

than intellect, is the factor. Intellect is purified by discrimination. In the purification of intellect, virtuous actions are also helpful to some extent, but it is not purified with virtuous actions as much as it is purified by the discriminative faculty. Sins, volatility of mind and ignorance in a striver are not to be blamed so much as the striver is to be blamed, if he does not attach importance to discrimination. Discrimination is beginningless and eternal. Therefore in spite of the persistence of sin, volatility of mind and ignorance, discrimination can be aroused. Discrimination is not destroyed by sin but it is not aroused. A striver does not attach importance to discrimination because he attaches importance to actions and objects. He who attaches importance to actions and objects is a man of perverse understanding.



Link:—In the preceding verse, it has been mentioned that he who looks upon his pure self as the doer, does not see at all. Now the Lord, in the next verse, explains who really sees.

यस्य नाहङ्कृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वापि स इमाँल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥ १७ ॥

yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo buddhiryasya na lipyate
hatvāpi sa imāḷlokānna hanti na nibadhyate

He, who is free from egoism, whose intellect is not tainted, though he may slay other creatures, he slays not, nor is he bound (by actions). 17

Comment:—

'Yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo buddhiryasya na lipyate'—He is free from the egoistic notion that 'I am a doer and his intellect is not tainted, by the selfishness that I shall reap the fruit. As all actions, are performed in light but light is not the doer, similarly the self, is merely a silent witness, of all activities. Thus a striver, realizes that he is not a doer. Similarly, he has no desire of his own i.e., he is free from the pairs of opposites, that it should so

happen and it should not so happen, it means, that his intellect is not tainted. Such a striver, remains neither a doer, nor an enjoyer, and he realizes, this fact.

Nature does everything and it always undergoes modifications, while the self, is its illuminator. By knowing this fact, a striver, remains established, in the self. He does not regard himself, as a doer. When he is free from this egoistic notion, his intellect is not tainted, to acquire the fruit of actions.

Egoism is an assumption, and this assumption, is made by an embodied soul, himself. It is he (himself), who assumes a sense of doership or denies, this sense.

'Hatvāpi sa imālokaṇṇa hanti na nibadhyate'—Though, he may slay all beings at once, yet he does not really kill, because he has no egoistic notion; and he is not bound, because he has no notion of enjoyership. It means, that he is attached neither to action nor to their fruit. Action and fruits, are within the sphere of Nature. But, due to not realizing this fact, an embodied soul, assumes doership and enjoyership, in himself. When action is performed with a sense of doership, then the three factors, namely, the doer, the organ and the activity, are contributory to the accomplishment of an action. In the absence of doership, all actions are converted into inaction. But, with a sense of doership, any activity, converts into an action. When the sense of doership is extinct, then the cosmic soul (God), Who is the essence and illuminator of all, remains. So, he can neither kill, nor be bound (Gītā 2/19).

He slays all beings—what does it mean? It means that a man who performs his duty, according to his caste (social order) and stage of life, being free from egoistic notion, with his untainted intellect, incurs no sin. For example, a liberated soul belonging to warrior class, while slaying warriors on the battlefield, neither slays nor is he bound, because he is free from egoism, and selfishness.

Here, the context is of war. So, by using the term

'Hatvāpi' (even having slain), the Lord inspires Arjuna, to wage the war. The term 'Api' (even) denotes—"Such a man, does nothing at all, though he may be ever-engaged in action" (Gītā 4/20), "Being engaged in all forms of activities, he dwells in the Lord" (Gītā 6/31), "The Supreme self, though dwells in the body, it neither acts nor is tainted" (Gītā 13/31). It means, that the Self, remains uniform and fixed, whether a man is engaged in actions, or he does not act. The reason is, that it is nature, which performs all actions.

A man (soul), has his identity with God, but it is because of his egoistic notion, that he becomes separate, from the Lord. Actually, he is neither a doer nor an enjoyer, but by identifying himself with a body he accepts an egoistic notion, and thus becomes a doer and an enjoyer.

This egoism is of two kinds. 'Ahaṁsphūrti', and 'Ahaṅkṛti'. A man, awakes from sound sleep and he realizes that he exists. This is one kind of egoism, which is called 'Ahaṁsphūrti'. But then by identifying himself with the body, he assumes that he belongs to a particular caste, creed and social order etc., this is his affinity with, the unreal. With such affinity (identification), with the unreal (body), he regards actions done by the body, as actions done, by the self. This is another kind of egoism, called 'Ahaṅkṛti'.

