

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ ५ ॥

na hi kaścitkṣaṇamapi jātu tiṣṭhatyakarmakṛt
kāryate hyavaśaḥ karma sarvaḥ prakṛtijairguṇaiḥ

For, no one under any circumstances can remain even for a moment, without undertaking action; everyone is compelled to act, by the modes born of nature (prakṛti). 5

Comment:—

'Na hi kaścitkṣaṇamapi jātu tiṣṭhatyakarmakṛt'—In the Disciplines of Action, Knowledge and Devotion, no striver can ever remain without performing actions. Hence the terms 'Kaścit' (anyone), 'kṣaṇam' (a moment) and 'jātu' (verily) are uncommon. Here, the term 'kaścit' denotes, that no one whether he is wise or ignorant, can remain without performing action. Though a wise man may have no relation with his so-called body, yet actions are constantly performed by it. The term 'kṣaṇam' denotes, that a man does not assume that he performs actions constantly, but he cannot remain without performing action, even for a moment, so long as he assumes his affinity for the body. The term 'jātu' means that a man cannot remain without performing action, in any state such as wakefulness, sleep, sound sleep and unconsciousness. The Lord explains the reason by the term 'avaśaḥ' (helplessly) in the second half of the verse, by declaring that he has to act helplessly by impulses born of nature. Nature is ever changeful. A striver has to do nothing for himself. He has to perform actions sanctioned by the scriptures, for the welfare of others. So far as forbidden actions are concerned, they cannot be performed by a striver, because his aim is God-realization.

Many people regard, only those actions as actions, which are performed by the gross body. But according to the Gītā, the activities undertaken by the body, speech or mind are also regarded as actions (Gītā 18/15). And those actions, whether physical or

mental to which a man is attached, lead him to bondage.

Generally, people regard their professions, such as business, service or teaching and nursing of children etc., as actions, but they do not consider eating, drinking, sleeping, waking and thinking etc., as actions. So, when they renounce their profession, they think that they are not performing actions. But it is a serious error on their part. All the activities performed by the physical body, for the purpose of earning a living, actions performed by the subtle body like sleeping and thinking and in trance, performed by the causal body, are all regarded as actions. So long as, a man has ego and sense of mineness with the body, the activities performed by body are actions as the body is an evolute of nature and nature is never inactive. So, a person having egoism and attachment to the body, cannot remain without performing action, in either of the states, either of activity or inactivity.

'Kāryate hyavaśaḥ karma sarvaḥ prakṛtijairguṇaiḥ'— Everyone is made to act helplessly, by the modes of nature (prakṛti) because nature and its modes are ever active (Gītā 3/27, 13/29). Though, the soul is inactive, detached, imperishable, uniform and unconnected, yet so long as, it being attached to nature and its evolute—the gross, subtle and causal bodies wants to derive pleasure and remains helpless under the control of nature (Gītā 14/5). This helplessness of the self, under the control of nature, is due to affinity with nature. This has also been mentioned, in the eighth verse of the ninth chapter and the nineteenth verse of the eighth chapter.

Individual nature is moulded by tendencies and tendencies are born of modes and modes in their term evolve from prakṛti. Therefore, to be subjected to nature or modes or prakṛti is one and the same thing. As a matter of fact, subjection to the prakṛti and its evolutes, is the root-cause of all bondage. The same, on different occasions, has been defined as subjection to time, nature, action and prakṛti etc. So long as, the self (soul) does

not become free from nature and its modes i.e., does not realize God, it remains helpless under the control of modes, time, nature, pleasures and even persons, property etc. But when it transcends the modes of nature and realizes the self or God, it does not remain helpless, it attains freedom which is axiomatic.

Something Noteworthy

There are two states of prakṛti—active (gross) and inactive (subtle). Performance of action, is the active state, while remaining idle in sleep etc., is the inactive state. But, even in the inactive state nature does not remain inactive, and activity goes on, in its subtle form. When a person is awakened by someone, he says that he was aroused, in half sleep. This proves, that the process of sleep continued even, in the inactive state. In the same way, activity continues in a trance, dissolution (pralaya) and final dissolution etc., in its subtle form.

