

Adhyāya IIISection - I : Verses 1 - 8

Arjuna said :

If the attitude (buddhi) (of desirelessness) is held by you to be more important (jyāyasī) then action (done with - that attitude), O Janārdana! Why dost Thou, O Keśava! urge me to do the terrible deed?

Note:1. In Bhāṣī.Adh.II.39-72 the Lord has explained the attitude of mind (buddhi) of the Yoga contrasting it with the buddhi of the vedic Ritualist in Adh.II. verses 40-47 and by emphasising the characteristics of that buddhi itself and those of a man who possesses it in Adh.II.Verses 48-72. Arjuna seems to have come to believe that the attainment of that attitude (buddhi) itself is more important than an action (e.g., the war) done with that attitude of desirelessness or - disinterestedness.

Sāṅkara:

If knowledge (buddhi) (which is, according to Śrī Sāṅkara, invariably followed by renunciation of the world) is held by thee to be superior (jyāyasī) to action, O Janārdana! Why dost Thou, O Keśava! urge me to do the terrible deed?

According to Śrī Sāṅkara the verse deals with the well known question of knowledge versus action, jñāna versus karman. Buddhi means jñāna. Jñāna, being the nature of Ātman is no kartr, is to be always followed immediately by renunciation of all actions (sarvakarmasannyāsa). According to Śrī Sāṅkara the

verse clearly proves that the Lord had told Arjuna in Adhyāya II that jñāna is superior to karman and had yet asked Arjuna to fight; and the verse also disproves the view of a predecessor (Bhartṛprapañca) that the Gītā teaches a combination of knowledge and Action (jñānakarmasamuccaya). According to Śrī Śankara the recipient (adhikārin) a fit student of jñāna is quite different from that of karman. Only an uttama adhikārin is fit for jñāna; while, Arjuna was a mere madhyama adhikārin.

2. With words appearing to be (eva) mixed (i.e., vague) Thou, and as it were, confoundest my intellect; tell me, after having decided, that one by which I may reach Bliss.

Notes: 1. Vyāmisreneva vākyena - This means 'mixed words' which might refer to Adh.II.49 where the Lord advises Arjuna to seek shelter in the attitude (buddhi) of desirelessness, or disinterestedness, instead of asking him to fight, as in other verses of Adh.II. The expression might also refer to Adh.II.49-72 where the Lord has emphasised the standpoint or attitude of Yoga, "Disinterested Action" rather than Actions done Acc.to Yoga.

2. Sreyah - This means the 'Bliss' which seems to have been made as distinguished from preyah. Sreyah and preyah are originally used in the Katha Upa.I.2.1-2, from which the Gītā has borrowed a lot. Śrī Śankara 'ekam' means one of jñāna and karman. He says that Arjuna's question about "One" proves that jñāna cannot be combined with karman even as a subsidiary sādhana to Mokṣa.

The Lord said :

In this world the method of life (nisthā) is two-fold (dwividhā), stated by Me before (purā), O sinless one; that, of the Sāmkhyas, by the Disinterested Action (yoga) through a particular kind of knowledge (jñāna) and that of the Yogins by the Disinterested Action through action.

Notes:- (1). "Purā proktā mayā" refers to what the Lord said in Adh. II. The Sāmkhyānām nisthā ~~the disinterested~~ is stated in II. 11-38; Disinterested Action (Yoga), particularly, the disinterested action of war (samkhya) achieved through the particular knowledge (jñāna) of the immortality or mortality of the soul and of the righteous war a duty of a Ksatriya, is a means to that nisthā. The yoginām nisthā is stated in II. 39-72; Disinterested Action (yoga) achieved by means of action itself rather than any kind of knowledge, say, the knowledge of prakṛti as the sole actor, is a means to this yoginām nisthā.

Sānkara.

In this world a two-fold state (nisthā, duty) (of the three twice-born castes) was stated by me formerly (in the beginning of the creation, when I revealed the tradition of the Veda and its Meaning), O Sinless one; that of the Sāmkhyas (those who possess the knowledge distinguishing between Ātman and non-Ātman, and who have renounced the world from the very stage of celibacy) through Yoga in the form of jñāna; and that of the Yogins (the Karmins) through Yoga in the form of action.

Note:- Sankara says that this verse also disproves the jñānakarma-samuccaya view as the teaching of the Gītā or the Veda, in so far as this verse says that jñānayoga is for the Sāmkhya and Karmayoga for the yogins.

It is hardly necessary to point out that Sankara's interpretation of purā- (sargādeu prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā), mayā (vedārthasampradāyamāviṣkurvatā), jñānayogaḥ (jñānameva yogaḥ), sāmkyānām (Brahmacaryādeva kṛṭasannyāsānām), karmayogaḥ (karma eva yogaḥ) ^{and} yoginām (Karminām) is wrong.

Sāmkhya is nowhere in the Gītā said to be Sannyāsa. On the contrary, yoga is in the Gītā opposed to sannyāsa (V.1), and as the sāmkyānām niṣṭhā is by means of Jñānayoga, it must be a niṣṭhā of disinterested action (yogaḥ) based upon a kind of knowledge. Yogaḥ is distinguished from Vedic Karmans in II.40-47; so, it is wrong to explain yoginah as karminah only. Karma eva yogaḥ - karmayogaḥ is also wrong; it ought to be "yoga through action" as distinguished from Jñāna.

(4). Not through a non-beginning (i.e. avoidance, giving up) of actions a man gets to action-lessness (a stage in spiritual advancement, when it is no longer an obligation for a man to do his duties). Nor does he get perfection only through the (right) Renunciation (because he can get it also through Disinterested Action).

