

21. Geetha - the Kalpatharu

HUMANS have, perforce, to engage themselves in some action or other. They have to be active, either physically or mentally or both. Apart from securing a contented and happy life, man craves for wealth, for fame, for power and possessions and popular esteem. But, the central teaching of the Geetha is disinterested activity, that is to say, activity suffused with enthusiasm and intelligence, done with perfection, without hope or expectation of rewards and even fruits. "You are entitled to do the work but not to the fruits thereof," says Krishna to Arjuna. The process is really more pleasant and satisfying than the end product. When a person engages himself in arranging for the celebration of a wedding, he forgets his fatigue, the expense or time and money while despatching invitations, deciding the menu, decorating the house, receiving guests and kinsmen, and supervising the ceremony. When the wedding is over, the joy declines and the fatigue comes into consciousness. The aftermath tastes insipid.

Leave the result of your work to the Will of God

When work is undertaken with an egotistic attitude, impelled by selfish motives and inspired by hopes of self-advancement, it feeds greed and pride, envy and hatred. Then, it fastens the bond and fosters the feeling of attachment to more and more profitable works. It promotes ingratitude to those who lent their hands and brains and to God Himself who endowed the person with the urge and the skill. "I did it", one says when the work succeeds; or "Others spoiled it" one says when it fails. Resentment, depression and despair follow when the work results in failure.

The more deeply one is attached to the fruits, the more intense and painful is one's grief when one is disappointed. The only means, therefore, to escape from both pride and pain is to leave the result to the Will of God, while one is happy in the thought that one has done one's duty with all the dedication and care that one is capable of. No one can do better than his best. The body is gifted with all its inherent excellences and defects so that it can be used, every moment of life, for purposes that can sanctify time through service, sacrifice and love.

The word Karma translated as work or action also connotes the rites prescribed by the *Vedhas* (ancient sacred scriptures) in the section named so. They are aimed at securing for the persons performing them a variety of material gains. Some of them promise as reward even a sojourn in heaven. But, they are all result-oriented. Though they cleanse the mind and foster renunciation, they yield the best results only when they have the attainment of world peace and world prosperity as the goal. Karma then becomes Karma-yoga, karma yoked with unselfish ideals. All acts undertaken by persons after surrendering their wills and wants to the Lord (*Sarva dharmaan parithyajya, Maam ekam Sharanam Vraja--Giving up all ideas of do's and dont's, surrender to Me alone*) become so holy and so pure that they do not bind one, either by the iron chain of misery or the golden chain of exultation.

Karma has to be an act of fulfilment and adoration

The Geetha does not encourage inertia, indifference or slothfulness. It recommends Karma as a *Yoga* (divine communion), as an activity in tune with the Divine Will, directed to the promotion of one's spiritual consummation. Karma has to be an act of fulfilment, of adoration and of one's duty to oneself and others. The Geetha marks out the steps and the path towards the realisation of this goal. It accepts all attitudes as valuable and sublimates each one into a *saadhana* (spiritual effort). It elevates the *Karma Kaanda* into a means for the uplift of the self and the advancement

of mankind. It is *Kalpa Vriksha* (Wish-fulfilling Tree), which bestows boons to aspirants of all levels of commitment.

It is an ocean of spiritual wisdom from which each one can bring away as much as the vessel he carries with him can hold. The rational seeker, the actional *saadhak* and the devotional aspirant all get equal attention and care from the Lord. In fact, the Geetha infuses into every act of daily life the sublimity of *Vedhaantha*, the immanence and transcendence of the Divine Principle. The *Vedhaantha* is interpreted in such simple terms that even the common man can understand and observe them in daily life.

The Geetha is the authentic Messenger of God; it conveys His Message in clear, convincing fullness. It is the Mother's comforting counsel for mankind. Grasping it, man can swim safe across the storm-ridden sea of life. It is the surest guide to the *saadhak*. It is a mine of *manthras*; it is an ever-active fountain of *Vedhaanthic* truths. It is the royal road to victory for seekers of Freedom. It renders that road a path of flowers.

Mandhir, Prashaanthi Nilayam, 10 September, 1984

Tongue is a tool that you can use in order to give vent to your thoughts, your ideas, your feelings, your desires, your prayers, your joys, your sorrows. If you are angry, you use it to speak out harsh words very loudly.

If you are pleased, you use it to speak soft words in a low pleasant voice. I want you to use your tongue only for your good and the good of others.

If you speak harshly to another, he too talks loud and harsh; angry words cause more angry words. But, if you use soft and sweet word, when another is angry towards you, he will calm down, he will be sorry that he used his tongue in that way.

Sri Sathya Sai