with our sorrow. So, we should try to share the sorrow of others from our heart, and according to our resources. When we share their sorrow, all our resources are automatically, utilized, to relieve them of their sorrow and suffering. It is beyond our power to make others happy, but it is upto us to use our resources, in order to help the sad in removing their sorrow. This renunciation of the means of happiness, will bring us peace of mind.

A striver should always have the feeling that no one should ever suffer in the least. Everyone is free, in having such generous feeling. This feeling is a service itself. Actions and objects are limited, while feeling of generosity, is unlimited. So a striver can attain the unlimited Lord, by unlimited feelings. How can He be attained by the limited resources such as actions and objects? Therefore, those whose possessions and resources are limited, can also render great service, by having generous feelings.

A striver, who does not regard the body, senses, mind and intellect etc., as his, can share the joys and sorrows of others. In fact, the body, senses, mind and intellect etc., are neither his nor for him. Similar, is the case with objects, resources and persons. These are also not his personal property. Everyone, whether he is

rich or poor, educated or uneducated, can renounce this assumed affinity for these. As soon as, this assumed affinity is renounced, and one renders service to others, by those things regarding them as theirs, he gets rid of attachment and aversion, easily.

'Tau hyasya paripanthinau'—In the spiritual discipline, attachment and aversion, are the waylayers to rob a striver, of his spiritual property. But, a striver does not pay heed to this fact. Therefore, he does not progress in the spiritual field as much as he should have. Generally, strivers complain that they cannot concentrate their minds, on God. But this lack of concentration is not such a stumbling block, as are attachment and aversion. When attachment and aversions are renounced, the mind can easily concentrate.

Total renunciation of actions, pertaining to one's nature, is beyond a striver's power, but their performance without attachment and aversion, is within his power. So, the Lord urges strivers, not to come under their sway for these are his waylayers. In fact, attachment and aversion are naturally perishing. But, a striver by holding that they dwell in him, accepts their existence and then acts, by coming under their influence. So he does not get rid of them. If he holds that they do not dwell in him and so he does not act, being swayed by them, these will automatically perish.

Appendix—When we assume that others are instrumental in providing pleasure and pain to us, then attachment and aversion ensue viz., we get attached to the thing which we think provides pleasure to us and have aversion to the thing which provides pain to us. Therefore attachment and aversion are born by one's own error, there is no other reason. It is because of attachment and aversion that we fail to perceive the world as the manifestation of God but we view it as insentient (inert) and perishable. If attachment and aversion are rooted out, it is not insentient but all manifests as God—'vāsudevaḥ sarvam' (Gītā 7/19).

When evils such as attachment and aversion appear, one should not come under their sway viz., he should not perform forbidden actions being swayed by them. Being affected by them, if actions are performed, the evils (flaws) will be strengthened. But if actions are not done being swayed by them, the man will be filled with enthusiasm. For example, if anyone uttered bitter words to us but we didn't get angry, we would be filled with enthusiasm and joy that we could escape anger. But we should hold that it was not done by our own power; but by God's grace otherwise we would have been overpowered by it. If a striver perceives any defect, he should not be under its sway and should not assume it in him. If attachment and aversion had existed in the self, they would have remained as long as the self had existed. But this is everyone's experience that we ever exist but attachment and aversion don't stay forever, they are fleeting. Attachment and aversion can't have an access to the self because the self's category is quite different from that of attachment and aversion. He, who knows the fleeting nature of attachment and aversion, is different from them. Therefore attachment and aversion are different from us and they are also different from the mind and intellect etc., in which they make a visit—'manogatān' (Gītā 2/55). 'Indriyasyendriyasyārthe rāgadveṣau vyavasthitau'—this expression means that a man should not be attached to desirable or undesirable circumstances but should make proper use of them viz., in desirable circumstances he should serve others while in undesirable circumstances he should give up the desire for favourable circumstances. The expression 'tayorna vaśa-māgacchet' means that he should not be happy and sad in favourable and unfavourable circumstances. To feel happy and sad means to be attached to the fruit of action and the person who is attached to the fruit of action gets tied down—'phale sakto nibadhyate' (Gītā 5/12).

