

yogināmapī sarveṣāṁ madgatenāntarātmanā
śraddhāvānbhajate yo mām sa me yuktatamo mataḥ

(Gītā 6/47)



Link:—In the preceding verse, the Lord declared the worshippers of God, with form and attributes, to be the best Yogīs. So a question arises, whether worshippers of attributeless Absolute (Brahma), are not the best Yogīs. The Lord, answers the question, in the next two verses:—

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥ ३ ॥
सन्नियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ ४ ॥

ye tvakṣaramanirdeśyamavyaktaṁ paryupāśate
sarvatragamacintyaṁ ca kūṭasthamacalaṁ dhruvam
sanniyamyendriyagrāmaṁ sarvatra samabuddhayaḥ
te prāpnuvanti mameva sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ

But those, who worship the Imperishable (Akṣara), the Undefinable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the incomprehensible, the Unchanging and the Immobile, the constant, by restraining all the senses, being even-minded everywhere, engrossed in the welfare of all beings, also come to Me. 3-4

Comment:—

The term 'Tu' (but), shows that worshippers of the formless Brahma, are different from those, who worship the Lord with form.

'Sanniyamyendriyagrāmam'—Having given the term 'Sanniyamya', with two prefixes 'Sam' and 'Ni' the Lord, lays emphasis on full control over all senses. If they are not fully controlled, there is difficulty in the worship of attributeless Absolute. The senses of devotees who worship the Lord with attributes, are fixed on Him and so there is not much need of

controlling the senses, as for devotees who worship attributeless Brahma. Such devotees, having no base for thought, without controlling the senses, can think of the objects of senses, and thus can perish (Gītā 2/62-63). Therefore, for devotees who worship the attributeless God, it is necessary to control, not only the senses fully, but also the mind, because so long as, there is attachment of the mind with the objects of senses, the Absolute (Brahma), cannot be attained (Gītā 15/11).

In the Gītā, control over senses has been considered very essential, in the Disciplines of Knowledge and Action. There is no such stress in the Discipline of Devotion.

'Acintyam'—The term stands for the Absolute, Who is beyond the reach of senses and mind, because they being evolutes of prakṛti cannot even know and think of prakṛti; then how can they know and think of God, Who transcends prakṛti (Nature)? God can be known, only by the self.

'Sarvatragam'— God is all-pervading and limitless. So, he cannot be attained, by limited mind, intellect and senses.

'Anirdeśyam'— 'Anirdeśyam', is that which cannot be defined, through language or speech. Only that, which is accompanied by caste, quality, action and is confined through space, time, thing and individual can be defined, or hinted at. How can the all-pervading and sentient God, be defined or hinted at, by insentient language?

'Kūṭastham'—This term, stands for the Absolute, Who while pervading all space, time, things and individuals, remains unvitiated and uncontaminated. He always remains uniform and unaltered, without undergoing any change, at all. On a 'Kūṭa' (anvil), different instruments and ornaments etc., are shaped, but it ever remains, the same. Similarly, in spite of birth, existence and destruction of different beings and objects, God pervading them, remains the same. He is not affected by, their birth, existence and destruction.

'Acalam'—Brahma, is totally immovable and free from change, while prakṛti (nature), is movable.

'Dhruvam'—The Absolute, Who is certain and eternal is called 'Dhruva'. Out of all the eight adjectives used for Him, this one is the most important, otherwise people may misunderstand, whether He exists or not, as all the other adjectives, are in the negative. He ever exists and never ceases to be, in the least, "The world seems to exist, because of His existence or light" (Mānasa 1/117/4).

'Akṣaram'—The Absolute, Who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss, solidified, is never destroyed. He is imperishable. He does not suffer, any diminution.

'Avyaktam'—He is unmanifested, He is incomprehensible to the mind and senses, and He is also devoid of any form or shape.

'Paryupāsate'—The term, here stands for real worship of devotees, who worship the attributeless, Brahma. Real worship, consists in remaining established in God, by identifying the self with Him, without any desire and egoistic notion.

He, Who is denoted by these eight adjectives, is an imperfect form of Brahma, because Brahma is incomprehensible, even to the intellect. But worship, which is offered with these eight adjectives, is the worship of attributeless Brahma, and this worship results, in the attainment of attributeless Brahma. He cannot be an object of intellect. Keeping in view these eight adjectives, of the absolute, the adoration made, is called 'Paryupāsate.' This is real worship of the Absolute, and it results, in merging with the Absolute.

