

than a war? When a man can attain salvation under such a terrible circumstance and activity as a war, then what other more terrible circumstance and activity will be there in which he may not attain salvation? According to the Gītā sitting on a seat in loneliness and meditating on God can lead to salvation (Gītā 6/10—13) and waging a war can also lead to salvation.

Arjuna wanted neither heaven nor kingdom (Gītā 1/32, 35, 2/8). He wanted to turn away from the sin which would accrue by killing his kith and kin (Gītā 1/36, 39, 45). Therefore the Lord appears to say, “If you don’t covet heaven and kingdom and want to turn away from the sin, discharge your duty of fighting in the war treating the agreeable and the disagreeable alike, thus you will incur no sin—‘naivaṁ pāpamavāpsyasi’. The reason is that sin is not incurred by waging war; but uneven-mindedness (partiality), desire, selfishness and ego are the causes of sin. It is your duty (dharma) to wage war. Sin is incurred by not performing one’s duty and by doing which should not be done.”

In the preceding verse the Lord seemed to say to Arjuna, “If you want to gain kingdom and heaven, it is proper for you to perform your duty,” while in this verse He seems to say, “If you don’t want to gain kingdom and heaven, it is proper for you to discharge your duty by being even-minded.” It means that it is improper not to discharge one’s duty under any circumstances.



Link:— The Lord, in the next two verses, authorizes Arjuna to be guided by even-mindedness, already mentioned in the preceding verse and he describes its glory.

एषा	तेऽभिहिता	साङ्ख्ये	
	बुद्धिर्योगे	त्विमां	शृणु ।
बुद्ध्या	युक्तो	यया	पार्थ
कर्मबन्धं		प्रहास्यसि ॥ ३९ ॥	

eṣā	te'bhihitā	sāṅkhye	
	buddhiryoge	tvimām	śṛṇu
buddhyā	yukto	yayā	pārtha
	karmabandhaṁ		prahāsyasi

O Pārtha (Arjuna), this attitude of mind has been presented to you from the point of view of Jñānayoga (Discipline of Knowledge); now hear of the same, from the point of view of Karmayoga (the Discipline of Selfless-Action). Equipped with this state of mind, you will be able to completely shake off the shackles of Karma (Action). 39

Comment:—

'Eṣā te'bhihitā sāṅkhye buddhiryoge tvimām śṛṇu'—Here the word 'Tu' (indeed) has been used to show that the description of the Discipline of Action, is different from the Discipline of Knowledge.

The term 'Eṣā' has been used for equanimity, which has been described in the preceding verse and which has already been explained in the Discipline of Knowledge, (from the eleventh to the thirtieth verses). When a man discriminates between the body and the soul, he gets established in equanimity automatically because it is attachment to the body which is an obstacle in the way of equanimity. So this ideal of equanimity has already been presented from the point of view of 'Sāṅkhyayoga' (Discipline of Knowledge); now listen to a discourse on equanimity in the context of 'Karmayoga' (Discipline of Action).

'Imām' (this) term has been used to explain how this equanimity is attained by the Discipline of Action and what its importance is?

'Buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha karmabandhaṁ prahāsyasi'—Arjuna was afraid of the sin that would accrue by waging the war (1/36, 45). But Lord Kṛṣṇa says that sin does not accrue by waging the war as it is your duty, but it accrues by having attachment and aversion. So if you attain equanimity, no sin

will accrue and your duty of waging the war, will not lead you to bondage.

In the seventh verse of this chapter Arjuna asked Lord Kṛṣṇa to advise him what was good for him. Hence, Lord Kṛṣṇa answers his query. First, He mentioned the means of Sāṅkhyayoga (Discipline of Knowledge), and then laid great stress on performance of duty, and told him that there was nothing more welcome to a Kṣatriya, than a righteous war (2/31). Then, He told him that no sin would accrue, if he had equanimity (2/38). Now, He explains the same equanimity, in the context of 'Karmayoga' (Discipline of Action).

A Karmayogī performs action to set an example, to the masses (Gītā 3/20) without any selfish motive. By doing so, he attains equanimity, easily. Having attained equanimity, he is easily liberated, from the bondage of actions.

