

liberally. Therefore, 'Dānam' is mentioned as a natural quality of Kṣatriya.

'Īśvarabhāvaśca'—The Kṣatriyas, have a natural inclination to rule over their subjects. If they behold their subjects going against ethics and righteousness, they check them, from the unrighteous or wicked path, and turn them towards righteous and just path, in a loving manner having no pride.

'Kṣātram karma svabhāvajam'—A Kṣatriya, is he who protects all his subjects, from suffering. The above-mentioned are his natural duties.

**Appendix**—Kṣatriyas are very heroic and morally radiant. But because of envy, the king, who ruled over the state, tried to discourage other Kṣatriyas who were subordinate to him, he did not let them progress, lest they, being powerful, should usurp the state. It was because of such envy, discord and discouragement among Kṣatriyas that foreigners following other religions were successful in ruling over India.



*Link:—The Lord now mentions the natural duties of a Vaiśya, (a member of the trading class) and a Śūdra ( a member of the labour class).*

**कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।**

**परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥ ४४ ॥**

**kr̥ṣigaurakṣyavāṇijyam vaiśyakarma svabhāvajam  
paricaryātmakaṁ karma śūdrasyāpi svabhāvajam**

Agriculture, cow-rearing and commerce are the duties of a Vaiśya, inherent to his nature, and actions consisting of service, are the duties of a śūdra, born of his nature. 44

*Comment:—*

'Kṛṣigaurakṣyavāṇijyam vaiśyakarma svabhāvajam'—Agriculture, cattle-rearing and pure trade, are the duties of a Vaiśya born of his nature.

Pure trade consists, in supplying the needs of the, people by transporting the commodities, from one place to another, sincerely and honestly, so that no one may feel a shortage.

Lord Kṛṣṇa, (because of his relationship with Nanda-Bābā), regarded himself as a Vaiśya.\* So he himself grazed cows and calves. In the Manusmṛti (the code of Manu) it is mentioned, that the duty of a Vaiśya is cow-rearing. So Lord Kṛṣṇa exhorts Vaiśyas, at least to rear cows, if they cannot raise all cattle. So, the Vaiśyas should bring up cows, by applying all their resources, body, mind, power and riches.

#### An Important Fact Concerning Cow-Rearing

A cow is to be reared from every point of view. Human beings can attain, four important aims of life, through cow-rearing—these are money (artha), righteousness (Dharma), desire (Kāma) and salvation (Mokṣa). In the materialistic world of today, a cow is very useful. Her milk, churned butter and dung, add to the wealth of a nation. Our country, is an agricultural country. So bullocks, are used to plough the land. The land, can also be ploughed by male-buffaloes, or camels. But bullocks, are superior to them. Buffaloes cannot work so efficiently, as bullocks because the latter have more sāttvika strength, than the former. The latter can work for a longer time, in the sun, than the former. Moreover, the number of the buffaloes is smaller than that of bullocks. As far as camels, are concerned, they cost more than bullocks. If cows are reared, they give birth to bullocks. So bullocks are not to be bought. Bullocks born of foreign cows cannot be used in farming, because ploughs cannot be put on their necks, as they have no withers.

The cow is a sacred animal. The air which touches her body becomes pure. Her dung and urine, check epidemics, such as plague and cholera etc. Houses plastered with dung, are not

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\*Agriculture, trade, cow-rearing and lending money for interest are the duties of a Vaiśya. But cow-rearing has been our profession since time immemorial (Śrīmadbhā. 10/24/21).

so much affected by bombs, as the cemented houses. Dung eliminates poison. In Banārāsa, a saint saved a man, who was supposed to be dead by snake-bite, by smearing his body with dung, two times. Urine of cow, is very useful in heart diseases. A little quantity of urine of a she-calf, as a dose everyday, cures stomach diseases. A saint, suffering from asthma had a lot of relief, by drinking a little urine of the she-calf. In these days, several medicines are prepared from the dung and urine of cows. Gas is also prepared from dung, for cooking purpose.

