

fire which dwells in the bodies of living beings, and mingling with the upward and downward breaths, I digest the four kinds of food" (Gītā 15/14), and move the navel, with the middle finger slowly.



*Link:—Having explained, that the faith of a person can be known by his worship or by the food, which is dear to him, the Lord now explains, the three kinds of sacrifice, by which a man's faith or inclination, is known.*

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते ।

यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः ॥ ११ ॥

aphalākāṅkṣibhīryajño vidhidṛṣṭo ya ijjate  
yaṣṭavyameveti manaḥ samādhāya sa sāttvikaḥ

Sacrifice (yajña) which is performed, according to scriptural law, by those, who expect no reward and believe firmly, that it is their duty to offer the sacrifice, is sāttvika (good). 11

*Comment:—*

'Yaṣṭavyameveti'—Being blessed with human body a man, becomes eligible to perform the sacrifice according to his caste and social order, with a firm belief, that it is his duty to do so, and he should not expect any reward, either here or hereafter. The terms 'eva' (only), and 'Iti' (thus), have been used, to emphasize the fact, that it is his duty and it must be done. He should, have no other consideration, except performance of duty, for duty's sake.

'Aphalākāṅkṣibhiḥ'—A man, expects no reward, either here or hereafter, for sacrifice, which he offers.

'Yajño vidhidṛṣṭo ya ijjate'—The sacrifice, should be offered, according to the ordinance of scriptures.

If he expects no reward, then why should he perform a sacrifice? The Lord, answers 'Manah samādhāya (mind having

reconciled), i.e., it is his duty, to perform it.

### What is Sāttvika Sacrifice?

The term 'yaṣṭavyam\*', denotes that sacrifices should be offered, as a duty. When a man offers sacrifice having desire of gaining honour, praise and riches here, and heaven and luxuries, in the next birth, he is attached to the sacrifice. But if he performs it, without any kind of reward, his affinity with it is renounced and (in absence of selfishness and pride), his ego is purified.

In it there is a vital point, that when a doer performs an action, he gets affinity with it. An action, is in the image of a doer viz., as is the doer, so is his action. The Lord, in the third verse of this chapter, declares, "As is a man's faith, so is he" and he acts according to his faith. It means, that as affinity of a doer with an action remains, there is every possibility of his getting into bondage. But if he performs an act, as a matter of duty without having any attachment for it, his affinity is renounced and he gets liberated. How is an action to be performed, only for duty's sake? A person, has to do nothing for himself. He should have no affinity, with any object, time and place etc. He should perform his duty, according to the need of the hour. Thus, he will not desire to reap the fruit of action, and will not be bound.

On the other hand, attachment leads him, to bondage. It is declared in the Gītā—"The Yogīs (men of action) perform actions, only with their senses, mind, intellect and body, abandoning attachment" (5/11). It means, that a Karmayogī, should not have any affinity with body, senses and mind. It also implies, that he should not have any affinity, with the ladle, the place and materials for oblation.

Sacrifice, and its fruit, both have a beginning and an end, they appear and disappear, while the soul is imperishable and

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\* Duty is the action which should be performed, which is according to one's capacity and by which the aim is achieved.

eternal. But, he (the soul) assumes his affinity with actions, and their fruits. Until he renounces this affinity, he gets entangled, in the cycle of birth and death (Gītā 5/12).

Sattvagūṇa, enables a man to renounce his affinity with the world, and leads him to God-realization, therefore, it is called as 'Sat' or transcendental.\* All the qualities of the divine nature are Sāttvika. But a person possessing divine nature realizes God, only when he transcends the three guṇas (modes of nature).



अभिसन्धाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत् ।

इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ १२ ॥

abhisandhāya tu phalaṁ dambhārthamapi caiva yat  
ijyate bharataśreṣṭha taṁ yajñaṁ viddhi rājasam

Sacrifice, which is offered in expectation of reward or for the

\* In the Śrīmadbhāgavata in the twenty-fifth chapter of the eleventh section besides the three Guṇas there is also the description of the state which transcends the three Guṇas while in the Gītā there is the description of the three Guṇas only. Why is it so when Lord Kṛṣṇa is the speaker in both of them? The answer is that when the sacrifice is performed as a duty (17/11), gifts are made as a duty (17/20) and an action is performed as a duty (18/9), the person has no affinity with actions and their fruits, and so the Sāttvika actions turn into transcendental ones.

At the end of the seventeenth chapter also the Lord while describing the Lord's name 'Sat' out of the three names 'Om', 'Tat', 'Sat', declares that all the actions which are performed for the sake of the Lord become 'Sat' viz., real (transcendental) (17/27). It means that the actions of a Karmayogī become transcendental when he renounces attachment to the actions and their fruits, while the actions of a Bhaktiyogī become transcendental when they are performed for the sake of the Lord. So there is no description of the state which transcends the three Guṇas.

In the Gītā it is also mentioned the Sattvagūṇa (The mode of goodness) binds (14/6) and those established in Sattvagūṇa rise to the higher regions (14/18). Why? The answer is that it is not Sattvagūṇa which binds but it is attachment to it which binds (14/6, 13/21). Similarly the assumption that one is established in Sattvagūṇa also leads him to bondage (14/18).