

*pūrvaih*, by the ancient ones, Janaka and others; not actions as are undertaken in the present day. (6)

‘If action has to be undertaken here, then I shall do so following Your instruction itself. What is the use of specifying that it was done earlier by the ancient ones?’ ‘The answer is: Because there is a great difficulty as regards actions.’ How?

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।  
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १६ ॥

16. Even the intelligent are confounded as to what is action and what is inaction. I shall tell you of that action by knowing which you will become free from evil.

*Kavayah api*, even the intelligent; *mohitāh*, are confounded in this subject of action etc.; *iti atra*, as to; *kim karma*, what is action; and *kim akarma*, what is inaction. Therefore, *pravaksyāmi*, I shall tell; *te*, you; of *karma*, action; *akarmaca*, as also of inaction; *jñātvā*, by knowing; *yat*, which—action etc.; *moksyase*, you will become free: *aśubhāt*, from evil, from transmigration.

‘And you should not think thus: What is called *karma* is the movement of the body etc. as are well-known in the world; and *akarma*, inaction, is not doing those, (that is) sitting quietly. What is there to understand (further) in that regard?’ ‘Why?’ The answer is:

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।  
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥ १७ ॥

17. For there is something to be known even about action, and something to be known about prohibited action; and something has to be known about inaction. The true nature of action is inscrutable.

*Hi*, for; there is something *boddhavyam*, to be known; *api*, even; *karmanah*, about action enjoined by the scriptures; and there is certainly something to be known *vikarmanah*, about prohibited action; so also, there is something to be known *akarmanah*, about inaction, about sitting quietly. (The words ‘there is’ are to be supplied