

in 4/22 by 'even-minded in success and failure', and in 4/23 by 'One who is devoid of attachment and works for sacrifice.'

Thus, the Lord has said, that truth about forbidden actions must be known, so that a man, having known it, may renounce desire, which is the root of forbidden actions.

Appendix—It is very difficult to gaze what fruit an action bears at present and in future for others. While performing an action a man thinks that it is of benefit to him but actually it causes harm to him. He may work for profit but it may end in loss. He acts for pleasure whereas his act results in pain. The reason is that due to the sense of doership and the desire for fruit (attachment to pleasure), man cannot determine the true nature of actions.



Link:—In the next verse, the Lord eulogizes a person who knows the truth, about actions.

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।

स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ १८ ॥

**karmaṇyakarma yaḥ paśyedakarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ
sa buddhimānmanuṣyeṣu sa yuktaḥ kṛtsnakarmakṛt**

He, who sees inaction in action and action in inaction, is wise among men, he is a Yogī and performs all his duties. 18

Comment:—

'Karmaṇyakarma yaḥ paśyet'—'Seeing inaction in action' means, to remain untainted during performance or non-performance of actions. It means also that performance or non-performance of actions, is not for the self. When a man thinks that he is the doer and so he should reap the fruit of action, he is bound by such actions. As actions are perishable, so is their fruit. The self, is eternal and has no affinity for the changing actions, and their fruits. Yet, It is bound, because of the desire, for fruit. Therefore, the Lord in the fourteenth verse declared, "Actions don't bind

Me, because I have no desire, for the fruit of actions." It is the desire for fruit, which binds one. The Lord declares, "He who is attached to the fruit of action, is bound" (Gītā 5/12).

If a striver, has no desire for fruit, new attachment does not arise; and old attachment perishes, when actions are performed for the welfare of others. Thus, he becomes, totally dispassionate. This dispassionate nature, turns all actions into inaction.

A man, has to take birth either to be free of obligations or receive these from others, for all previous births. This exchange has been going on for several births. He cannot get rid of the cycle of birth and death, so long as, he does not repay his debt. The way to close his account is, that he should pay to others what he owes to them and should not expect them to repay to him, their debts. Thus, the account will be closed and, he will be liberated, from the cycle of birth and death (Gītā 4/23).

If a person does nothing for himself, and has no desire, he gets detached from all actions and objects etc., because all objects and materials etc., such as the body, senses, mind, intellect and life-breaths are of the world, not one's own as these have been acquired from the world, so that service may be rendered to the world with these. Therefore, when a striver performs all actions (service, adoration, chant, meditation entrances also) for the welfare of the world, the flow of action is towards the world and the striver, remains detached and untainted. This is 'seeing inaction in action.'

So long as, a striver has affinity for the body and the world, the performance or non-performance of actions, will be included in action. So, a Karmayogī should remain untainted (detached), while he performs actions, as also while he does not. When a man performs actions, without having any desire for fruit, profit, honour, praise and pleasure, here or hereafter, it means, that he is detached (untainted) during the performance of actions. Similarly, when he does not perform any action, he should not

desire, in the least, to gain honour, praise, pleasures and bodily rest etc., by non-performance of actions.

He, who abandons action, because it is painful or out of fear from physical suffering or practises relinquishment of passion, (Rājasa Tyāga) while he who renounces his obligatory duty out of delusion, indolence and heedlessness, practises Tāmasa Tyāga. Both kinds of relinquishment, must be totally abandoned. Similarly, if a man does not perform action, so that he may enjoy the state of meditation or trance or liberation, he does not get detached from nature (prakṛti). When he renounces his full affinity for nature, he remains untainted while performing actions or not performing these.

'Akarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ'— 'Seeing action in inaction' means, performing action or not performing it, by being detached (untainted).

Worldly people want to gain, something or the other, through performance and non-performance of actions, while a Karmayogī's only aim through the two, is the welfare of the world, by remaining detached. The Lord declares, "For him there is no interest, in what is done or what is not done" (Gītā 3/18). If he has any self-interest, he is not a Karmayogī, but is rather a doer of actions.

So long as, a striver assume his affinity for nature, he holds that he progresses in the mundane sphere through the performance of actions, while in the spiritual sphere, through their non-performance. But, in fact, it is not so. As walking and eating etc., are actions of the physical body, so are reflection and meditation, the actions of the subtle body and trance, the action, of the causal body. Therefore, he who performs his duty (action) for the welfare of the world, by remaining detached (untainted), sees inaction in action. The same, has been pointed out, in the forty-eighth verse of the second chapter, by the Lord, when He declares, "Perform action, being steadfast in Yoga (equanimity)."