Sankara - Not through a non-beginning of actions (which, when performed, lead to the purification of mind, Sattvasuddhi, which

in its turn leads to the rise of jñāna and Sannyāsa) a man gets naiṣkarmya (Actionlessness, i.e., Renunciation after jñānayoga). Nor a man gets siddhi (= naiṣkarmya or jñānayogena-nisthā) through mere abandonment of action (i.e., renunciation without jñāna)

Note the difference in the interpretations of naiṣkarmya. (vide XVIII.49 where also naiṣkarmya means a stage when it is not compulsory for a man to do his duties), siddhi (Modi-Moksa; Sannyāsa, and eva in sannyasanādeva. Modi-'by yoga also - vide Api in sarvakarmānyapi sadā kurvāno madvyapāsryah-XVIII.56A, Sarvabhūtātmbhūtātma kurvannapi va lipyate,^{Adh. V} V.7, etc.

(5)

(The two arguments in favour of Disinterested Action in V.4 are advanced) because nobody (neither a sage nor an ignorant man) can, even for a moment, ever remain (absolutely) without doing some action or other ('breathing', begging alms' etc. being action, which even the Brahman-knowing ascetic must do; otherwise he would have to commit suicide); (this argument in V.5A is true) because, every one (either a jñānin or an ajñā) is made per force to do (some) action (every moment) by the guṇas (sattva, rajas, tamas) born of Prakṛti.

Sankara - (Nor by mere renunciation without jñāna can anybody get siddhi- Sankara's interpretation of V.4B) because none can even for a moment, ever, remain without doing any action, because everyone is per force made to do some action by the guṇas born of the Prakṛti. (Everyone - everyone who is ajñā; because it is said in e.g., XIV.23 that the jñānin is not shaken by the guṇas.) Guṇair yo na vicālyate. ^{Adh. XIV.} 23 b.

Note that Śaṅkara adds only Ajñā to Kāścit and sarvaḥ; i.e., Kāścit Ajñāḥ while, really kāścit and Sarvaḥ must refer to both jñānin and Ajñāḥ. The Gītā argues that even a jñānin-sannyāsin shall have to do certain deeds, though these deeds may be sāttvika (i.e., phalanirapekṣa, as stated in Adh. XVII & XVIII).

(6) That bewildered (Vimūdhātma - dharmasammūdhātma) man who sits having (outwardly) controlled the organs of action, (but) mentally remembering the objects of senses, is called a hypocrite.

(7) But that (wise) man, not attached (to actions or their results, who like Janak) having mentally controlled his organs, begins, O Arjuna, Disinterested Action (yoga) through action (karma) is distinguished.

Śaṅkara - But the (ignorant man, asked by the Scripture to do his duties), who having mentally controlled his organs of knowledge (buddhi-āndriyāni), (and) being unattached, begins Karmayoga by means of organs of action, is, O Arjuna, superior (to the hypocrite).

Note (1) Śaṅkara's addition of dharmāni adhikṛtāḥ Ajñāḥ to yāḥ and (2) his change of āndriyāni to buddhīndriyāni.

(8) Perform thou action fixed (niyata, by Sambhāva, i.e., the Caste-duties of a Kṣatriya) because action is superior to Renunciation (for even the sage). Even the maintenance of the body would not be possible for thee if thou wert (absolutely) actionless. - 8

Sankara = Perform thou the daily (niyatam) action, because action is superior, (in point of its result) to avoidance of action (for an ignorant man like thee?). The continuation of the body even would not be possible by - avoidance of action.

Note :- (1) We: niyata-Svabhāvaniyata Cf. Swabhāvaniyata in XVIII.47 and niyata in XVIII.7; Sankara niyata = nityam, yo yasmin karmanyadhikr̥tāḥ phalāya cāsrutam tanniyatam karma.

(2) Jyāyah - We to be preferred for its effect, and utility in Lokasaṅgraha, Sankara - is better from - the standpoint of its result to the ignorant man.

(3) Akarmanah-we and Sankara differ.

(9) Section II : Verse 9 to 16

The people here are action—bound in case of action other than that performed for the purpose of Yajña. (under - stood as a principle leading to the continuation of the world order). For its sake, O son of Kunti, perform thou action, being free from attachment.

Sankara - The people here (who are asked by the Scripture to do their duties, because they are ignorant) are action-bound by action other than that done for the sake of yajña (which represents viṣṇu) (yajño vai viṣṇuḥ). For His sake, O son of Kunti, perform thou action, avoiding attachment to the result of action.

Notes:1. The difference regarding the interpretation of Yajña Śrī Sāṅkara quotes "Yajño vai Viṣṇuḥ", but in our opinion Yajña, is explained by the verses of the context (III.10-15) itself; which please see.

2. Śrī Sāṅkara's addition of "(karmani) adhikṛtaḥ to lokah".

10. Having, in ancient times, created "creature together with sacrifice (yajña), the Lord of creature said : by this (yajña) shall you propagate; be this (yajña) your giver of desired objects.

Sāṅkara:

Having in ancient times created the three, twice born, castes (prajāḥ) the Lord of prajāḥ said: by this (yajña) shall you propagate; be this your giver of desired fruits.

Notes:1. Prajāḥ - "Mankind". Śrī Sāṅkara says 'trayo varṇāḥ'.

2. Sṛṣṭvā - Having emanated.

3. Prajāpatiḥ - The Lord of emanation.

4. Śrī Sāṅkara on prasaviṣyadhvam, says that prasavaḥ means vrddhiḥ i.e., utpattiḥ, taṁ kurudhvam.