The grains produced by the dung and urine of the cows as manure, is pure. Dung and urine of cows, make the land more fertile than chemical fertilizers, as was once experimented, on a crop of grapes. Chemical fertilizers, destroy the fertility of land in a few years, and makes it barren, while the manure of cow dung and urine, maintains well its fertility. Cow-dung is being exported to foreign countries, so that the lost fertility of land there, may be restored.

Cows of our country are gentle and sātṭvika. So their sātṭvika milk sharpens intellect and makes their nature mild. Foreign cows give more quantity of milk, but as they are angry by nature, their milk makes us, cruel. A she-buffalo gives more milk than a cow, but her milk is not sātṭvika. Those who drink cows' milk, are more active than those who drink a she-buffalo's milk. Once, an experiment was made on military horses and it was found that horses fed on cow-milk, could cross a river, while the horses fed on buffalo-milk, could not, though the latter seemed stronger. The milk of she-camel, being tāmasika is not useful and its curd and butter, are not prepared. In the Jurisprudence, it is mentioned that camels, dogs and donkeys etc., are untouchable.

Cows occupy an important place in all religious rites. Her milk, churned butter (ghee) and dung etc., are used in rites of birth, tonsure and sacred thread etc. Cow-dung purifies, a place. Cow's milk is used in preparing sweet dishes which are offered to Brāhmaṇas, in honour of manes. A cow is offered as charity,

to a Brāhmaṇa, to escape hell. In religious ceremonies a mixture of dung, urine, milk, curd and churned butter (ghee), known as 'Pañcagavya' is used.

Her ghee, is used in religious sacrifices, which are performed to satisfy desires. In the Raghu family, cow had an important place. Her milk and ghee, are nourishing.

Service to the cow without expectation of any reward, leads to salvation and purifies the heart. Lord Kṛṣṇa is known as Gopāla, because He staged a human play, as a cowherd, with bare-feet. In ancient times sages reared cows and their milk and ghee, sharpened their intellect. So they could produce great and rare classics (literature). Cow's milk and butter, provided them longevity, so a synonym of ghee (butter), is 'Āyu'. Great emperors, went to those sages for consultation.

In historical records, there are names mentioned of innumerable persons, who sacrificed their lives, for the protection of cows. But how sad it is, that today thousands of cows are being slaughtered daily, out of greed! If this state of affairs continues, cows will totally disappear. Then cow-dung will not be available. Without cow-dung lands will grow barren, and there will be no production of corn and cotton (cloth). People will be deprived of the bare necessities of life, such as food, water and clothes and they will have to lead a miserable life. The nation, will become dependent and weak. Slaughter of cows, is the main cause of famines, droughts, volcanoes and strifes etc. So it is our first and foremost duty, to stop this slaughter, with might and main.

We should rear cows, use their milk and butter, use cow-dung-gas, for cooking, make cow-pens, in order to protect them, protect the existing pastures (grazing grounds) and press the government to leave more areas of land, free for pastures. The policy of cow-slaughter, should be opposed and government should be forced, through public opinion to enforce a law to stop cow-slaughter immediately, throughout the country, for the protection of the country.

**'Paricaryātmakam karma śūdrasyāpi svabhāvajam'**—It is the duty of a Śūdra, to render service to the people of the four Varṇas (Castes), with all his resources.

Here, a doubt rises how can a Śūdra, who is born with predominance of the mode of ignorance, endowed with seven evil propensities, such as ignorance, heedlessness, indolence, sleep, unillumination, inactivity and delusion (Gītā 14/8,14,17), render service to others? The clarification is, that it is mentioned in the Gītā, that those possessing the mode of goodness go upwards to the higher regions, the passionate remain in the middle region (mortal world) while those steeped in ignorance, sink downwards (Gītā 14/18). If a being dies, when Rajas (the mode of passion) is predominant in him, he is born among men who are attached to action (Gītā 14/15). It means that all human beings, have predominance of the mode of passion. All these human beings have further been divided into fourfold caste (social order), according to the predominance of their modes—sāttvika, rājasa or tāmasa. So performance of action is important, for all human beings. Therefore, a human birth, has been called 'Karmayoni' (Birth for action). In the Gītā also, while mentioning the duties of the four social orders, the Lord mentions the expressions 'Svabhāvaja Karma' and 'Svabhāvanīyata Karma'. So all men, are inclined to perform actions. Thus, service is the duty of a śūdra, born of his nature and it involves no exertion for him.

