

the sense of doership and the desire of fruit." Here the Lord declares that the seekers of salvation have also performed actions by renouncing the sense of doership and the desire for fruit. The reason is that actions performed with the sense of doership and with the desire for fruit alone lead to bondage. Therefore the Lord asks Arjuna to perform actions in the same way as the seekers of salvation have performed.

In Jñānayoga first there is renunciation of the sense of doership and then the desire for fruit automatically disappears. In Karmayoga first there is renunciation of the desire for fruit and then the sense of doership easily get extinct.



Link:—In the preceding verse, the Lord explained that having known the divine character of actions, the ancient seekers of liberation performed actions. Now, the Lord in the next verse, starts the topic of, knowing the truth about action.

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १६ ॥

**kiṁ karma kimakarmeti kavayo'pyatra mohitāḥ
tatte karma pravakṣyāmi yajjñātvā mokṣyase'subhāt**

What is action? What is inaction? As to this, even the wise are confused. Therefore, I will explain to you what action is, by knowing which, you shall be liberated, from its evil effect (i.e.,) worldly bondage. 16

Comment:—

'Kiṁ karma'— Common men believe that activities done with the body and senses are mere actions, while non-performance of an act, is inaction. But, the Lord declares that activities performed with body, speech and mind, are actions (Gītā 18/15).

An action, is determined by the motive by which, it is performed. An action, such as adoration of a goddess, is of the

mode of goodness, but if it is undertaken with the motive of fulfilling mundane desires, it becomes a mode of passion. If it is undertaken with the motive of someone's ruin, the same action is, of the mode of ignorance. In the same way, actions which are performed without attachment, a sense of mine and desire for fruits, are classed as inaction, and these do not bind a man, to the fruit of action. It means, that truth about action cannot be determined by outward activity only. In this connection, even wise men, possessing knowledge of the scriptures get confused, i.e., they are, at a loss to understand the truth. An action is classed, as an action or inaction, or is forbidden, according to the motive with which it is performed. Therefore, the Lord declares, that He will explain to Arjuna, what action is, why and how it binds a man, and how he can be liberated from it and by knowing the truth about it.

If a man, has a sense of mine, attachment and desire for fruits, it means that action is being performed by him i.e., he is tainted by that action, even though he does not perform an outward action. On the other hand, if he has neither a sense of mine, nor attachment nor desire for fruit, it means that actions are not being performed by him i.e., he is not tainted by such actions, even though he performs actions. Thus performance or non-performance of actions is inaction, if he has no attachment, while performance or non-performance of actions is classed as action, if he has any attachment.

'Kimakarmeti'—The Lord, divided action into two groups—actions and inaction. Actions, bind a man, while inactions (which are undertaken for others) liberate him.

In reality, physical abjuring of actions, is not inaction. The Lord, has declared that the renunciation of actions, through delusion is stated to be, of the nature of 'ignorance' (Gītā 18/7). The exclusion of action, from fear of physical suffering, is called 'passionate' (Gītā 18/8). In the renunciation

of the nature of 'ignorance' and 'passion', the affinity for actions is not renounced, though the performance of actions is. Renunciation, in which attachment and desire for reward, are abandoned, is regarded as one of 'goodness' (Gītā 18/9). In fact, this is called 'inaction', because affinity for actions is renounced in such a exclusion. Therefore, inaction, consists in the performance of actions, by remaining untainted by them.

Even the wise are confused, about the truth of what, an inaction is. The reality about an action or an inaction is, that it should not bind a man. Arjuna holds that he will attain salvation if he does not indulge himself in the cruel deed of fighting. So the Lord declares, that a man does not attain to perfection, by mere renunciation of action (Gītā 3/4) but he can attain it, even by engaging himself in battle (Gītā 2/38).

Thus inaction, consists either in the performance of actions by remaining untainted or in remaining untainted, while performing actions.

'Kavayo'pyatra mohitāḥ—How can common men understand the truth about action and inaction, when even the learned who are well-versed in the scriptures, are at a loss to grasp this topic? It means, that only the liberated souls or the Lord knows, the truth about action and inaction.

'Tatte karma pravakṣyāmi'—A man, (the soul) is bound by actions, so he would also be liberated, by action. The Lord promises here that, He will declare the reality about actions, so that they may not lead him to bondage and he may be liberated from the bondage of the cycle of birth and death.

In fact, it is neither action nor inaction, which binds a man, but it is the desire, the sense of mine and attachment, which bind him. If he renounces desire and feelings of possession and attachment, he is liberated, while performing action, and not by performing it. One, who understands this fact, knows the reality about actions.

