

in all the three cases.) Because *gatih*, the true nature, that is the essential nature; *karmanah*, of action—implying *karma* etc., namely action, prohibited action and inaction; is *gahanā*, inscrutable, hard to understand.

‘What, again, is the essential nature of action etc. which has to be understood, and about which it was promised, “I shall tell you...” (16)?’ This is being stated:

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥१८॥

18. He who finds inaction in action, and action in inaction, he is the wise one (7) among men; he is engaged in Yog and is a performer of all actions!

Since engagement and non-engagement (in action) depend on an agent, therefore, *yah*, he who; *paśyet*, that is *paśyati*, finds; *akarma*, inaction, absence of action; *karmani*, in action—*karma* means whatever is done, action in general; in that action—; and *yah*, who; finds *karma*, action; *akarmani*, in inaction, in the absence of action; *sah*, he; is *buddhimān*, a wise one; *manusyesu*, among men. All dealings involving an act, accessories, etc. exist certainly on the plane of ignorance, (8) only so long as one has not attained to the Reality. He is a *yogī*, *yuktah*, engaged in Yog; and a *kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*, performer of all actions. One who discriminates between action and actions. One who discriminates between action and inaction is praised thus.

Objection: Well, what is meant by this contradictory statement, ‘He who finds inaction in action’, and ‘action in inaction’? For action cannot become inaction, nor inaction action. That being so, how can a witness have (such) an incongruous perception?

Vedāntin: Is it not that (9) to an ordinary foolish observer, that which in reality is inaction appears as action, and similarly, action itself as inaction? That being so, in order to show things as they are, the Bhagavān says, ‘He who finds inaction in action’, etc. Therefore