

'Tāni'—The agent, action and knowledge, have no connection with the self. The self is ever-pure and detached.

'Api'—It is indispensable to know, these three kinds, because by knowing these in the right perspective, a man can realize the fact enumerated in (18/17). 'He who is free from egoistic notions, whose intellect is not tainted, though he slays the people, he really slays not, nor is he bound (by actions)' i.e., he realizes, the self.



Link:—The Lord now begins to describe the Sāttvika Knowledge (knowledge of goodness).

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ २० ॥

sarvabhūteṣu yenaikam bhāvamavyayamīkṣate
avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu tajjñānaṁ viddhi sāttvikam

The knowledge, by which one realises the Imperishable Being (Reality) in different beings, as undivided (not separate in separate beings), knows such knowledge to be sāttvika. 20

Comment:—

'Sarvabhūteṣu yenaikam bhāvamavyayamīkṣate avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu'—All beings and things etc., are kaleidoscopic, they have no existence of their own. But they seem to exist, in the light of the Imperishable Lord, Who pervades everywhere. A man, out of ignorance sees their existence. As soon as his ignorance is removed, and he gains knowledge, he realizes the existence of God, in all the perishable beings, and things etc.

Having gained knowledge a striver, sees the imperishable Supreme Lord, abiding equally in all perishable beings (Gītā 13/27). Though He is undivided, yet He seems to be divided among beings, things, circumstances and incidents etc., (Gītā 13/16). A striver, beholds only imperishable essence, in all the objects, whichever undergo changes. How to know that, he sees

only the Lord? He remains free, from attachment and aversion. This is the criterion.

'Tajjñānam viddhi sāttvikam'—This knowledge, is known to be sāttvika. It is called Sāttvika, because of affinity with things and inclinations etc. If this affinity, is renounced, this knowledge is Self-realization, which ought to be known, as stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa. He declares, "I will describe, that which ought to be known and knowing which, one attains immortality" (Gītā 13/12).

A Vital Fact

The universe, is known by senses, the senses are known by intellect, and intellect is known by 'I'. The universe, the senses and the intellect, are known by 'I'. But there is one Illuminator, Who illuminates this 'I' also. That Illuminator is all-pervasive and infinite, while 'I' is limited and finite. 'You' (thou), 'this' and 'that', are also illumined in that light, as 'I' is illumined. That Illuminator, is not subject to illumination. That is Illumination-Incarnate. He is attributeless, the Absolute. He is undivided and He illuminates, everything. His illumination in a particular person, is called sāttvika knowledge.

In other words, Sāttvika knowledge, can be explained, in this way. All the beings, are included in 'I', 'you', 'this' and 'that'. They are diverse, but He who illumines them, is indivisible. They ever undergo changes and are not real, but He ever remains uniform. All the four, 'I', 'you', 'this', and 'that', are not really existent, in that Illuminator. But they get their seeming existence, by that Illuminator only. That Illuminator, illumines all and He Himself is an embodiment of illumination. They are separate (divided), while He as their illuminator, remains undivided. This is sāttvika knowledge. Being pure and illuminating, this knowledge, illumines all divisible, changeable and perishable beings, and objects (Gītā 14/6).

This sāttvika knowledge is said to be the illuminator from

the point of view of the illumined and indivisible from the point of view of the divisible. But when it has no connection with the illumined and divisible objects, it is in fact attributeless, absolute and real knowledge itself.

Appendix—As a common man holds that the Self pervades the entire body, similarly a striver holds that God pervades the entire universe. As the body and the world are one (identical), so are the Self and God one.

From the view-point of a striver, beings also, have their own existence, so his knowledge is 'Sāttvika'. If from his view-point there is no separate existence of beings but there is only one imperishable existence, then it is the transcendental entity viz., Self-realization (attainment of Brahma). That imperishable entity pervades equally everywhere. We have our natural identity with that entity.



Link:—The Lord, now describes, Rājasika knowledge (knowledge of the nature of passion).

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान्प्रथग्विधान् ।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ २१ ॥

pr̥thaktvena tu yajjñānam nānābhāvānpr̥thagvidhān
vetti sarveṣu bhūteṣu tajjñānam viddhi rājasam

The knowledge, by which one perceives the manifold entities of different kinds, as varying from one another, know that knowledge, to be rājasika (jñāna). 21

Comment:—

'Pr̥thaktvena tu* yajjñānam nānābhāvānpr̥thagvidhān'—There is predominance of passion, in rājasika knowledge. The Lord declares, "Know thou Rajas to be of the nature of passion" (Gītā 14/7). This passion, causes attachment and aversion.

*The term 'Tu' has been used to denote that the Rājasika knowledge is different from the Sāttvika one.