An Important Fact

In order to explain the existence of God, two kinds of adjectives—in the negative and in the positive, have been given. The negative adjectives, imperishable, indefinable, unmanifest,

unthinkable, immovable, unlimited, show that God is different from prakṛti (nature), while the positive adjectives, such as omnipresent, uniform, eternal, and nouns—truth, consciousness and bliss, show the Lord's, independent existence.

Innate, Inactive, Absolute, beyond the states of activity and non-activity, is the illuminator, of activity and non-activity. The different adjectives, have been used, so that the intellect may have a conception about Him, and so it may reflect upon, that Absolute.

In the Gītā, the description of God and the soul (self), is almost the same. The adjectives, which have been used here, for God have been used for the soul—as in the twenty-fourth and the twenty-fifth verses of the second chapter, 'omnipresent', 'immovable', 'unmanifest' and 'unthinkable' etc., and in the sixteenth verse of the fifteenth chapter, 'unchangeable' and 'imperishable' have also been used, for the soul. Similarly, in the twenty-fifth verse of the seventh chapter, the adjective imperishable has been used for God, while in the fifth verse of the fourteenth chapter, it has been used for soul.

Both God and the soul, pervade everywhere. 'The whole world is pervaded by God (The Supreme Person)' (8/22, 18/46) and 'all this world is pervaded by Me' (9/4). Similarly, in the seventeenth verse of the second chapter, it is said about the soul also, "All this is pervaded by the soul."

As the sight of two eyes does not clash nor sounds in spite of being wide-spread do not conflict with the ears, so does (according to the dualistic principle) the all-pervasiveness of God, not strike against the all-pervasiveness of the soul, both being without form or shape.

'Sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ'—In the Discipline of Action, renouncement of attachment, a sense of mine, desire and selfishness, is very important. When a person, uses objects such as the body, riches and property, in rendering service to others,

without regarding them as his and for him, his attachment, a sense of mine, desire and selfishness, are naturally renounced. When a body is used, in rendering service to others, egoism is renounced, and when objects are used for others, a sense of mine, is renounced. A striver following the Discipline of Action, considers the objects in his possession as the objects of those people, to whom he renders service. So it is indispensable for a 'Karmayogī', to remain engrossed in the welfare of all beings. But in this verse as well as in the twenty-fifth verse, of the fifth chapter, the Lord declares that the 'Jñānayogīs' (the followers of the Discipline of Knowledge) remain engrossed in the welfare of all beings. It proves that the path of action, is necessary even in the path of knowledge, in order to renounce affinity, for actions totally.

Here, a point needs attention. The service rendered with the body, objects and actions is limited, because all objects and actions, are limited. But, he who has a feeling for the welfare of all beings, renders unlimited service, because there is no limit of the feeling. Therefore, a striver, should use the objects for the welfare of all beings, by regarding these as theirs, without attachment. Because of unlimited feeling, when a striver renounces his affinity for matter totally, he realizes the unlimited Essence, i.e., God. When a person, regards objects as his own, he has an egoistic notion, as well as, unevenness of mind. But, when he uses these for others, by regarding these as theirs, his egoistic feelings and unevenness of mind, come to an end. On the other hand, a common person may use every object of his own, in rendering service to his kith and kin, but because of his attachment and a sense of mine for them (limited feeling), he cannot realize, the limitless God. So, in order to attain, the limitless God, a striver should possess limitless feelings, of the welfare of all beings.

A striver, following the Discipline of Knowledge, because

of lack of dispassion cannot renounce worldly objects, by considering these as illusory, so long as he attaches importance to perishable objects. But a striver, following the Discipline of Action, can renounce these easily, by using these in rendering service, to others. The former, can renounce objects only, if he has a keen dispassion, while the latter can renounce these with a little dispassion, because he uses them for the welfare of others. Thus affinity, for matter is renounced easily, by being engrossed, in the welfare of all beings, and the path of action, is an easier one.

Devotees, who worship an attributeless Absolute, specially hold two views, (i) Whatever appears in the form of insentient or the sentient, and moving or the unmoving, is soul or Brahma (the Absolute). (ii) Whatever appears, is perishable, transitory and unreal. Thus, realizing the seen, as unreal, and whatever remains, is soul or Brahma.

A striver, following the path of knowledge, cannot attain perfection, merely by learning 'All is Brahma', so long as he has attachment in his mind i.e., he possesses evil propensities, such as desire (lust), and anger etc. So, like a Karmayogī, it is necessary for him to remain engrossed, in the welfare of all beings, to attain perfection, by renouncing attachment.