Activity or non-activity with some motive in the world, are both actions. To remain quite detached, while doing actions or refraining from them throughout, and being detached, while there is performance or non-performance of actions,—this total detachment under all circumstances, is called 'Yoga', and is 'Karmayoga.'

A striver should remain equanimous, during the performance or non-performance of actions, called Karmayoga.

Question:—Why has the Lord mentioned 'inaction in action' and 'action in inaction', while in both cases, inaction or detachment, is the predominating factor?

Answer:—When a man sees inaction in action, there remains the dominance of detachment. But, when he sees action in inaction, there is predominance of performance or non-performance of action. It means, that detachment has its affinity for the self, while performance or non-performance of actions, has its affinity for the world, including the body. Therefore, detachment is one's own duty, while performance or non-performance of action, is the duty of another. In order to differentiate the two, the Lord has mentioned 'seeing inaction in action' and 'action in inaction'.

In the Discipline of Action, there is performance or non-performance of action, for the welfare of the world without attachment, because, while performing actions, one should remain detached and while remaining detached, one should perform actions—these two aspects are the principles of the Gītā.

'Pravṛtti' (activity) and 'Nivṛtti' (non-activity)—both are in domain of nature. Nature is ever-changing and So is performance or non-performance of actions, while the Self Which is the illuminator and base of the two, ever remains uniform without undergoing any modification. In order to explain this fact, the Lord has declared, that he who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction both is wise. It means, that a striver while remaining established in the self, should perform actions for the welfare of

the world viz., as a sacrifice (Yajña).

'Sa buddhimānmanuṣyeṣu'—The striver, who sees inaction in action and action in inaction i.e., remains detached (untainted), and knows the truth about action. Unless he is detached i.e., regards objects and actions as his, and for him, it means that he has not known the reality about actions.

In order to, know the truth about God, a striver has to identify the self with Him, while in order to know the reality about the world, he has to separate the self from the world (actions and objects), for he (the self) has identity with God, while he is different from the world. All actions, are transitory while the self is eternal.

As a common man cannot remain unsoiled, in a coal cellar, only a wise man could do so, similarly, only a wise man can remain detached from actions, while performing these. Therefore, here as well as in the tenth verse of the eighteenth chapter, the Lord calls such a man wise among men. He wants to say that for such a wise man, nothing further remains to be known.

'Sa yuktaḥ'—A Karmayogī, remains equanimous in success and failure, because he totally renounces the desire, for the fruit of actions. Here the term 'Yoga', stands for equanimity. One is a Yogī, because he remains established, in equanimity.

Every being has a natural union with God, but he forgets it, because he assumes his affinity for the world. When he performs actions for the welfare of the world, by renouncing desire for fruit, a sense of possession and attachment, his assumed affinity for the world is renounced and he realizes his union with God, which is natural and eternal. For such a Yogī nothing remains to be attained, for he has achieved Divinity.

'Kṛtsnakarmakṛt'—So long as, a man has to attain something or the other, he has to perform actions viz., his attachment for actions, does not wither.

Perishable actions bear perishable fruits. So long as, one

has desire for the perishable, he will have to undertake actions. But, on having renounced all affinity for the perishable, he attains to the Imperishable Lord and nothing further remains to be done. Then, a Karmayogī has nothing to do, with the performance or non-performance of actions, i.e., he becomes a performer of all actions.

When nothing remains to be done, to be known and to be attained by such a Karmayogī, he is liberated from the evil, bondage of the wheel of birth and death in the world (Gītā 4/16, 32).

Appendix—There are two spheres—one of action and the other of inaction. Out of these two, inaction is the essence. Therefore he who sees inaction in action viz., while performing an action remains untainted and he who sees action in inaction viz., while remaining untainted performs action, for him nothing remains to be done, to be known and to be gained. As at the beginning of an action ‘Gaṇeśajī’ is worshipped but during the performance of the action ‘Gaṇeśajī’ is not worshipped all the time. But it is not the case here of remaining untainted in actions at the beginning only. Therefore the Lord has mentioned inaction in action and action in inaction. It means that one should never be tainted (desire for fruit and the sense of doership) viz., he should ever remain untainted.

In the eighth verse of the third chapter the Lord declares that the performance of an action is superior to inaction—‘karma jyāyo hyakarmaṇaḥ’ while here He declares that it is better to see inaction (non-doership) than the performance of action; and for the person who is thus untainted, nothing remains to be done, to be known and to be gained. It proves that a man should be free from the desire for fruit and from the sense of doership because these two severally bind a man.



Link:—Now, the Lord in the next two verses, describes the