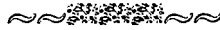


of knowledge but he becomes a 'Jñānī' viz., a devotee having exclusive devotion to God.

An 'arthārthī' has constant attachment to wealth because he hankers after wealth every time. But an 'ārta' has no continuous relation with suffering because suffering does not persist all the time. A 'Jijñāsu' does not care for pleasure or pain, therefore he has neither a desire to get pleasure nor a desire to get rid of sufferings. The seeker of wealth and the sufferer—both by becoming seekers of knowledge become 'Jñānī' viz., devotees.

The devotee who is seeker of wealth when is gifted with wealth by God, repents of his mistake; as Dhruva repented of his desire for kingdom when he got the kingdom. But a sufferer-devotee does not feel so much sorry, but he has the notion that God frees sufferers from sufferings; as Draupadi and Gajendra (king of elephants) after being protected, didn't feel sorry, but they had an inclination towards God. A sufferer-devotee can't tolerate suffering—this is his weakness.

A Jijñāsu devotee does not know God in full. He is not satisfied by attaining salvation or enlightenment but he has hunger for love (devotion). But for a Jñānī-devotee besides God there is no other entity in the least at all, then how can he feel the lack of anything? Therefore the Lord has called a Jñānī (the man of wisdom) (the devotee with exclusive devotion) His own self (manifestation)—'jñānī tvātmaiva me matam' (Gītā 7/18).



Link:—Among the four kinds of virtuous men, the man of wisdom is the best, who is described, in the next verse.

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।

प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

teṣāṃ jñānī nityayukta ekabhaktirviśiṣyate

priyo hi jñānino'tyarthamaham sa ca mama priyaḥ

Of these, the best is the man of wisdom (Jñānī) steadfastly and exclusively devoted to Me; for most dear am I to the wise, and who is most dear to Me. 17

Comment:—

'Teṣāṁ jñānī nityayukta'—Among the four kinds of virtuous men, a man of wisdom is the best, because he is steadfast viz., he is constantly established in God. He thinks of nothing, besides God. As the cowherdesses while milking cows, churning curd and discharging other domestic duties, thought only of God* a man of wisdom while performing all the mundane and spiritual actions, is attached to God alone.

'Ekabhaktirviśiṣyate'—The man of wisdom, without having any desire of his own, has an exclusive devotion for God. So he is the best one.

Though all the four kinds, of virtuous men are engaged in God's devotion, yet the first three, have no exclusive devotion, because they have some desire or the other of their own. The seeker of wealth, seeks favourable circumstances, a sufferer seeks to do away with unfavourable circumstances, a seeker of knowledge, has a desire to know his self or Divinity. But, the man of wisdom (devout devotee) has exclusive devotion for God, without having any desire of his own.

'Priyo hi jñānino'tyarthamaham sa ca mama priyaḥ'—I am extremely dear to the wise, because he has exclusive devotion to Me, without having any desire of his own. Therefore, he is extremely dear to Me.

Though all creatures, being fragments of God, are naturally

* The Gopīs of Vraja who, while milking cows, separating rice from chaff, churning curd, smearing the courtyard with cow-dung, rocking babies in cradles, lulling a baby to sleep, watering the basil and sweeping the house, singing the divine songs of Lord Kṛṣṇa's life-story with full devotion in an ecstasy of delight with their minds constantly attached to Him are virtuous and deserve congratulations.

dear to Him, and He brings up all of them, without any partiality, yet, those who have an inclination for Him, become especially dear, to Him.

When a devotee, becomes free from desires, axiomatic devotion (love) is aroused, in Him. This love, neither ends nor lessens, but increases every moment, and is limitless, endless and knows no satiety.

Appendix—The Lord has called His devotee who is exclusively devoted to him ‘Jñānī’ (wise) because “All is God”—this is the real and final knowledge (wisdom), there is nothing beyond it. Therefore the devoted (devout) devotee, who has realized this knowledge, is a real Jñānī (Gītā 7/19). The reason is that such a devotee holds that there is no other entity besides God, while a man who applies his Viveka, holds that there are two entities—the real and the unreal. It means that here the term ‘Jñānī’ has not been used for the liberated self-realized soul but it has been used for the ‘Jñānī’ viz., the devoted (devout) devotee who has realized ‘All is God’. In the Gītā, the Lord principally has called a devotee ‘Jñānī’ (7/16—18) because he is the highest and real ‘Jñānī’. He loves God alone, therefore he is the best—‘ekabhaktirviśiṣyate’.

The Lord’s devotee who is the seeker of wealth is ‘anityayukta’ (not constantly established in God). The sufferer is less ‘anityayukta’ than the seeker of wealth. The seeker of knowledge is less ‘anityayukta’ than the sufferer. But a ‘Jñānī’ is totally ‘nityayukta’ (constantly established in God).

‘Priyo hi jñānino’tyarthamaham sa ca mama priya’—this expression means that when a devotee has realized ‘Vāsudevaḥ sarvam’, then between that devotee and God there is relationship of true love alone, nothing else. In the scriptures, this has been called every moment—increasing love and infinite bliss.



Link:—In the previous verse, Lord Kṛṣṇa declared the man of wisdom to be the best of all the four. The other three, are also not undervalued by Him. So He says in the next verse.

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।

आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥ १८ ॥

**udārāḥ sarva evaite jñānī tvātmaiva me matam
āsthitaḥ sa hi yuktātmā māmevānuttamāṁ gatiṁ**

All these are noble, but the man of wisdom (jñānī) is verily My own self; this is my view. For, such a devotee steadfast in Me and established in Me alone who am supreme goal. 18

Comment:—

'Udārāḥ sarva evaite'—All these are noble. The term 'Udārāḥ' (noble), has several interpretations—

(1) In the eleventh verse of the fourth chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa declares, "Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I seek them." A devotee, likes God and so does God like a devotee. But, a devotee is noble, because he accepts his affinity and surrenders himself first to God. He does not bother, whether God calls him His own or not.

(2) Devotees of the gods (deva) perform oblation, charity, penance etc., following the rules for fruits. The gods, grant them boons, as desired by devotees, without thinking of the welfare of devotees. But, God grants only boons, which are for their welfare and which enhance their devotion. He does not grant boons, by which their devotion is not enhanced and they may be entangled in the world, because He is the supreme father and the greatest well-wisher. So, the devotees of God, worship Him, not caring whether their desires are satisfied, or not. Thus, they are noble.

(3) Worldly pleasure and prosperity, obviously seem pleasant, while adoration does not seem to bear immediate