In the fiftieth verse of the second chapter, the Lord declared, "Yoga is skill in action." It means that Yoga viz., equanimity (evenness of mind) is the means to be liberated from the binding nature of actions. Arjuna could not understand this point; therefore, the Lord promises to explain this point again.

An Important Fact

'Karmayoga' is not an action. It is selfless service. In it non-attachment predominates. Service and non-attachment—both are not actions. Discrimination, plays an important role in both of these.

As the body, senses, mind and intellect etc., are acquired these are transitory. They should be used, only in rendering service to the world, because these have been acquired from the world. Moreover, these will have to be renounced. But, the Self or God Who is ours, can never be renounced. Only that which is really not ours, but we have assumed as ours, is renounced. In fact, this is not renunciation, it is discrimination.

All materials, (the body, senses, mind and intellect etc.,) are neither of the self, nor for the self, but are of the world and for the world. The self ever remains unaffected and uniform, while the materials are changing. Therefore whatever action is performed, with these materials is for the good of others, not for the self. In this there is a vital fact, that no action can be performed, without materials. Even the greatest writer cannot write, without ink, pen and paper, which are of the world. Therefore, when a person, uses the articles of the world for the world, he in fact, does not render any service to the world, he gives the things of the world to the world. Thus he merely uses his discrimination. Thus, it is discrimination which leads to renunciation and service.

Discrimination has been bestowed upon beings from time immemorial. Had it been the fruit of virtuous action, how could virtuous actions have been performed, without discrimination? It

is discrimination by which one can resolve, to perform virtuous actions, by renouncing evil actions. As discrimination is self-evident, so is Karmayoga (Discipline of Action) which involves no labour. Similarly, in the Discipline of Knowledge, the self (Which is detached) is self-evident, while in the Discipline of Devotion, the affinity for God is self-evident.

'Yajñātvā mokṣyase'śubhāt'—The self, is good and virtuous, while the ever-changing world, is bad or evil. The self, in spite of being an eternal fragment of God, and developing a disinclination for God, has got entangled in the perishable world. The Lord declares, that He will describe reality about action, by knowing, which he (Arjuna) will be liberated from its evil effect i.e., worldly bondage of the cycle of birth and death.

[The topic of knowledge of action, which begins in this verse, will be concluded in the thirty-second verse with the declaration, "Thus knowing, thou shalt be liberated".]

A Vital Fact

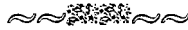
In the term, 'Karmayoga' Karma (actions) are performed for the world, while Yoga (union with God), is for the self. Action and non-action—these are the two states of action, which involve egoism. So long as, a man has egoistic notions he has, affinity for the world; and so long as he has affinity for the world, he continues to have egoistic notions. But 'Yoga' transcends the two states. In order to realize that Yoga it is essential to be free from egoism. The method of being free from egoism, is performance or non-performance of actions, by being equanimous and remaining equanimous during performance or non-performance, of actions. It means, that he should have equanimity (evenness of mind) during the performance and non-performance of actions (Gītā 2/48), i.e., he should remain untainted.

Those, who believe that a man is inclined towards the world by performance of actions, and is inclined towards God through

non-performance of actions, and having a disinclination for the world, meditate on God and experience a trance, also perform actions. The feeling, that God (perfection) will be attained through meditation and trance, is also a subtle form of action, because one expects God-realization through performance of actions, in the form of meditation and trance, while God is beyond action, as well as inaction.

The Lord declares, that He will explain the reality about action by which one will attain God, immediately. God pervades everywhere, all the time, through things, persons, bodies, senses, minds, intellects and life-breaths etc., equally. He remains united with us, when we perform actions and when we do not perform actions. But, we are unable to realize Him, because of our affinity for actions and objects, born of nature (prakṛti).

A man has an egoistic notion, equally during the performance of actions, as well as during the non-performance of actions, but his egoism merges in the world, when he instead of performing actions for himself, performs these, for the welfare of the world.



Link:—In the next verse Lord Kṛṣṇa inspires Arjuna to know the reality of action and inaction.

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥ १७ ॥

**karmaṇo hyapi boddhavyaṁ boddhavyaṁ ca vikarmaṇaḥ
akarmaṇaśca boddhavyaṁ gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ**

The reality about actions must be known, as well about forbidden actions, even so the reality about inaction, must be understood; for mysterious, is the nature of action. 17

Comment:—

'Karmaṇo hyapi boddhavyam'— He, who remains untainted while performing actions, knows the truth about actions, described