

CHAPTER XXVII

As the healthy glow of the body is hidden from sight by the clothes that cover it, the individual soul obscured by Ahamkara or egoism is not able to reveal the splendour of the Brahma Thatwam, which is its treasured possession. For egoism is at the root of all evil, all defects, all deficiencies. It is born in desire, or kama. Be free from egoism too.

The state of desirelessness is really the state of egolessness. And what is Moksha or Liberation, except liberation from bondage to the ego? You deserve Liberation when you break away from the bond of desire.

Men engage themselves, by and large, in activities prompted only by the desire to benefit from the results. They withdraw from acts that bring no benefit. But the Geetha condemns both attitudes. For whether consequences follow or not, one cannot escape the obligation to be active. Man

cannot completely give up activity. How then, can man avoid being caught up in the mesh of consequences? The Geetha teaches that *Karma-phala thyaga* (giving up all attachment to the fruit of karma) as the greatest sadhana designed for this purpose.

Whether desired or discarded, hoped for or not hoped for, every act ends in some consequence, if not immediately, at least after some time. It is inevitable. The consequence may be good or evil. But if the act is dedicated to the Lord, neither will affect the doer. By that sacrament of dedication, the deed is transmuted into a higher order and made divine, holy, sacred. On the other hand, acts performed under the inspiration of the ego will be fraught with bondage.

Those who are sincerely seeking to realise God, to achieve Him, have to become free from the taint of desire. Become *mamakaara-sunya*, devoid of feelings of “I” and “Mine.” Then, you attain Moksha, Salvation. That is the achievement of the goal of life. That stage knows no joy or grief. It is above and beyond them both. Krishna willed that His friend and devotee Arjuna should reach that state and so, He endeavoured to save him, by teaching him the ways and means through a variety of methods. Moreover, He used him as an instrument to receive this precious gift for the good of all humanity.

Before concluding the sacred counsel, Krishna addressed Arjuna and said, “Give up all Dharmas and surrender to Me. I shall liberate you from all sin. That is to

say, give up Ahamkaara and Mamakaara, pride in the ego and in possessions and feelings of I and mine. Destroy the identification of the self with the body which is only its cage or prison. Get firm in the belief that all this is Paramatma and nought else. So, there is nothing else to be done except bowing to His Will and surrendering to His Plan. Man has to give up the twin activities of commission and omission, Sankalpa and Vikalpa, resolving and refusing. He has to follow the Lord's Commands. He has to accept His Will, be happy wherever He has placed him, however He has shaped him. He keeps himself far from the inquiry into the appropriateness or inappropriateness of his acts, but does them as acts of worship to the Lord, acts for which no reward is expected. That is the sum of his duty.

Some dry Vedanthins decked with strings of beads take advantage of this teaching of Krishna to give up all Dharmas and with this assurance that He will liberate them from all sin, idly stretch their legs and loll with closed eyes. They shirk their legitimate duties and eat, sleep and roam about as much as they like or can. They do not discriminate between what is good and what is bad. Their excuse is that the Lord has commended them to transcend Dharma. When elders at home or experienced seekers question their conduct, they answer, "Alas, that you too should blunder thus. Don't you know what the Lord has said in the Geetha? "I have accepted as the basis of my conduct, His Command, '*Sarva Dharmaan Parithyajya.*' I have no need for advice from persons with lesser authority." They feel very proud

of their devotion and orthodoxy. Such people select from the words of the Lord only those portions which favour their inclinations. The words before and after are conveniently ignored, because they are unpleasant, though they are inseparable portions of the same injunction. They ignore the vital part of the command, in spite of the claim to be staunch votaries of the Geetha.

Giving up all Dharmas, "*Maam ekam saranam vraja*" says the Lord. That is "Surrender to Me alone." Have they surrendered thus? No. Have they at least the deep yearning for Liberation? No, for if they had it, they would not have neglected their legitimate duties. They would not have fallen a prey to the demands of food and sleep. Such men are glorious only in gossip. They are great only in glittering. They do not put the Lord's Command into actual practice. They are too idle to do so. Not even an atom of spiritual endeavour can be seen in them.

True aspirants can discern valuable truths in the divine words spoken by the Lord:

*Sarva dharmaan parithyajya
Maamekam saranam vraja;
Aham thwaa sarva paapebhyo
Mokshayishyami, maa suchah.*

Note that the Lord has said, "Sarva Dharmaan parithyajya," not, "Sarva Karmaan parithyajya." What then is the meaning of this statement? It means, "Perform all acts enjoined by the Lord, for His Glorification, without getting involved and lost in discussions of Dharma and Adharma."

Though you know that there is nothing for you to acquire, for you have placed complete trust in the Lord and live only as an offering to the Lord, still, like Janaka and others, you have to engage yourselves in activity for the well-being of the world, *Loka Sangraha*. The Sarva-bhootha anthara-atma, the soul immanent in every being is not distinct from the Atma or soul that is in you. So, be Sarva-bhootha-hithe-rathaa, that is to say, eager to promote the wellbeing of all beings. Perform all acts enjoined by the Sastras and Scriptures for His sake, in the spirit of dedication, with no eye on the fruits thereof. This is the true Nishkama Karma.

Understand the Geetha well and, observing its injunctions, establish yourselves in the attitude of Nishkama Karma. Do all duties as acts of worship, Hari-prasadam. That is the sole task. Leave the rest to Him: the fruit, the consequence, the result. Then, you receive the Grace of Hari (Vishnu) and your life on earth is sanctified and becomes worthwhile.

For those who follow the path of Dharma ultimate victory is certain, in spite of diverse difficulties that might hamper them. Those who stray away from the path of Dharma might have wealth and comfort for long, but they will be overpowered ultimately by disaster. The Kauravas and the Pandavas are the brightest witnesses for this truth.

The Kauravas steeped in Adharma were so blinded by conceit that they subjected the good Pandavas to a variety

of tortures. But they met with total destruction. They had the support of all types of parties but since they did not earn the strength of the Grace of the Lord, they were deserted by fate and ruined beyond repair. Bharatha teaches all people of Bharath this one lesson: Nothing can equal the Grace of God, not even the mightiest array of arms. This is the most valuable message that it embodies.

The Geethabhavanam (Mansion of Geetha) is the mansion of Sathya and Dharma, erected on the soil of India, for the benefit of the world. Study it with faith and devotion. Experience the curative and restorative effects of its teachings by actual practice. For such, the Atmarama, (the Atma so full of the spring of sweetness and bliss) will be ever present as a reality. The Lord will shower on him His favours in a trice. Pray to the Lord who has all the fourteen worlds in Him and you can certainly become master of the eight treasures which give happiness here below, and what is even more desirable, Kaivalya (which is the fountain of Nithya [eternal] Ananda, of Nithya Sathya [Eternal Truth] and Mithya Jnana [relative or temporary wisdom]).

Why wander about for ghee, when you have butter with you? Acquire butter, that is to say, the Grace of the Lord, by implicit obedience of the rules of life laid down by Him. When that Grace is won, one need not pray separately for Moksha or Liberation. He knows best what you should get and when. He will confer what you deserve and can benefit from. Yearn for Him, suffer anguish for Him. There is no need to yearn for Moksha then. If that is done with no

second thought, He will destroy all sin. Hold fast to Him. He can make you Immortal, like Arjuna. Those who seek to escape from this cycle of birth and death must obey the command of the Lord as laid down in the Geetha and surrender to Him. Then, he will be crowned with success in every undertaking. He will achieve Victory.