11. "With this (Yajña) nourish the Gods, and may the Gods nourish you; thus nourishing one another shall you (both the Gods and men) achieve the Supreme Bliss (Param Sreyah).

Note:(1) The yajña is not here only a means for desired objects; it ~~is~~ means for param sreyah = Mokṣah, so the Gītā does not preach the Vedic idea of yajña; "the Gītā is not a priestly production". The yajña here is a means of param Sreyah to - both men and gods;

Sankara - " With this (yajña)nourish the gods, and may the gods nourish you; thus nourishing one another shall you achieve (even) the supreme good (though the - sequence of the attainment of knowledge) or the param Sreyah viz., the heaven;

Note: Sankara - Sreyah paramapi; jñānaprāptikārmṇa
avāpsyatha svargam vā param sreyo vāpsyatha.

(12) "For, the gods nourished by you with the yajña shall bestow on you your desired enjoyments. He who enjoys the enjoyments given by the gods, without having given (back) the same to them is none else but a thief.

Note: With Verse 12B compare the latter half of Īśāvāsya-
midam sarvam yat kiṃ ca jagatyām jagat, tena tyaktena
bhuñjīthā mā grudhaḥ kasya svid dhanam. Īśāvāsya Upa.1.

1. This verse says that the entire jagat belongs to the Lord and a man must "abandon" it to him and then enjoy it. He shall not covet the Lord's property. Some (A.B) translate "Apradāya ebhyaḥ" as "without returning the goods aught". But, the verse does not say that only a part of the enjoyments given by gods is to be returned to them.

The verse says that all enjoyments that are given by gods are to be returned to gods and are then to be enjoyed.

Sāṅkara merely paraphrases the latter half of the verses. Thus, he does not notice the importance of this doctrine of Bhakti in the Gītā, which is closely connected with "Disinterested Action", (yoga) of the Gītā. It seems to me that the Gītā is here influenced by "a view like that" in the Īśā.Upaniṣad.

(13) The righteous (Santaḥ), who eat the remains of (this) yaḅṅā, are freed from all sins (sarvāpāpaiḥ), but the sinful ones, who cook (food) for their own purpose eat sin.

Note : (1) Mucyante sarvakilbiṣaiḥ gives us an idea of the meaning of the yaḅṅā here. The word 'sarva' should be particularly noticed. The yaḅṅā for the sake of which (III.9) Arjuna is asked to do his svabhāva niyata karma is such a yaḅṅā. It was free from all sins (involved in the performance of svabhāvaniyatakarmaṇ).

Note: The Smṛtis have a verse parallel to this verse. Thus, we read in the Manusmṛti Chapter III-V, 68-69.

The verse in the smṛti refers to the pañca mahāyajñas and speaks of freeing people from only those sins which are incurred by a householder in his life as a householder. The Gītā makes use of the then known conception of pañca mahāyajñas for explaining and preaching 'its own yoga'.

A man should live as a householder, do all his duties, should not expect any selfish reward, but should hope to be free ^{from} all sins involved in his varna and Āsrama-dharmas. In the conception of pañchmahāyajna there was already the idea of doing - some thing as yajña, not for any special reward but only for freeing oneself from some particular sins. The Gītā makes the yajña a universal item and asks a man to do all actions for - the sake of that yajña and in return promises freedom from - all sins. The idea of cooking one's food and eating it after performing the yajña is kept up in the Gītā also.

Sāṅkara

The righteous who eat; the remaining food (called - Amṛta in the smṛtis) after performing (the five yajñas) the devayajña, etc., are freed from sins committed (by them) on account of the five places of slaughter, the hearth, (cullī;) etc., and others caused by injury to living beings done through carelessness. But those sinners who cook for their own sake - eat sin.

Note:- Sāṅkara believes that the teaching of this is almost the same as in the similar verse in the smṛti. This kind of Sāṅkara's interpretation is responsible for making some scholars believe that the Gita is a - priestly production.

(14) From food beings are born (bhavanti=Udbhavanti); from rain the production of food (takes place); from the Yajña - (spoken of in v.10-13) the rain is produced; the Yajña is -

born of (a principle called) Action; -

15. Know Thou the Action as born of Prakṛti (Brahma=Prakṛti) and the Prakṛti as born of the immutable (Akṣara). Therefore, the all pervading Brahman is always supported on the Yajña.

Notes: 1. Verses 14-15 should be read in comparison with Agnau

prāstāhutih samyagādityamupatisthte.....

tatah prajāh. (Mānasmṛti. Adh. III. v. 76). The Gītā seems to me to make a change in the items stated in this verse to suit its own doctrine of Yoga (Disinterested Action).

i. The verse of the Mānasmṛti mentions a Wheel (cakra) consisting of Yajña, Sūrya, Parjanya, Anna, Prajāh, who again perform yajña. The Gītā verse mentions bhūtāni (or prajāh), anna, parjanya, yajña, karma, prakṛti (or Brahma) Akṣara or Sarvagata Brahma respectively. The Gītā adds some items to the numbers of the old verse, viz., karma, Prakṛti and Akṣara, while it drops others.

ii. The items added by the Gītā are those which are mentioned in the Gītā with reference to its Yoga. The Gītā too often speaks of karman as born of Prakṛti. Prakṛti (called Brahman in v. 15. a), and asks a man to be disinterested in performance of his duties because 'the Prakṛti alone does all Actions'. The Gītā brings in karman and Prakṛti by tracing Yajña to karman (meaning that Yajña is an activity or a part of activity born of Prakṛti).

