

favourable and the unfavourable circumstances. It means, that circumstances change, but he (the self) remains the same. However we commit an error, that we keep an eye on circumstances, but we do not watch the Self. Consequently, we feel happy or sad.



*Link:—The Lord, in the first half of the ninth verse of the third chapter, by a negative inference, declared, "The mankind is bound by actions other than those performed for the sake of sacrifice." He describes the same fact, by a positive inference, in the next verse.*

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥ २३ ॥

gataśaṅgasya muktasya jñānāvasthitacetasaḥ  
yajñāyācarataḥ karma samagraṁ praviliyate

All actions of a man, who is devoid of attachment, who is liberated, whose mind is established in knowledge of the self, who works for the sake of sacrifice (yajña) are destroyed. 23

*Comment:—*

[This verse, is an important one about the Discipline of Action, because only here, it is mentioned that all actions of a Karmayogī, are destroyed. Similarly, the thirty-sixth verse of the fourth chapter, is an important verse on the Discipline of Knowledge, while the sixty-sixth verse of the eighteenth chapter is an important verse, on the Discipline of Devotion.]

'Gataśaṅgasya'—Attachment, to actions, objects, incidents, circumstances and persons, leads to bondage i.e., the cause of birth of the soul in good and evil bodies (Gītā 13/21). When a man performs actions for the welfare of the world, without any selfish motive, he becomes free from attachment, for actions and objects.

In fact, a man (the self) is inherently detached,

(Bṛhadāraṇyaka 4/3/15). But in spite of being detached, he gets attached to the body, senses, mind, intellect, objects, circumstances, and men etc., by regarding these as his own, and is thus bound by desire for pleasure. So long as, he wants to satiate his desire, his attachment is enhanced. In fact, whatever is to happen, will happen and whatever is not to happen will not happen, whether one desires it or not. Therefore, he who has any desire, gets entangled in vain, and has to suffer pain.

A Karmayogī, considering the acquired things of the world, neither of his own nor for himself, utilizes these, in rendering service to the world. Thus the flow of things and actions, is towards the world and the self remains the same, as it is, non-attached.

He has no egoistic notion of rendering service to others because he thinks that he has discharged his debt by returning thing to the one to whom it belonged. If egoistic notion subsists, it binds a Karmayogī. It subsists only when he considers, the materials for service, as his own. When the subtle egoistic notion, is rooted, then only pure service remains. Moreover, he does not expect any reward, in the form of money, honour, praise, position and authority etc., because he does not lay claim to these. He wants, neither to be called a generous man, nor gets pleased if praised by calling him, generous, or derives pleasure out of his act of service. By doing selfless service, he gets placidity of mind. If that placidity is not enjoyed, he automatically realizes, axiomatic detachment.

'Muktasya'—A man (the soul), in spite of being different, from actions and objects, such as the body etc., assumes these as his own, because of desire, attachment and a sense of mine, and is thus bound. By following the Discipline of Action, when the assumed affinity is renounced, the Karmayogī becomes detached. This detachment leads him to liberation.

'Jñānāvasthitacetasaḥ'—He, who ever remains conscious of

the self, has his mind ever established in its knowledge. When he becomes conscious of the self, he gets established in the self. In fact, he had already been established in the self, but he only now realizes the fact.

In fact, knowledge is gained of the world, rather than of the self, because the self is an embodiment of knowledge. The world, consists of actions and objects. The self, being sentient, is different from insentient actions and objects. The self is their illuminator. As soon as, a striver realizes this fact, his affinity for actions and objects, is renounced and he realizes, that he is, naturally, established in the detached self.

'Yajñāyācarataḥ karma samagrāṁ praviliyate'—One form of, 'Seeing inaction in action', is to work for the sake of sacrifice (yajña). Performance of actions for the welfare of others, without a selfish motive, is called 'Yajña', (sacrifice). He, who works for the sake of sacrifice, gets liberated, while he, who performs actions other than those, that are performed for the sake of sacrifice, is bound (Gītā 3/9).

Actions and objects, are the evolutes of nature (prakṛti). Both of them have a beginning and an end, i.e., they are perishable. They neither existed, before they were seen, nor will exist, when they have gone. It means, that in the middle, they merely seem to exist, but actually they do not exist, as it is a rule, that whatever does not exist, at the beginning and at the end, also does not exist in the middle (at present). But the self, the illuminator of objects and action, is sentient and remains stable. Though, It has no affinity for objects and actions, when It assumes its affinity, for them, it is bound. The method by which to be liberated from this bondage, is to work for the welfare of others, without having any selfish desire for fruit.

In the world, there are innumerable objects and undertakings, which one assumes as his own, by having attachment, desire and a sense of mine for these he gets bound when having

renounced attachment, desire and a sense of mine, he renders, service with them regarding them as of others', all his actions (of past as well as present) are dissolved, and he realizes, his natural detachment.

### An Important Fact

(1) An agent, an instrument and action, are the threefold basis, of action (Gītā 18/18). Out of the three, the real basis is the agent, because the instrument and the action, depend on the agent.

