

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।

तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥ ९ ॥

yajñārthātkarmaṇo'nyatra loko'yaṁ karmabandhanaḥ  
tadarthaṁ karma 'kaunteya muktasaṅgaḥ samācara

The mankind is bound by actions other than those done for the sake of sacrifice. Therefore, O son of Kuntī (Arjuna), perform action for that (yajña) sake, and without attachment. 9

*Comment:—*

'Yajñārthātkarmaṇo'nyatra'—According to the Gītā, every duty is 'Yajña' (sacrifice). The term 'Yajña' includes sacrifice, charity, penance, oblation, pilgrimage, fast, study of the Vedas and all physical, mundane and spiritual actions. Professions such as business, service and teaching etc., sanctioned by the scriptures, are also included in 'Yajña'. Other actions, which are performed in order to comfort others and for the welfare of others, are also included in the term 'Yajña'. Attachment perishes very quickly by performing actions for the sake of sacrifice and all actions of a Karmayogī are dissolved (Gītā 4/23) i.e., they instead of leading the person to bondage, reduce the stock of his past actions also to nothing.

In fact, a man's inclination is judged by his aim, rather than by his actions. As a businessman's aim while having a transaction is to earn money, and he thinks of money, as soon as he shut his shop, similarly, a striver who performs action for the sake of sacrifice, has the aim of God-realization and as soon as the action is over, he is inclined towards God.

The people of different Varṇas (castes) have their allotted duties and actions. A Brāhmaṇa (a member of the priest class) can depend on charity which is a source of his living, while it is not allowed for a Kṣatriya (a member of the warrior class). Similarly, performance of actions without having any desire for fruit, is a man's own duty while performance of actions expecting

their fruit is not his own duty. Similarly, forbidden actions are also not included in one's own duty, and so is the case, with actions which are performed in order to gain pleasure, honour, praise and comfort etc.\* Therefore, a striver should take precaution lest the action should be performed with a selfish motive. In fact a striver is he, who is ever on the alert in this regard.

If a person receives a visitor with open arms, in order to create a good impression of his gentleness upon him, it means that the action has been performed, with a selfish motive. Therefore, such an action cannot be called a sacrifice. Similarly, if a person puts a question to an orator in a meeting or in a discourse in order to impress the orator and the audience, his action is not performed for the sake of sacrifice (Yajña). It means that a striver should perform action by renouncing his selfish motive and desire.

A striver should not take any action for pleasure and prosperity, or even for the maintenance of the body. If actions are performed for the maintenance of body, it means that there is a desire to live. Actions should be performed for the sake of sacrifice alone. Any action taken for personal welfare, leads to bondage. Indeed, the supreme striver is he who performs actions for the welfare of others, even without having a desire to attain salvation. The welfare of others also involves one's own welfare. Therefore, all the mundane and spiritual actions should be performed, for the welfare of others.

Action which is performed for one's own self, leads to bondage. Therefore, even actions such as remembrance, reflection, meditation and even a trance should be practised for the welfare of the world. Thus whatever a striver does with his physical, subtle and causal bodies, does only for others, not for himself. By doing so, his affinity for the world is renounced and he is

---

\* When a man performs actions for himself, it means that he has a desire for the fruit of actions and where there is desire for the fruit of actions, there is the possibility of the performance of forbidden actions.

united with God. This is known as Karmayoga.

**'Loko'yaṁ karmabandhanaḥ'**—Only human beings are entitled to take action in the form of performing a duty (sacrifice), as has been described by the Lord relating to the topic, of the wheel of creation (3/14—16). He who performs actions with an interested motive is bound, while he, who performs actions, for the welfare of others, performs his duty and attains liberation from bondage. It is not action but attachment and selfishness, which bind him.

**'Tadarthaṁ karma kaunteya muktasaṅgaḥ samācara'**—Here the term 'muktasaṅgaḥ' (freedom from attachment) denotes, that actions should be performed without entertaining the feeling of 'mine', and attachment to actions, things, body, mind and intellect etc. If the feeling of 'mine' and attachment are renounced, actions are automatically performed for the welfare of others, and if a striver has no other actions to perform, he automatically gets established in the self. Consequently, only actions which are prescribed by the scriptures, are performed by him.

The renunciation of duty out of indolence and carelessness, is declared to be 'Tamas' (Gītā 18/7) which results in delusion i.e., such a person is born in the wombs of the deluded. He who abandons a duty, because it is painful, such relinquishment is Rajas (Gītā 18/8) the fruit is pain (Gītā 14/16). Therefore, here Lord Kṛṣṇa does not exhort Arjuna to renounce actions but He orders him to perform actions efficiently and enthusiastically renouncing selfishness, mineness, attachment, desire for fruit and partiality etc., according to the ordinance of the scriptures. Such relinquishment is regarded 'Sāttvika' (Gītā 18/9). The Lord Himself further declares that there is nothing in the three worlds that must be done by Him, yet He is engaged in action (3/22-23).