2. The word Brahma in verse 15. a. means Prakṛti Cf. v. 27. A.

(3) The Gītā traces Brahman or Prakṛti to the Akṣara called sarvagata Brahman also. But this philosophical doctrine is given in the Gītā in order to connect yajña with the Akṣara or Sarvagata Brahman and ultimately to ask a man to do all his duties for the sake of that yajña (III-9)

(4) Yajña is traced to the Akṣara through karman and the Prakṛti, and again, the Akṣara is said to be supported on the yajña. This seems to mean that the yajña having the power to create bhūtas (to continue the world order) * is born of the Akṣara. But the Akṣara as being the ultimate cause or origin of the yajña depends upon or is supported by the yajña, just as the Devas, who make the yajña fruitful depend upon the yajña for their own nourishment.

(5) Thus, while in the verse of the Manusmṛti, there is a circle of yajña Āditya-Varjanya Anna-prajāh in the Gītā, the circle consists of yajña and the Akṣara,

In verse 10-12 there is the Cakra consisting of manuṣyas who perform the yajña and gods who thrive through the yajña and help manuṣyas through the yajña. We must remember that ultimately the gods are forms of the Akṣara or sarvagata Brahman. Just as the gods are supported by the yajña (V.10-12), Brahman is supported by the yajña, says the Gītā. "Tasmat" seems to refer to this fact. Sarvagata Brahman in its world-creation-activity is supported in and through yajña and Arjuna (in verse-9) is asked to do all actions for the sake of that yajña. Note that he is not asked to do that yajña itself.

Sāṅkara's Interpretation: (Here is one more argument why a man religiously fit for action as distinguished from Renunciation, must do his duties. Because, action is the cause of the continued revolving of the world-wheel. How? (Here is the reply). From food beings are (born); from rain - is the production of food; from the sacrifice rain takes place; the sacrifice (i.e., the apūrva, the extra ordinary - result of a yajña) is born of action (i.e., the activity of the priests and the sacrificer).-14.

That action know thou to be born of veda (Brahman in the verse); and the veda in its turn as born of the Aksara (just as breath is born of a man); therefore the veda (Brahman) which pervades everything (because it reveals everything, sarvagata) is yajñe pratiṣṭhitam (because it chiefly deals with the procedure of yajña).

Note:- (1) Sāṅkara's interpretation makes this verse no improvement of the verse in the manuscript. It accepts the teaching of the verse from Manu and that of the tradition about the origin of the veda and its function (vidhiprakāśana). But it is not consistent with the Gītā's attitude towards the veda and with the context of the verses (14-15). (2) Note Sāṅkara's meaning of the yajña (apūrvam), Karma (rtvigyajamānāyoh vyāpārah), Brahma (Vedāh), Sarvagata (Sarvārthaprakāśaka). (3) He seems to take yajñe pratiṣṭhitam as "an authority in the matter of sacrifice". This is hardly correct if we look to passages like 'Brahmane hi pratiṣṭhā aham (XIV.27)', 'na ca sampratiṣṭhā (XV.3b)' where pratiṣṭhika is used with a locative form viz, yajñe

(16) He who here does not keep revolving (anuvartayati-
anupravartayati) the Wheel (cakra an inter-dependent chain
of things) thus, (once) set revolving (by the Lord of creatures
prajāpati in verse.10), is a man of sinful life, finding -
pleasure in the senses; (he), O son of Prthā, lives in vain.16.

Note:- (1) This verse seems to ~~not~~ be the conclusion of
verse.10-15.

(2) Pravartitam, i.e., by Brahmā or Prajāpati.

(3) cakram the fact of gods and men depending upon
one another through the yajña and also the fact
of the interdependence of the yajña and the Aksara.
Both the facts have the same sense. The yajña is a
help to the progress of the world towards param -
śreyah as stated in verse.11 (parasparam bhāvayantah
śreyah paramavāpsyatha).

(4) Every man who does his duties for the sake of this
yajña (III.9) helps in keeping revolving the cakra
which was set revolving by prajāpati. If a man -
becomes a sannyāsin, particularly in the days of the
Gītā and the Upanisads which preceded the Gītā, he
would oppose the yajñas taught in the vedas and
would give them up. The Gītā does not reject the
yajñas entirely but asks a man to do them -
disinterestedly to perform them as a help to the
attainment of param śreyah by both the gods and men.
The Gītā also asks men to do all his actions
(i.e., not to take to sannyāsa in order that the yajña
in question may go on.)

- (5). Indriyārāma and aghēyuh is the man who performs the kāmyayajña, the vedic Ritualist of whom the Gītā (Adh. XVI) speaks as born with āsuri sampat.

Sānkara-

He, who (being religiously fit for action) does not make turn the wheel (of the world, preceded by veda and yajña) set revolving (by Īsvara), is a man of sinful life having pleasure in (the objects of) the senses, and lives in vain. (So, the sense of the section II verses 10-16, is that, an ignorant man, being asked by the Scripture to do the actions, must do them).

Note:- (1) Sānkara-Yah -Yah karmani adhikṛtaḥ saḥ. He also adds: Tasmād ajñena adhikṛtena kartavyameva karmeti prakaraṇārthah.

(2) Pravartitam- Īsverena pravartitam. Why not prajāpatina pravartitam?

Section-III Verses: III.17-19 and 20 A.

(17) But the man, having joy in Ātman only (i.e., Paramātman), satisfied in Ātman (i.e., Paramātman) and content in Ātman (i.e., Paramātman) only, has no duty (Kāryam) to do. - 17

Note: (1) Ātman means Paramātman; The word is used in the sense of paramātman as well as jīvātman. It is not correct to translate it as "the Self", because that translation implies the identity of jīva and paramātman.