If we give a serious thought to the topic, we come to realize, that a desire to act, arises, only when we have a desire to acquire something, or the other. The desire to act, makes us an agent, or a doer. This sense of doership, binds a man. When a man, performs an action with the desire to acquire anything, his sense of doership, is strengthened. But, when a Karmayogī, without having any desire to acquire anything, works for the sake of sacrifice i.e., for the welfare of others, his doership, is utilized for the welfare of others and he realizes, that he is detached from actions and objects etc. His actions are not accumulated as in the absence of doership, all his actions are neutralized.

In the Discipline of Action, renunciation of a sense of mine, is important, while in the Discipline of Knowledge, renunciation of 'egoism', is important. If a striver, renounces one of these, the other is automatically renounced. In the Discipline of Action, first there is renunciation of a sense of mine and then renunciation of egoism, naturally follows; while in the Discipline of Knowledge, the order is reversed. In absence of 'Tness and 'mineness', the doership and enjoyership, both melt away.

When, a man of action, has neither a sense of doership, nor has any desire, he has not to reap the fruit of action, in the same way as a criminal has not to suffer torture or punishment, if he dies. When a person, does not want to reap the fruit of

his actions, all his actions are dissolved.

(2) In the ninth verse of this chapter, the Lord declared, "He who thus knows, in their true nature, My divine birth and action, comes to Me." The birth, can be divine only of the Lord, but actions of men, can also be divine. In the fourteenth verse of this chapter, the Lord declares, that his actions are divine, as he has no desire for the fruit of actions and thus, he is not bound by them i.e., his actions, change into inaction. In this way, if a striver, also performs actions, without expecting the fruit of actions, his actions also, change into inaction. Then, in the fifteenth verse, He declares, "Having known this, men who sought liberation, also performed actions." In the sixteenth verse, He resolves to teach the reality about action, while in the seventeenth verse, He declares that one should understand the true nature of action, of forbidden action and of inaction. In, the eighteenth verse, He declares, that he who see inaction in action and action in inaction, is wise among men.

Desire is the known root of actions. When desire is, enhanced, forbidden actions are performed, but when desire is renounced, actions are changed into inaction. The main purpose of the Lord, is to describe inaction, (from the sixteenth to the thirty-second verse). Therefore, He has described renunciation of desire, which is the root of actions and forbidden actions in each of the verses from the nineteenth to the twenty-third, along with inaction\* and the topic has been concluded in the thirty-second verse.

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\* Examples of the renunciation of desires— 'Devoid of desires' (4/19); "Having abandoned attachment to the fruit of action" (4/20); "Having no hope or desire" (4/21); "Satisfied with what comes to him by chance" (4/22) and "Devoid of attachment" (4/23).

Examples of inaction—

"Actions have been burnt by the fire of knowledge" (4/19); " He does nothing though engaged in action" (4/20); "While performing actions he incurs no sin" (4/21); "Though acting he is not bound" (4/22); " The whole action is dissolved" (4/23).

**Appendix**—One is 'Kriyā', one is 'Karma' and one is 'Karmayoga'. The body passes from babyhood to youth and from youth to old age—this is 'kriyā'. By this 'Kriyā' a man neither incurs sin nor virtue, it neither leads him to salvation nor to bondage. Similarly the flow of the river Ganges is mere a 'kriyā'. If a man gets drowned in its current or it may prove helpful in farming etc., the Ganges does not incur any sin or virtue. When a man by assuming affinity with 'kriyā' becomes a doer viz., he does 'kriyā' for himself, then this 'kriyā' bears fruit and it becomes 'Karma' (action). Karma leads to bondage—'yajñārthātkarmaṇo'nyatra loko'yaṁ karmabandhanaḥ' (Gītā 3/9). In order to be free from the bondage of actions, when a man does nothing for himself but works for the welfare of others in a disinterested way, it is 'Karmayoga'. By Karmayoga bondage for actions is destroyed—'yajñāyācarataḥ karma samagraṁ praviliyate'. With the annihilation of bondage 'yoga' is attained viz., eternal union with God is realized.

This twenty-third verse is the main verse of Karmayoga. As the Lord by the expression 'jñānāgniḥ sarvakarmāṇi bhasmasāt kurute' (Gītā 4/37) has declared that the fire of knowledge reduces all actions to ashes and by the expression 'ahaṁ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ' (18/66) He has declared He will liberate a devotee from all sins, similarly in this verse He has declared by the expression 'yajñāyācarataḥ karma samagraṁ praviliyate' that all the actions including past ones of a karmayogī melt away.



*Link:—In the preceding verse, the Lord declared, "All actions of a man, who works for the sake of sacrifice, are dissolved." The term 'sacrifice', in this context, stands for duty, according to a person's caste and order of life etc. Therefore, the Lord, in the next seven verses, explains several forms of sacrifice as duties, for the strivers, according to their inclination, faith and qualification.*