In fact nature never remains inactive because it is ever-changing. In the self (spirit or soul) there is no doership, but having assumed Its affinity for bodies etc., the evolutes of nature, It becomes helpless, under the control of nature. It is because of helplessness, that though, being a non-doer, assumes Itself, as doer. All the actions of the universe, such as seeing, hearing, breathing, digestion of food etc., are performed by nature. So is the case with the states of childhood and youth. But the embodied soul, is bound by regarding itself as the doer of some actions.

Nature constantly undergoes changes, while in the purer self there is never any change. In fact, the worldly things have no existence of their own. The kaleidoscopic heap, seems to exist in the form of things. When a man assumes his affinity for things, he cannot remain without performing actions, even for a moment in any state. If a striver realizes that all the activities are confined to the things and he has not the least relation with them, then only can he get rid of his helplessness. A Karmayogī (follower

of the Discipline of Action) gets rid of this helplessness by renouncing the desire and attachment to the ever-changing things.

Whatever has been said, by the Lord here in this verse, has also been said, in the eleventh verse of the eighteenth chapter when He declares, "It is indeed impossible for an embodied being, to abstain from actions altogether."

Appendix—All actions are performed only in Prakṛti. But a man by accepting his identity with nature (prakṛti) becomes dependent on the modes of nature—'avaśaḥ' and he gets contaminated by actions. Therefore no person who assumes his affinity with nature, under any circumstances, can remain even for a moment without undertaking action in any state as wakefulness, sleep, sound sleep, faint, trance, creation-new creation, dissolution and final dissolution etc.

How is an action performed in the states of sound sleep, faint and trance? When a man sleeps and any person awakes him in between, he says that he was awakened without having a full (complete) sleep. It proves that at the time of sleep, the action from incompleteness to completion was going on. Similarly in faint and trance also an action goes on. In Pātañjala Yogadarśana this action has been called 'pariṇāma'.* Pariṇāma means current of variation viz., flow of change.† It means that from the beginning of trance to the state of relapse, an action goes on. If there is no action, there can't be relapse from the state of trance. At

* vyutthānanirodhasaṁskārayorabhibhavaprādurbhāvau nirodhakṣaṇa-cittānvayo nirodhāpariṇāmaḥ

sarvārthataikāgratayoḥ kṣayodayau cittasya samādhipariṇāmaḥ
tataḥ punaḥ śāntoditau tulya pratyayau cittasyaikāgratāpariṇāmaḥ

(Vibhūtipāda 9, 11-12)

† Atha ko'yaṁ pariṇāmaḥ?—Avasthitasya dravyasya pūrva dharma nivṛttau dharmāntarotpattiḥ pariṇāmaḥ.

'What is 'pariṇāma'?—the change of the state from the original (existing) one to the other new one is 'pariṇāma'.

(Yogadarśana Vibhūti 13, Vyāsa Bhāṣya)

the time of trance there is 'pariṇāma' and at the end of trance there is relapse.

'Sahajāvasthā' or 'Sahaja Samādhi' (natural state of self-realization) transcends all states of Prakṛti. In it there is no action in the least, an action is not possible. Therefore in Sahajāvasthā there is neither 'pariṇāma' (current of change) nor vyutthāna (relapse). The reason is that activities take place only in Prakṛti and its evolutes, never in the self. 'Kāryate hyavaśaḥ karma'—We are helplessly driven to action, but we are quite free in having or not having attachment or aversion for them.



Link:— In the fifth verse, it has been mentioned that no one can remain without action for a moment, even, one may object to these that a person could regard himself as free from action, by forcibly suspending the functions of the senses. The answer comes in the next verse.

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥ ६ ॥

karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya ya āste manasā smaran
indriyārthānvimūḍhātmā mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate

He who while, restraining the organs of action, thinks of sense-objects in his mind, he, of deluded understanding is a hypocrite. 6

Comment:—

'Karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya ya āste manasā smaran indriyārthānvimūḍhātmā mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate'— Here the term 'Karmendriyāṇi' does not stand only for the five organs of action (speech, hand, foot, anus and generative organ) but also stands for the five sense-organs (ear, skin, eye, taste and nose) because actions cannot be performed by the organs of action alone without sense-organs. Besides this if only the organs of action such as hand and foot etc., are restrained but the sense-organs such as ear and eye are