This (Thirty-ninth) verse, should have been placed after the thirtieth verse, as it rightly belonged there, because from the eleventh verse to the thirtieth verse, the Lord explained even-mindedness, from the view-point of the Discipline of Knowledge, and now He describes it from the view of Discipline of Action. So it seems improper, to insert these eight verses, from the thirty-first to the thirty-eighth, here. But really it is not so. The reason is, that before describing equanimity in the Discipline of Action, it is necessary to describe, what one ought to do and what one ought not to do. It was Arjuna's duty, to wage a righteous war. It was not his duty to abandon war, because by doing so, he would incur sin. So Lord Kṛṣṇa, in these eight verses, described what Arjuna ought to do and what he ought not to do (2/31—38). Then, he explained equanimity. It means, that first from the eleventh verse to the thirtieth verse, he explained equanimity, through as elucidation of the real and the unreal, by mentioning that the real is real and the unreal is unreal and none can change these. Then, from the thirty-first verse to the thirty-eighth verse, having

explained what one ought to do, and what one ought not, from the thirty-ninth verse, He exhorts Arjuna never to desist from his duty, but to always perform duty with even-mindedness, in success and failure.

Appendix—‘Karmayoga’ (Discipline of Action) is divided into two parts—‘kartavya vijñāna’ (the science of duty) and ‘Yoga vijñāna’ (the science of equanimity). The Lord from the thirty-first verse to the thirty-seventh verse mentioned the science of duty in which He described the favourable consequences of discharging the duty and adverse consequences of not discharging the duty. Now from this verse to the fifty-third verse He mentions the science of equanimity.

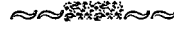
The equanimity which the Lord mentioned in the preceding verse, can be attained both by ‘the Discipline of Knowledge’ and ‘the Discipline of Action’. By knowing the discrimination between the body-division and the self-division and renouncing affinity with the body-division, is ‘The Discipline of Knowledge’ while by knowing the duty-division and the non-duty-division and by renouncing what ought not to be done and discharging one’s duty, is ‘the Discipline of Action’. A man by following one of the two disciplines should attain equanimity. The reason is by attaining equanimity a man is freed from the bondage of action.

One is ‘Dharma Śāstra’ (Pūrva mīmāṃsā) [The scripture for duty] and one is ‘mokṣa śāstra’ (Uttara mīmāṃsā) [The scripture for salvation). Here from the thirty-first verse to the thirty-seventh verse, there is description of ‘Dharma Śāstra’, while from the thirty-ninth verse to the fifty-third verse there is description of ‘Mokṣa śāstra’. By ‘Dharma śāstra’ (discharging one’s duty) there is both kinds of progress*—mundane and spiritual. In ‘Dharma śāstra’ the discharge of one’s duty is important. Either call it ‘Dharma’ or duty—it is one and the same.

Not to do what ought to be done is ‘non-discharge of duty’

* ‘yato’bhyudayaniḥśreyasasiddhiḥ sa dharmah’ (Vaiśeṣika 1/3, 2/39).

and to do what ought not to be done is also 'non-discharge of duty'. Duty is that in which a person having renounced his desire for pleasure, pleases others and which involves his own welfare as well as the welfare of others. By discharging one's duty, 'Yoga' (equanimity) is naturally attained. Without discharging one's duty a man can't attain equanimity (Gītā 6/3). Having attained equanimity, knowledge of Truth is naturally attained—which is the result of both—'Karmayoga' (the Discipline of Action) and 'Jñānayoga' (the Discipline of Knowledge).



नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।

स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ ४० ॥

nehābhikramanāśo'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate
svalpamapyasya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt

In this path (of selfless action), there is neither loss of effort, nor any adverse result. Even a little practice of this discipline (dharma) protects one from great danger (of birth and death). 40

Comment:—

[Lord Kṛṣṇa has explained the importance of disinterested action in the latter part of the thirty-ninth and this fortieth verse in four ways:—(i) By it, one becomes free from shackles of actions. (ii) There is no loss in effort. (iii) There is no adverse result. (iv) Even a little practice of it (dharma) protects, one from great fear.]

'Nehābhikramanāśo'sti'—In this path of disinterested action, there is no loss of attempt viz., the partial practice of this Yoga (Discipline of Disinterested Action) has its corresponding benefit. The desire to attain equanimity is the beginning of equanimity. Such a beginning never gets wasted because desire for attaining the real is also real.

'Iha' (in this) means that in this world human beings are