- (2) The expression "Ātmakrīda" is used in the Upanisads,
- (3) 'Tu' shows that the 'Ātmarati' is distinguished from -
 the yogin who does all his actions for the sake of
 the Yajña as well as from the 'Indriyārāma' (V.16). -
 The Yogin does all his duties disinterestedly, though
 he is not Ātmarati and Ātmatr̥pta. The "Indriyārāma"
 does all his duties for a selfish motive. The Ātmarati
 rejoices in Paramātmān and has reached a stage in -
 spiritual development when he need not do any action.
 'Tasya kāryam na vidyate' Cf. 'Na me Pārthāsti kartavyam'
 in v.22. Also v.18 makes the meaning of 'Tasya Kāryam
na vidyate' clear.

Śaṅkara - (The Lord, wishing to establish in the Gītā śāstra
 the teaching of the śruti that those who know the Ātman and
 who have renounced the world and beg alms only for the -
 continuation of their body, have nothing else to do than -
Ātmajñānanisthā, says as follows.)

But (the sāṅkhya who has established himself in the
 knowledge of the Self), who may be one having joy in the self
 only, a man (i.e. an ascetic, sannyāsin) satisfied with the self
 alone, content with the self alone, has nothing to do. (Tasya -
kāryam na vidyate, not explained)-17

- (18) He has nothing to do with krta 'action', nor anything
 with Akrta 'renunciation' in this world. Nor there is any one
 among all beings, his resort for any thing.

Note:- (1) v.18A. The Ātmarati has nothing to achieve with the help of Action or Renunciation. He would not insist upon doing action, nor upon renouncing them.

(2) For this reason, Arjuna is asked to do his duties disinterestedly.

Sankara - That (Paramātmāratī) has no aim to achieve through action (krta = karman). Nor does he get any evil (Anartha) called sin of omission (Pratyavāya) or an evil of the nature of Ātmahāni (loss of the self) through Renunciation of action. Nor also is there anyone among all creatures his resort to be achieved by action inspired by an aim (i.e., he has nothing to achieve by resorting to any particular being).

Note:- (1) After akrtena Sankara adds (na akrtena) pratyavāyākhya anarthah.....Ātmahānilaksāno vā,

(2) Moreover, Sankara remarks at the end of his Bhāṣya on his verse, as follows:- na tvametasmin sarvataḥ samplutodakasthāniye samyagdarsāne vartase.

I have translated this remark at the beginning of his interpretation of v.19.

(19) Therefore, remaining unattached (to the result of an action or to the action itself) always perform (all) actions which are to be done; because, man, performing actions without attachment, attains the Supreme. - 19

! Sankara-

(But you have not reached this Right knowledge, which corresponds to 'water overflowing from all sides'. Because it is so,) therefore, remaining unattached, always perform actions fit to be done; because a man doing actions without attachment (i.e., for God), gets absolution (param-Moksam) (i.e., through - the purification of the mind, Sattvasuddhidvārenetyarthah).

(20) (A man, performing actions without attachment attains the Supreme One, -v.19B) because Janaka and others attained to Perfection (Samsiddhi=Moksa) only by Action (performed without attachment).

! Sankara-

because Janaka and others (if they had attained Right knowledge) set out to get Moksa (Samsiddhi=Moksa) along with the performance of actions (done for the guidance of the people, because of their prārabdha-karma requiring them to proceed to Moksa in that way.)

OR

because Janaka and others (if they had not attained Right knowledge) set out to get Moksa (gradually-kramena) - through action (which is a means to the purification of mind- karmanā sattvasuddhisādhanabhūtena).

Note:- (1) In my opinion 'Karmanaiiva' 'only through action (performed without attachment)' is meant to exclude (the predominance of) jñāna as a means to Moksa. The Gītā holds the view that jñāna is not always necessary for getting Moksa.

- (2) Verse 20B gives the optional argument of lokasaṅgrahārtha-karmācarana as an argument different from the argument of the example of Janaka. So, Śaṅkara's first interpretation is out of place here.

Section IV : Verses: 20B-26

Actions for the guidance of people ~~20B~~ (Lokasaṅgraha)

- (20 B) Also, considering only the guidance of the people (lokasaṅgraha), you should perform your duties-20B.

Note: (1) Proper attention should be paid to 'api' (also ~~20B~~) and 'eva' (only in the verse 'api' shows that one more argument in favour of yoga is now begun; and 'eva' shows that the argument of 'lokasaṅgraha is not to be mixed up with other arguments.

- (2) The sense of lokasaṅgraha is given in v.21-26. If the Lord or Arjuna would renounce action, people at large would also renounce action. If all (good) people renounce action, the same thing of which Arjuna was afraid (in Adh. I.) would happen; viz., the people would be destroyed and a mixing of castes would take place (v.24). Thus lokasaṅgraha seems to mean setting an example of right conduct by keeping the people active and thereby preserving the people and the purity of their castes.

Śaṅkara-

Even looking upon only the guidance of the people (as your aim) you (being dependent upon your prārabdhakarma) should do your duty.

Notes:1. Śāṅkara - Lokasamgraham sampāśyan = lokasamgraham prayojanam sampāśyan.

2. Śrī Śāṅkara also adds prārabdhakarmāyattastvam..... arhasi. But the example of Kṛṣṇa in v.22 shows that even persons who have become jīvanmukta or who have always been mukta, if such persons exist, are to - undertake the work of lokasamgraha.

21. The ordinary men do only whatever a great man does. People follow up that standard which he sets up.

22. O son of Prthā! In the three worlds there is no action that I should do; (because) there is nothing unattained, that I should attain; and yet I do remain in action.

Note:1. Śrī Śāṅkara does not at all note the importance of the example of Kṛṣṇa as the Preceptor of the Gītā's Yoga.