The temperament of a Brāhmaṇa, a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya, is dominated by discrimination and they also possess purity, while because of predominance of delusion, a Śūdra's discrimination, is veiled. It is because of his veiled discrimination, that he has predominance of obedience and service, he has a natural inclination, for service. So service to members of the four Varṇas, by obeying them and by affording them facilities, in carrying out their vocational and daily duties, is his natural duty.

**What do natural duties mean?**

The nature of the embodied soul which is sentient and

Prakṛti which is insentient, are different. The sentient, never undergoes any modifications, while Prakṛti being kaleidoscopic ever undergoes modifications. The self (soul or spirit), being a fragment of the Lord, is sentient. There is no connection between the sentient and the insentient. But its attachment to the insentient Prakṛti, becomes the cause of Its birth in good and evil wombs (Gītā 13/21). Thus men are born, according to their qualities (modes), because of their attachment with them as Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas or Śūdras. All of them have a natural inclination to their duties, mentioned above. If a person performs these duties, having an egoistic notion for enjoyment, by having a selfish motive, he is bound. But if he performs these without expecting any reward, by giving up selfish motive and egoistic notion, it becomes "Karmayoga", and he is not bound. Through this Karmayoga (Discipline of Action), he worships the Lord, who has manifested Himself, as the entire universe. If one by surrendering himself to God, performs spiritual actions (utterance of His name, meditation, good company and study of the scriptures etc.,) his actions turn into Bhaktiyoga, (The Discipline of Devotion). Then his attachment (affinity to Prakṛti or Nature) is totally renounced, there remains nothing, but the Lord. Thus a striver realizes Him. Then all the actions with his body, senses, mind and intellect are performed, according to his Varṇa (Caste), and Āśrama (Stage of life), as sanctioned by scriptures and he is not attached to them. His actions are, models for others and his love for the Lord, Who is all-bliss, enhances every moment.

Should one's Varṇa (Caste), be decided by birth or actions? A being is born, as a man according to the qualities and actions of his previous birth. So his caste is decided by birth. Thus marriages etc., should be decided by caste. Secondly, for a person whose aim is to receive worldly pleasures, prosperity, luxuries, honour and praise etc., it is obligatory to discharge his duty, according to his caste. If he does not do so, he has a downfall. Even the Vedas, abandon such a demoralized person, at the time

of his death, even though he has studied, the six supplementary branches of sacred sciences, (the Vedas) viz., education (Śikṣā), ritual part of the Vedas (Kalpa), an exposition of the Vedāṅgas (Nirukta), metre (Chanda), grammar (Vyākaraṇa) and astrology, (Jyotiṣa). But, he whose aim is God-realization, practises chanting, meditation, adoration, study of scriptures and performs, other spiritual activities, in order to attain his aim. In the spiritual discipline, spiritual feelings and conduct, play a more important role, than Varna or Caste. Thirdly, a striver, having the aim of God-realization, attaching more importance to spiritual activities, performs his obligatory duty, according to his caste and stage of life, regarding it as worship to God.

Further, in the forty-sixth verse the Lord explains, that He from whom all beings emanate and by whom all this is pervaded—by worshipping Him through the performance of his own duty, does man attain perfection. Every person, has got the right to perform his duty. The gods, demons, beasts and birds do not possess this natural right, yet it is not forbidden to them, because being a fragment of God, they can attain Him. Every being, can lay full claim, over the Lord. It proves, that there is predominance of feelings, discrimination and action in God-realization, while birth predominates in dealings, such as livelihood and marriages etc. So, in the Bhāgavata it is mentioned, that if a man of a lower caste possesses the virtues of higher caste, he should be regarded noble, though he is born of a low womb. Similarly, in the Mahābhārata it is mentioned, in a dialogue between Yudhiṣṭhira and Nahuṣa, that a Śūdra, whose conduct is noble, should not be regarded, as a Śūdra and a Brāhmaṇa who does not perform the duty of a Brāhmaṇa, should not be regarded as, a Brāhmaṇa. It means, that there is predominance of action, rather than birth.