Those strivers, who having assumed the world, as unreal, meditate on God in solitude, their physical renouncement of actions, proves useful, in their spiritual path. But, by mere renunciation, they do not attain to perfection (Gītā 3/4). For attaining perfection, dispassion for pleasure and detachment from the body, senses, mind and intellect, are very essential, and for dispassion and detachment, they should remain engrossed, in the welfare of all beings. When they lead a lonely life, away from the world, they have an egoistic notion, which can be removed by being engrossed, in the welfare of all beings.

A striver, should not only be detached from the world, but

also from the body, because the body is also a part of the world. So long as, he identifies himself with the body, and remains attached to it, even by living in loneliness, he cannot attain his aim. In order to, efface egoism and attachment, he must be engrossed, in the welfare of all beings.

Also it is not possible for a striver, ever to remain in solitude, because he has to come into contact with society, for the maintenance of his body. Moreover, if he is not completely dispassionate, because of his pride, in dealing he may be harsh, and so his egoistic notion, does not come to an end. Therefore, he cannot achieve his aim. In order to get rid of this harshness, he should remain engrossed, in the welfare of all beings. A striver, following the Discipline of Knowledge may not render service, on a large scale but the Lord declares, that he will attain Him, as he is intent on the welfare, of all beings.

It is necessary for both the strivers, whether they worship God with attributes, or God without attributes to, remain engrossed in the welfare, of all beings. When a striver thinks that his own welfare, is different from the welfare, of all beings, it means that he has egoistic feelings which is a stumbling block to God-realization. When a striver, performs all actions (eating, drinking, sleeping etc., as well as chanting His name, meditation, study of the scriptures etc.) for the welfare of the world, his egoism, comes to an end and God's power, which is ever engaged in the welfare of all beings, supports him.

Real service, does not consist in offering objects and in bodily service, but in thinking of the welfare, of all beings without any selfish motive or reward. One should serve them, as he serves the limbs of his body, without expecting any fruit.

As a common man, without receiving any moral teaching, serves his body very scrupulously, without being proud of the act, so does a God-realized soul, remain engrossed in the welfare, of all beings, through the likeness of the self (Gītā 6/32) without

having the least pride or egoism. A striver, should ever follow the foot steps of such a God-realized soul, scrupulously.

'Sarvatra samabuddhayaḥ'—Devotees, who worship attributeless and formless Brahma, have evenness of mind in all persons and objects, because they therein behold only Him who is equally pervading in all of them (Gītā 5/19).

The Lord, wants to explain, that devotees following the path of knowledge, besides thinking of God in solitariness, should also be even-minded, in practical life. Secondly, in loneliness, they cannot remain totally lonely, because, the body is also a part of the world. When a striver beholds the world, and the body as one, it means that he is even-minded. But, if he views the body and the world, as separate, it is uneven-mindedness. Real loneliness, consists in beholding only God everywhere, and in remaining established in Him, and having renounced egoism, attachment for the body, senses, mind and intellect etc., totally. Such a striver is really, even-minded.

In the Gītā, 'evenness of mind' means beholding the same Lord, pervading everywhere, rather than the same dealings with everyone. The Lord, in the eighteenth verse of the fifth chapter, mentions five beings in this regard—a learned and humble Brāhmaṇa, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a pariah. None, can have the same dealings, with all of them. The similar dealings are not possible. One should not resort to any such dealings. A striver beholds God, in all of them. As in different ornaments made of gold, there is nothing but gold, so does a striver, have equal vision as he beholds God, everywhere.

A liberated soul, has equal vision, as he beholds God, everywhere. Such liberated souls, are models for strivers. A striver has no equanimity, because he accepts the existence of worldly objects. When he ceases to accept, their existence, he attains, equanimity.

A striver tries to behold God everywhere, while for God-

realized souls, there is nothing but, God. They are even-minded, because they behold only God, everywhere. This natural state, of a realized soul, is an ideal for strivers. They aim at it. In what proportion, the independent existence of non-self, the strivers accept, in that proportion they are not, even-minded. The lesser the independent existence, in their mind, the more even-minded, they become. Strivers try to see the Absolute, everywhere. But the intellect of the God-realized soul, is naturally influenced by the Absolute.

'Te prāpnuvanti māmēva'—The Lord declares, that devotees who worship the attributeless God, also attain Him. It means, that He, is in no way different, from the attributeless Brahma (Gītā 9/4; 14/27). He is both endowed with attributes and also, attributeless.