23. Because, if possibly everyday I, (being) unidle, do not remain in action, all men, O son of Prthā! will follow My path from all sides.

Śāṅkara: The same as ours.

24. These (three) worlds would perish if I do not do actions; and I should become the maker of the mixing (of castes) and should destroy these creatures.

Śāṅkara:

Śrī Śāṅkara says that by being the maker of Śāṅkara i.e., mixing of the castes, the Lord would become the destroyer of the people.

(25)

O descendant of Bharata! A wise man should act without attachment (to action or to its result), with a desire to give guidance to the people, (as enthusiastically) as the ignorant, attached to action, act.

Sāṅkara does not at all note the importance of this verse asking the 'vidvān' the wise man to continue doing his duties. On the contrary he writes an introduction to this verse, in which he alternatively assumes Arjuna to be Ātmavid anyo vā (one who know the Ātman or not). "Yadi punarahamiva tvam - krtārthabuddhiḥ ātmavid anyo vā."

(26)

Let not the wise cause a wrong notion (that all action should be given up) in the mind of the ignorant people who are attached to action. He should (rather) like all actions, performing them disinterestedly.

Sāṅkara -

Let not the wise cause division of mind of the ignorant who are attached to action. Performing all - actions disinterestedly (yuktah) he should make (the ignorant) perform (josayet = kuryāt all actions).

Sāṅkara does not notice the importance of 'vidvān'.

Section V : Verses 27 - 29

27. All actions are being performed by the gunas (strands) of Prakṛti (the Material Nature). He whose mind is bewildered by egoism (ahankāra) thinks "I am the doer".

- Notes:
1. The Principle Prakṛti is stated here for the first time in the Gītā. Prakṛti, or, rather, its gunas are the real actors in all actions. Every man may try to see how far he is the real agent of his deeds. He will find that he cannot do any deed; it is the Nature, that does all deeds.
 2. Prakṛti consists of sattva, rajas and tamas. The Gītā is not consistent regarding its use of 'gunas'; here we have 'Prakṛteḥ gunaiḥ'; but elsewhere in the Gītā we find "Prakṛtijair gunaiḥ" i.e., 'gunas born of Prakṛti'.
 3. This verse explains "avidvānsah" of v.25.
 4. The Sāṃkhya School of philosophy whose traditionally known first Acārya is Kapila, taught Prakṛti and Puruṣa as the two ultimate realities in the world. In my opinion the Gītā does not know the school either in its classical form or in its pre-classical form (=the epic form). The Gītā is earlier than the rise of any school of philosophy in any form.
 5. The Gītā does not mention the Prakṛti or its gunas to explain the nature of Prakṛti or the philosophy of the Prakṛti. It treats of the origin of karman in order to teach and explain the disinterested performance of one's duties (Yoga) and the Prakṛti or its

gunas are one of the several origins of karman mentioned in the Gītā.

Sāṅkara:

Actions (secular or sacred), in all their varieties, are being done by (the body and the senses, which are) the gunas (= the effects) of the Prakṛti (the Sāṅkhya pradhāna, the matter, the gunānām sāmyāvasthā). He, whose mind is deluded by ahankāra (the notion that the aggregate of the body and the senses are the soul) believes "I am the doer (of the various deeds)".

- Notes: 1. (Sāṅkara interpretes the verse as if the fully developed classical Sāṅkhya system were known to the Gītā). Note his meanings of Prakṛti: pradhānam sattvarajastamasām sāmyāvasthā; gunaiḥ vikāraiḥ kāryakāranarūpaiḥ.
2. By his interpretation of Ahankāravimūdhātmā kāryakārnasamghātātmapratyayohankārah, tena vimūdhah - Atmā antahkaranam yasya avidyayā karmāni ātmani manyamānah, Śrī Sāṅkara tries to bring in his theory of Adhyāga and avidya but the Gītā does not know it at all. 'Ahankāra' only means the notion that 'I am the doer'. In mahābhūtāni ahankāro buddhiravyaktameva ca (XIII.5), ahankāra means the Principle of individuality, self-consciousness. But here III.27 means ahankāravimūdhātmā i.e., 'egotism', too frequent use of I and me, not 'egoism' as Śrī Sāṅkara means.

28. But, O strong armed One ! He who knows the essence of the classification of gunas (strands of Prakṛti) and that of karmans, knows that (the actions which really originate from and, are therefore identical with) the gunas, (the strands - of the Prakṛti) exist in the gunas, (but not in me), and then he is not attached (to actions and their results).

Note:1. The gunakarmavibhāgayoh seems to be those described in Bha. Gī.XVIII.41-48. There we are told that the karmans of the castes are born of svabhāva (or Prakṛti). The gunas are either identical with Prakṛti (Prakṛteḥ gunaiḥ) or are effects of Prakṛti, 'Prakṛtijāḥ gunāḥ'. So, when an action is performed, really the Nature (from which the action originates) is acting; in other words, karman which is nothing else but Prakṛti or its gunas resides or exists in Prakṛti or its gunas. When this is realized, a man will be free from all attachments.

Saṅkara:

But, O strong armed One! He who knows the essence of the class of gunas and the class of karmans, having known - "(When any action is being performed) (not soul but) the gunas (in the form of the senses), are in gunas (in the form of objects) remains unattached".



Note:- (1) Gunāḥ guṇeṣu variante = gunāḥ karanātmakāḥ guṇeṣu
viśayātmakesu variante.