Scriptures reveal, that even a man of the lowest caste, can possess the virtues of the highest caste and progress spiritually. So he need not get discouraged. Scriptures encourage a man of high caste to perform his duty, if he does not perform it. In

Jurisprudence (Smṛti), it is mentioned that Brāhmaṇas, who eat forbidden food and who are immoral, should not be respected even, by words. But scriptures declare, that a devotee of the Lord in spite of belonging to the lowest caste, is superior to a learned Brāhmaṇa.\* A Brāhmaṇa has been called, the voice of the Lord's cosmic form. It means, that he has to impart knowledge and teach and preach to the people of the four Varnas, with words of mouth because he possesses knowledge.

A Kṣatriya, has been called an arm or hand of the Lord's cosmic form, because it is he, who protects people of the four Varnas (Castes), from enemies. A hand protects the body from danger and serves it in sickness. Such is the duty of a Kṣatriya. In case of anarchy it becomes the duty of all four castes to protect their kith and kin, as well as their property.

A Vaiśya, has been called the stomach of the Lord's cosmic form. As the stomach, receives and digests food and nourishes all the limbs, similarly, it is the duty of a Vaiśya, to accumulate commodities and to supply these to people, by transporting these from one place to another, according to the need and demand of

\* (1) The low caste who chants the name of the Lord is noble. The noble men who chant His name have performed penances, oblations, pilgrimages, deeds of virtuous conduct and have studied the scriptures (Śrīmadbhā. 3/33/7).

(2) I hold that a low caste who has surrendered himself to God with his mind, speech, actions, wealth and life-breath is superior to a Brāhmaṇa endowed with twelve qualities who has a disinclination for the lotus-feet of Lord Viṣṇu because the pariah sanctifies his family while the Brāhmaṇa having a disinclination for the Lord because of the pride of his superiority complex can't sanctify even himself (Śrīmadbhā. 7/9/10).

(3) The low caste who remains engrossed in devotion to God is superior to a sage, while a Brāhmaṇa devoid of devotion to Lord Viṣṇu is inferior to a pariah because such a pariah with his kith and kin attains liberation from the worldly bondage while that Brāhmaṇa is hurled into hells.

(4) A low caste who is a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu is superior to a Brāhmaṇa who is not a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu because such a pariah with his kith and kin attains liberation from the worldly bondage while such a Brāhmaṇa goes to hells (Brahmavaivarta, Brahma. 11/39).

(5) If a Śūdra is a devotee of God, he is not a Śūdra, he is the noblest Brāhmaṇa. In fact out of all the Varnas (Castes) a Śūdra is he who is devoid of devotion to God (Mahābhārata).



the people. It is he, who offers charity to Brāhmaṇas, pays tax to the Kṣatriyas, brings himself up and remunerates, the Śūdra for his labour. By agriculture, trade and cow-rearing he supplies, the need of the four Varnaṣ.

A Śūdra, has been called the foot of the cosmic form of the Lord. As feet carry the weight of the entire body, from one place to another, a Śūdra renders service, to the people of all four Varnaṣ (Castes).

These are the natural duties, of the persons of four castes, and involve no difficulty or exertion, for them. For duties, in more detail, refer to the books on Jurisprudence (Smṛti) and follow those duties (Gītā 16/24).

Though at present the four Varnaṣ (castes), are mixed, yet Brāhmaṇas possess virtues, such as serenity, self-control and austerity etc., more than people of the other three castes. Similarly, heroism, vigour and firmness are specially found in the Kṣatriyas, while Vaiśyas are more well-versed in agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade, than the other three castes. In the same way, a Śūdra has more inclination to render service, than people of other three castes. Thus the people of different castes, have a natural inclination, for their duties, which are born of their nature, even today.