In these two verses, the Lord has mentioned four factors pertaining to the worshippers of attributeless Brahma—(1) The conception of attributeless Absolute, (2) condition of the striver, (3) the nature of worship, (4) what the striver, attains.

(1) In response to Arjuna's question, which he put in the second half of the first verse, using two adjectives, imperishable and unmanifested, pertaining to the attributeless Absolute, the Lord, in order to, give a more detailed description, uses five adjectives in the negative (imperishable, indefinable, unmanifest, unthinkable and immovable), and three in the positive (omnipresent, fixed and eternal) forms.

(2) Such strivers, behold the attributeless Absolute, everywhere, all the time, in all objects and persons etc. It is, on account of body consciousness and acceptance of the separate existence of worldly objects, there is desire to enjoy sense-objects and thus sense-objects are enjoyed. Strivers of the Absolute do not regard, any independent existence of anything, except God. So they do not attach any importance, to worldly pleasure and do not want to enjoy, these because, for them such pleasure has no separate existence. Such strivers, being even-minded, remain engrossed,

in the welfare of all creatures.

(3) His worship, is that he has a constant eye, on the attributeless Absolute.

(4) The Lord declares, that those who worship attributeless God, also attain Him. It means, that God with attributes, and God, Who is attributeless, are one and the same.

Appendix—Whatever the characteristics of Brahma (incomprehensible, changeless, immobile, imperishable, unmanifest) the Lord has mentioned here, the same characteristics have been stated of the soul as—‘incomprehensible’ (2/25), ‘changeless’ (15/16), ‘immobile’ (2/24), ‘imperishable’ (5/16, 18), ‘unmanifest’ (2/25) etc. The purpose of stating the same characteristics is that the Soul and Brahma (the Absolute) are the same in nature. If the Soul assumes its affinity for the body, it becomes ‘Jīva’ (the embodied Soul), but the same Soul, having renounced its affinity for the body, is Brahma viz., the Self having identification with the body is different from Brahma otherwise it is Brahma. Therefore having attained Brahma, the worshipper merges into the Being of the worshipped—‘idaṁ jñānamupāśritya mama sādharṁyamāgatāḥ’ (Gītā 14/2). ‘Te prāpṇuvanti māmeva’—God whether He is ‘saḡuṇa’ (with attributes) or ‘nirḡuṇa’ (attributeless) is the same, therefore the devotees who worship attributeless Brahma, also attain God. The Lord means to say that His attributeless and formless entity is not different from His entire form.

‘Sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ’—The world, the Soul and God—from all the three points of view all of us are one. It means that all the bodies are one as they are all within ‘aparā prakṛti’ (lower nature) and all the Souls are one as they are within ‘parā prakṛti’ (higher nature). Therefore when a striver becomes evenminded in all beings—‘sarvatra samabuddhayaḥ’ and he looks on all as one, like his own body—‘ātmaupamyena sarvatra samam paśyati yo’rjuna’ (6/32), then he develops the feeling of remaining

engrossed in the welfare of all beings. The reason is that when he regards all the bodies as his own body, he neither thinks anyone evil nor wishes anyone evil nor does anyone evil. Thus having renounced evil, welfare of others is naturally done by him. Not only this but he even does not think of doing evil to the person who does him evil because he regards all beings as his own; in the same way as if there is a sudden cut on the tongue with one's own teeth, one, by being angry, does not break one's own teeth—'umā santa kai ihai baḍāi, manda karata jo karai bhalāi.' (Mānasa, Sundara. 41/4).

The service, which is rendered to others by renouncing evil, can't be done by offering the biggest charity and by performing the most virtuous actions. Therefore renunciation of evil is the root of good (virtue). He who has renounced evil, can be 'sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ' (engrossed in the welfare of others).



Link:—In response to Arjuna's question, the Lord in the second verse, declared devotees who worship the Lord, with attributes the most perfect in Yoga, while in the third and the fourth verses, He declared, "The devotees who worship attributeless God attain, Me." The Lord in the next three verses, describes the difficulty and ease, of the two kinds of worship.

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥५॥

kleśo'dhikatarasteṣāmayaktāsaktacetasām

avyaktā hi gatirduḥkhaṁ dehavadbhiravāpyate

The difficulty in following their discipline of those whose minds are attached to the Unmanifest is greater, for the Unmanifest is hard to reach, by the body-conscious beings. 5

Comment:—

'Kleśo'dhikatarasteṣāmayaktāsaktacetasām'—Strivers whose