So, ¹Saṅkara seems to interpret gunāḥ guṇeṣu variante as indryāni indriyārtheṣu variante (Bha.Gī.V-9) But, I believe the theory in the present verse (III.28) is different from that in Bha.Gītā.V-9. The essence of both guṇas and karmans is prakṛti; so all actions ultimately originate from prakṛti, as in v.27. So, here the origin of karman, from prakṛti is emphasised, while in Bha.Gītā.V.9 the origin of senses from objects of senses seems to have been stressed.

Note:- (1) Variante some translate it as ~~as~~ 'move' (Pravartante).

(29) Those deluded by the guṇas of prakṛti are attracted to the guṇas and the actions. The man who knows the whole - (truth) should not make those weak persons who do not know the whole (truth), move (from their path of progress).

Note:- (1) This is the teaching of loksaṅgraha - guiding the people. The wise are asked to do their duties for lokasaṅgraha.

Saṅkara-

Those deluded by the guṇas of prakṛti are attached to the karmans which (really) belong to the guṇas (thinking, we are doing the action for a particular fruit). The one who - knows the whole (i.e., who knows Ātman) should not cause a wrong notion in the mind of those who do not know the whole (= who look to the fruit of actions only).

Note:- (1) Gunānām karmasu-I propose gunesu karmasu ca. The Gītā speaks of gunasanga (v.XIII-21.B) and karmasanga (XIV-15A)

Section VI : Verses 30 to 32

(30)

Having with inward mind renounced (Sannyasya) all actions unto Me, (and) have become devoid of desires (nirāśih) and egotism, engage in battle, setting aside your mental fever.
-30.

Note:- Mayi sarvāni karmāni sannyasyādhyātmacetasā. Out of the two definitions of yoga, the second one (II.50) defines yoga as "mental ren/unciation of good and bad actions themselves as distinguished from their fruits". The Yogin, in this case, believes that he is doing - nothing while physically he is doing each and every deed. The present verse (III.30) gives one particular form of this type of yoga Disinterested Action. Cf. Gītā Adhyāya-V. 10-13 where the mental ren/unciation of actions unto Brahman as distinguished from Kṛṇa is mentioned.

Saṅkara -

(How should an ignorant man (ajñā) who is asked by the Scripture to do his duties and who seeks Mokṣa, do them? The Lord replies:) Having deposited all actions into Me with the inward thought: ('I, the agent of my deeds, am doing them for the Lord, as a servant does his deeds for his master) and having given up all desires and egotism, fight, being free - from worry.

Note:- Sankara explains 'sannyasya' as 'niksipyā'. He does not seem to notice that the second form of yoga stated in II.50 is dealt with in this verse.

(31)

Also (āpi) the men who, always, perform (anutisthanti) this teaching of Mine, with faith (in it) and not caviling (it) they too are released from actions.

Note:- (1) In my opinion v.30 begins a new sections, because "āpi" in v.31 shows that one more form of yoga is - mentioned here.

(2) Note the emphasis underlying the expression

"Karmabhiḥ mucyante"

(3) anutisthanti - The mata of the Lord is not to be simply known, but it is to be performed (anustheya). Cf. anustheya in Bra.Sū.III-IV-12.

(32)

But know those who, scorning this teaching of Mine, do not perform (anutisthanti) it to be bewildered in all - types of knowledge (sarvajñāna), to be doomed (nasta) and to be destitute of any mind (with which they can understand any - teaching).

Note:- (1) "Sarvajñāna" shows that the Gītā has different theories and different views of which the view of Kṛṣṇa given here is only one. There is no need of making out one single view from all the different views in the Gītā, though we may compare and contrast them with one another for the sake of study.

Saṅkara explains anutisthanti in v.30-31 as anuvartante.

Section VII : Verses 33 - 35

Criticism of insistence on renunciation.

(33) Even the man of knowledge does perform certain deeds according to his nature. (All) beings follow their nature - (in what deeds they do). What can absolute control of actions, (which the man of knowledge preaches), do?

- Notes: (1) The Gītā tries to find a compromise between the Sakāmakarmakānda of the vedas and the sarvakarma-sannyāsa of the Upanisads. The compromise is the yoga 'Disinterested Action'.
- (2) Jñānavān refers to the jñānins of the Upanisads and 'nigraha' to their insistence on absolute renunciation of actions. The Gītā admits the absolute renunciation of desires (phalasaṅkalpa) which is the basis of its yoga, but objects to the absolute renunciation of actions.
- (3) 'Cestate' is important. The Gītā argues that even the jñānin who becomes a sannyāsin does perform - actions; because he cannot absolutely ~~abandon~~ abandon - actions.
- (4) Sadṛśam - The Gītā points out and admits that the actions done by the jñānin are in harmony with his nature. The actions of a jñānin may be the actions of teaching, writing commenting, learning, preaching, supervising the actions of guiding others.

(5) Pointing to these cestās of the jñānavān yati, the Gītā says (a) all beings do actions according to their nature, and (b) the insistence on absolute control of actions is of no avail; it 'can do nothing' (Kiṃ karisyati).

(6) Sometimes this verse is quoted to show that all beings follow the Nature and that hence control of senses is of no use; so, the senses should be allowed to do what they like to do. This interpretation though not given seriously, is totally in disagreement with the context of the verse.

!
Sāṅkara-

("Due to what reason do people not abide by your teaching to stick to one's own dharma? Why are they not afraid of the sin of violating your order?" The Lord says:-)

(All beings,) even the man of knowledge, acts according to his own nature. (Much more would a fool do so!) Therefore, beings follow their nature. What will control of nature, (preached by me or by any other man) do?