Some ignorant people, who have not studied the scriptures seriously, blame the Brāhmaṇas (persons of the priest class) that they have established their superiority in writing the scriptures. They hold, that the second position or place went to the Kṣatriyas, because of the authority and the third to the Vaiśyas, as they supplied the needs of the people. The people of these three castes, trampled on the Śūdras, out of selfishness and pride and asked them to render service, to persons of the three castes.

The clarification is, that it is written nowhere that Brāhmaṇas are superior to the people of the other three castes, and so they should lead a luxurious life. Their life is full of renunciation, hardship and penance. Even in the household life, a Brāhmaṇa

should not accumulate wealth. He should not hoard grain more than a full jar and be not attached to mundane pleasures. He should accept charity, only after performing his religious sacrifices, oblations and other religious rites etc. If he accepts the gift of a cow, he should observe expiation.

When a Brāhmaṇa, is invited in order to offer water and food etc., (as a 'Śrāddha') in honour of manes, the Brāhmaṇa invokes the hosts' manes, by observing continence and self-control. He performs the rites of offering oblation, to the manes according to scriptural injunction. Then he takes a meal in the house of the host. Afterwards he recites a sacred formula of Gāyatrī (a mantra of the Ṛgveda, which is to be recited daily by the twice-born), to purify himself. It is not something creditable, for a Brāhmaṇa to take a meal on the occasion of 'Śrāddha', or to accept charity. The credit lies in his renunciation. He accepts the host's meal and gift, to enable the host's manes, to attain emancipation, rather than for his selfish motive.

A Brāhmaṇa, can earn his living, by five means according to Manusmṛti (Code of Manu)\*—

(i) When crop is harvested, a few grains remain scattered here and there. A Brāhmaṇa picks these. Similarly, in the grain market, where grain is weighed, grains scattered on the earth, are picked by him. The former is known as 'Śiloṇchavṛtti', while, the latter as 'Kapotavṛtti'. This sort of livelihood, called 'Ṛta' is regarded as the best for him.

(ii) If a host offers him a gift, without his request, it is called 'Amṛtavṛtti' or 'Ayācitavṛtti'.

(iii) Getting a gift as a reward, by explaining people of auspicious time for marriage and other rites etc., is called Mṛtavṛtti.

(iv) Earning a living through, business is 'Satyānṛtavṛtti'

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\* Ṛta, Amṛta, Mṛta, Pramṛta and Satyānṛta—these are the five means of earning a Brāhmaṇa's livelihood. He should never earn his living by rendering service to others.

(v) If he is unable to earn his livelihood by anyone of the above-mentioned means, he can earn it, by agriculture by following the ordinance of scriptures, as he should not plough land with one bullock, nor in scorching heat of the sun and so on. It is called 'Pramṛtavṛtti'. He should eat food, after performing five daily ceremonies, (the study of the scriptures, offering sacrifice to gods, hospitality to guests, offering water to manes and casting of food, on ground for insects etc.).\*

In the Gītā, there is mention of nine natural duties of a Brāhmaṇa, and none of these is, for earning his livelihood. In the case of a Kṣatriya, out of the seven natural duties, the two—war and lordliness, are partial means of earning his living. In the case of a Vaiśya, all the three natural duties—agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade, are the means of earning a living. Similarly, is the case of a Śūdra, whose only natural duty is service, which is a source of earning and for him there are not many restrictions, on his food and source of livelihood.

The Lord, in the Gītā, declares, "Devoted to his own duty, man attains perfection" (Gītā 18/45). It means that a śūdra can attain perfection, merely by service, a Vaiśya, by agriculture, cow-rearing and trade, a Kṣatriya, by seven duties, such as heroism and vigour etc., while a Brāhmaṇa, by performing nine duties, such as serenity and self-control etc.