There is limitedness, in the self due to ego. Even in 'Ahaṁsphūrti', as mentioned above, individualism remains. But it does not bind. When one accepts 'Ahaṅkṛti', viz., he assumes relationship with someone or something or some action, then dualism of virtue and vice arises in the embodied soul, which induces him to perform good and bad actions. On Self-realization, the limitedness in 'Ahaṁsphūrti', is destroyed. In such a state, actions are done by that liberated soul, in an impersonal state. These do not bind him.

'Na hanti na nibadhyate'—He neither slays, nor is he bound—What does it mean? There are two states of trance temporary and permanent. The temporary state is called 'Nirvikalpa-Avasthā', while the permanent one, is called 'Nirvikalpa-Bodha'. The former

does not remain uniform, it undergoes change. It can be attained through practice. By remaining detached, from the 'Nirvikalpa-Avasthā', the self-evident 'Nirvikalpa-Bodha, is realized. The latter remains ever uniform without undergoing any change, and it cannot be attained, through practice. In this state, while slaying all beings, a man neither slays, nor is bound by such killing.

How should a man be free, from the egoistic notion and how should his intellect not be tainted?

A man, by applying his discrimination, should realize the fact, that all actions are performed by nature alone, which always undergoes modifications. Moreover, all actions, as well as their fruit, appear and disappear, while the self, as illuminator of all of them, ever remains uniform. By realizing this fact, he can be free from egoistic notion, and his intellect, is not tainted.

Appendix—The expressions—'nāhaṅkṛta bhāva' means to be free from egoism and 'buddhiḥ na lipyate' means to be free from desire, the sense of mine and selfishness.

Arjuna said, "Sin will accrue to us by slaying these desperadoes—'pāpamevāśrayedasmānhatvaitānātātāyinaḥ' (Gītā 1/36) and 'We'll accrue sin by slaying these reverend preceptors and elders—'gurūnahatvā hi mahānubhāvān.....' (Gītā 2/5). Therefore here the Lord declares that Arjuna will accrue no sin even though he slays not only his reverend preceptors and elders but also all other creatures because sin will accrue only, if he has the egoistic notion, and if his intellect is tainted. The intellect is tainted by having desire, the sense of mine and selfishness. If a man is drowned in the Ganges, the Ganges accrues no sin; and if anyone drinks its water, bathes in it and irrigates his land and makes it fertile, the Ganges does not earn any virtue. When it rains heavily, several creatures are killed and the life of several other creatures is saved but rain neither accrues sin nor virtue. The reason is that they have neither the egoistic notion nor their intellect is tainted. If a Surgeon performs a surgical operation, being free from desire, the sense of mine and selfishness, in

spite of cutting the organs, he incurs no sin. If he is also free from the egoistic notion also, then no question arises at all of his accruing sin.

By Jñānayoga, the egoistic notion is destroyed; and by Karmayoga, the taintedness of the intellect is wiped out. If one of the two is destroyed, the other is also destroyed. It is because of the egoistic notion that in a man (self), the desire for pleasure and salvation evolves. When the egoistic notion is wiped out, then the desire for pleasure is also wiped out—‘buddhiryasya na lipyate’. With the destruction of the desire for pleasure, the yearning for salvation is automatically fulfilled because salvation is axiomatic (Self-evident).



Link:—Knowledge and actions in themselves, are not evils. It is the sense of doership, which is an evil. A sense of doership, causes actions—this is explained in the verse, that follows:—

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।

करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसङ्ग्रहः ॥ १८ ॥

jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ pariñātā trividhā karmacodanā
karaṇaṁ karma karteti trividhaḥ karmasaṅgrahaḥ

Knowledge, the knowable and the knower, these three motivate action; and the instrument, the action and the agent (doer) are the three constituents (bases) of action. 18

Comment:—

[In the fourteenth verse of this chapter, the Lord explained the body, doer, instruments, efforts and daiva (impressions), these five factors, as responsible for the accomplishment of all actions. Out of these, the most important one, is the doer. So the Lord vehemently criticized, a man, who looks upon his self, as doer, in the sixteenth verse, while He praised one who is free from egoistic notion, in the seventeenth verse. The Lord in the eighteenth verse, clarifies that it is the notion of egoism