A person becomes slack in performing actions because of two factors—(1) It is in the nature of human beings that they perform action with a view to reaping the fruit. But when,

according to the Discipline of Action, he realizes that actions are to be performed without the desire for fruit, he thinks why he should perform actions at all. (2) If having started action, he realizes that it will bear adverse fruit, he feels that he should not perform it.

A Karmayogī has neither any desire nor expectation of the perishable fruit of action, he performs actions, only in order to do good to the world. So there cannot be any slackness in the performance of duty.

### A Vital Fact

Generally, a person does an act promptly and efficiently, only if it serves his selfish motive, but such an action binds him. In order to be free from the bondage, he should perform actions prescribed by the scriptures, disinterestedly.

In the Discipline of Action, all actions are performed for others. Who are others? Not only other beings and things, but the so-called our own bodies—gross, subtle, (senses, mind, intellect and life-breath) and causal (including 'ego') are also, included in the term 'others'\*. The reason is, that the self (soul) is a fragment of sentient God, while these bodies and things are the fragments of insentient 'prakṛti' (matter). All actions are performed through the evolutes of nature such as body etc., and for the body and the world which are also evolutes of nature, while the sentient neither undergoes actions, nor are actions performed for the sentient. So actions can never be performed for the self. But

---

\* Like the world the body, senses, mind and intellect are also different from us. Therefore, a Karmayogī without assuming them as his own, serves them. He does not let the body become sleepy, indolent, heedless, idle and pleasure-seeking. Thus he renders service to the body. He renders service to the senses by not allowing them to be engaged in worldly pleasures. He renders service to the mind by not allowing it to think of doing harm to others or thinking of sense-objects or futile things. He serves the intellect by not allowing it to think of the duties of others. He serves all of them by having neither the feeling of mineness nor attachment.

when the self assumes worldly insentient things, such as a body etc., as 'I', 'Mine' and 'for me', he performs actions for himself. By performing actions for others, attachment and the feeling of 'mine' perish easily.

Everybody can realize that the states of the body (childhood, youth etc.,) undergo change, but he remains the same. This unchanging self (soul) has its identity with God, while the changing body, senses, mind and intellect etc., have their identity, with the world. Whatever action is performed by us, is performed with body and senses etc., not by the self. This shows that we have nothing to do for ourselves, we have to do only for the world. When we perform actions for ourselves, we are bound by those actions—"The man is bound by actions, other than those performed for the sake of sacrifice (Yajña)."

The imperishable and unchanging self, has no affinity for the perishable and changing body, senses, mind and intellect etc. Therefore, there is nothing one's own and for one's own self. We can do nothing without the help of the body etc., therefore we have to do nothing for the self. The self can never lack anything. Without want there can arise no desire. Therefore, It needs nothing for Itself. In this way, when a man's affinity for actions and things is severed, if he is inclined towards knowledge, he realizes the self. On the other hand, if he is inclined towards devotion, he attains to the state of exclusive devotion.

**Appendix**—A man is not bound by performing actions but he is bound by 'anyatra karma' viz., actions which are done with a selfish motive (for himself) (Gītā 3/13). Therefore the expression 'yajñārthātkarmaṇo'nyatra loko'yaṁ karmabandhanaḥ' means—nothing is to be done for one's own self.

A man can be free from the bondage of actions only when he renders service to the world with the body, things, ability and strength (power) which he has received from the world and covets no fruit. The reason is that the world can't provide us

the thing which we aim at. We want bliss, want immortality, want carefreedom, want fearlessness, want independence (self-dependence). But all this will not be available to us from the world but it will be available by snapping off our ties with the world. In order to get dissociated with the world, it is necessary that whatever we have received from the world, we surrender it to the world in its selfless service.



*Link:—The Lord in the preceding verse declared, "The man is bound by actions, other than those performed for the sake of sacrifice." Therefore, in order to be free from bondage, actions instead of being renounced, should be performed, only in the spirit of performing a duty (yajña). The Lord confirms the same fact, by giving other reasons in the next three verses.*

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।  
 अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥ १० ॥  
 देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।  
 परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ ११ ॥

sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā purovāca prajāpatiḥ  
 anena prasaviṣyadhvameṣa vo'stviṣṭakāmadhuk  
 devānbhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ  
 parasparaṁ bhāvayantaḥ śreyaḥ paramavāpsyatha

At the beginning, when the creator (Prajāpati) created living beings with sacrifice (Yajña) and said, "By this shall you propagate; let this fulfil all your requirements for the sacrifice (yajña)." By this gratify the gods and let the gods foster you, these caring for each other selflessly through your duties, you shall attain to the supreme good. 10-11

*Comment:—*

'Sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā purovāca prajāpatiḥ'—One, who creates beings or things etc., it becomes his duty to preserve