Then He declares, "By worshipping Him through the performance of his own duty, man attains perfection" (Gītā 18/46). In fact, a man attains perfection by performing duty, as worship to Him, without expecting reward. As far as rendering service, is concerned, it is a sort of worship. So a śūdra worships God through service. Thus his worship is doubled. So he can attain perfection, more easily than a Brāhmaṇa. Secondly the responsibility fall on the eldest son, while the youngest receives

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\* It is forbidden for a Brāhmaṇa or a Kṣatriya to earn his livelihood by rendering service to others (Manusmṛti 4/4, 4/6). But it does not mean that he should not render service to others. He should serve others even the Śūdra. But he should not earn his living by service.

the greatest love, without having any responsibility. Here, the eldest son is a Brāhmaṇa, while the youngest one, is a Śūdra.

In fact, a man of a high caste, has to face difficulty in obeying scriptural injunctions thoroughly, and so he attains salvation with difficulty, while a man of lower caste attains Him easily. In this context, there is a story in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa. Once several sages went to Vedavyāsa, in order to know his decision about the relative superiority of castes (Varṇa). Vedavyāsa received them cordially and went to take a bath in the Ganges. While bathing he uttered three times "Kaliyuga (Kali age), you are lucky; Women, you are lucky; Śūdras, you are lucky." When he came back, the sages asked him how Kali age, women and śūdras were lucky. He answered, "In the Kali age, women and Śūdras by performing their duties, can attain salvation quickly, and easily."

One more point needs attention here. A man who works for his selfish motive, does not deserve respect either in the family, or society. So, is the case with Brāhmaṇas. They have not praised themselves in the scriptures, in order to prove their superiority. Noble men always praise and respect, other people. Brāhmaṇas are respected and praised, for their virtue of renunciation. So everyone, should give a serious thought to this topic, and should not accuse saints, sages and Brāhmaṇas, who wrote the scriptures.

The fourfold order, of society (viz., Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and the śūdra) was created, according to divisions of quality and work (Gītā 4/13). But even if a being, has to be born in either a high womb, because of a boon etc., or low womb, because of a curse etc., he acts according to the nature of the previous birth. It is because of this factor, that persons such as Dhundhukārī etc., in spite of being born in high wombs, perform evil actions while persons, such as Vidura, Kabīra and Raidāsa etc., in spite of being born, in low wombs perform virtuous deeds and become great men.

Today, we should try to get rid of personal and social evils,

which are against ordinances of scriptures, by discrimination, good company and study of scriptures. We should make our life pure and holy, so that we may attain, the aim of human life.



*Link:—The Lord in the next two verses, explains why a man should perform, his natural duties.*

**स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।**

**स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥ ४५ ॥**

**sve sve karmaṇyabhirataḥ saṁsiddhiṁ labhate naraḥ  
svakarmanirataḥ siddhiṁ yathā vindati tacchṛṇu**

Devoted to his own inherent duty, man attains perfection (God-realization). How he, devoted to his own duty, attains perfection, that thou hear now. 45

*Comment:—*

'Sve sve karmaṇyabhirataḥ saṁsiddhiṁ labhate naraḥ'—A study of the Gītā reveals, that a man's nature, may lead him to salvation if he remains free from attachment and aversion, as well as fruit of action. If a man performs his natural duties scrupulously, without self-interest and attachment, the impetus to action calms down, and he becomes detached from objects and actions etc. So a striver, gets established in the self, which is natural. Then, he is naturally attracted towards the Lord. A man, should perform his duty promptly and enthusiastically, for the welfare of others. By doing so, he experiences a sort of pleasure, called, 'Abhirati', for action. But if an act is done with attachment, having an eye on its return—this is called 'Āsakti', for action. The former leads him to perfection (salvation), while the latter leads him to bondage.

In this context in 'Sve sve karmaṇi', 'Svakarmaṇā tamabhyarcya', 'Svabhāvanīyatam karma' and 'Sahajam karma' etc., the term 'Karma' (action) has been used, in singular number. It means that if a man performs an action or several actions