Note:- (1) According to Sāṅkara there is no possibility of the Gītā criticising the view of the Upanisads and their insistence on absolute renunciation, because Sāṅkara, like the other Acāryās, believes in the uniformity of meaning (Ekavākyatā) of prasthānatrayi)

(2) ¹ Śaṅkara makes so many additions to the verse. First of all, no question such as is assumed by Śaṅkara - is actually asked by Arjuna. Secondly, the verse - points out that even a jñānin has to do certain - deeds; he cannot absolutely renounce all deeds. The Gītā here does not defend the 'mūrkha' in his behaviour or actions. Lastly, if the Lord holds that his "control" or the "control" of a sage is of no use, why should He proceed in verse 34 to show the way of control? Verse 34 is out of place if we accept Śaṅkara's - interpretation of verse 33. The word prakṛti in this verse, nature is accompanied by the adjective - 'svasyāh', therefore it means a nature of individual nature and not the nature of sāṅkhya of Ācārya Kapila.

(34) Each sense has definite (vyavasthitau) affection and aversion for its object. A (wise) man should not submit himself to their power, because they (affection and aversion) are his obstructors.

Note: (1) I have construed indriyasya, indriyasya rāgadvegau arthe vyavasthitau; because the Gītā says indryāni indriyārthesu vartante ṣṭi dhārayan (verse.9)

¹ Śaṅkara (There are sure to be) affection and aversion for the object of each sense. A man should not submit himself to their power, because they are his obstructors.

- (35) Better one's duty (fixed by birth) though devoid of merit, than the duty of another, well performed. - Better death in the performance of one's own duty; the duty of another caste brings danger.

Notes:- (1) Note the Gītā's attitude towards castes. According to Gītā XVIII.48 the caste-duties are born along with the man. The war which is a duty of the Kṣatriya may be regarded to involve sin as compared with the study, the teaching, etc. which are the duties of the Brāhmaṇa,

(2) In what sense svadharme nidhanm sreyah paradharmo bhayāvahah? When a man like Arjuna gives up his duties as a kṣatriya and takes to the duties, like supporting one's self by alms, of a Brāhmaṇa, he would do so out of attachment to the duties of a Brāhmaṇa and dislike for the duties of a Kṣatriya. This is apposed to the Yoga 'Disinterested Action' of the Gītā. It will cause "bondage". The Gītā wants that all actions should be done without any attachment. In XVIII.47 the Gītā argues that the duties of one's caste should not be given up in preference to those of another caste, because the duties of all castes involve some kind of sin. The proper way is to do the duties of one's own caste without any attachment. If so, it does not matter even if one is not able to perform one's own duties in the best possible way or even if one fails in achieving the aim of his duties.

Sankara - he introduces the verse with a man, prompted by affection and aversion believes that he may perform the duties of another's caste, 'because they are also duties - (dharmatvāt)'. This is wrong". These remarks of Sankara - are likely to create the impression that the verse is - intended to support the caste-system. But, as a matter of fact, the Gītā wants to defend its yoga disinterested - Action by saying that one's caste-duties should be performed without any attachment.

Section VIII : Verses 36 - 43

Causes of attachment. Why a man cannot remain unattached?

Arjuna spoke

(36) Now, prompted (prayuktah) by whom does a man commit sin, (such as I was about to commit), reluctantly indeed, O Descendant of Vrsni, dragged as it were by force.

Notes: (1) Pāpam-refers to the Sin or sins which Arjuna thought, he was going to commit by fighting with the Kauravas. See pāpam in I.36 pātakam in I.38, pāpāt in I.39, pāpam in I.45. In my opinion pāpa in sarvapāpebhyah in XVIII.66 also, refers to the same sins.

Sankara gives an introduction to the verse (yadyapyanarthamūlam) which shows that according to him Arjuna asks a question about sins in general.

The Lord said-

(37) It is desire, it is anger, born of the quality (guṇa) of Passion (Rajas), the great consumer, the great sinner; - know this to be our foe here (in Yoga 'Disinterested Action').

Sāṅkara takes kāma as sarvalokasatru and sarvānarthaprāptini-
mitta; he takes iha as 'ihasamsāre' 'in this world'.

(38) As fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo is wrapped by the womb, so this (jñāna 'knowledge') is covered by it.

Note:-(1) Idam refers to 'jñāna' which is mentioned in verses 32-33. The learned man (jñānavān) even has a desire - an attachment to certain actions; just as the ignorant man whose jñāna also is enveloped by desire has got attachment to certain other actions and their fruits.

(39) Enveloped is knowledge (jñānam) by this eternal enemy of the knower, which has the form of desire (kāma), and which is an insatiable fire.

Sāṅkar's Interpretation is the same as of ours.

(40) The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be its residence; this (desire), having enveloped knowledge (Jñāna), bewilders a man (dhehinam - the one who has the body) through these.

Sāṅkara and we do not differ.

(41) Therefore, O best of the Bharatas! having first controlled the senses, kill this wretched thing(sin); destroyer of jñāna and vijñāna.

Sāṅkara explains jñānam as śāstrataḥ Ācāryataśca Ātmādīnām-avabodhaḥ, vijñānam as viśeṣataḥ tadanubhavaḥ. The Gītā mentions jñāna and vijñāna in VI.8 (jñānavijñānatrāptātmā) IX.1 (jñānam - vijñānasahitam), XVIII.42 (Jñānam vijñānamāstikyam), VII.2 (Jñānam-teham savijñānam); but does not always explain or describe it. Jñāna does not seem to mean one particular system or doctrine but it refers to one of many philosophical thoughts current in the days of the Gītā. Thus, we have got various different - philosophical views - not identical - in various Adhyāyas of the Gītā. Vijñāna does not seem to mean 'realization', but it means the detailed scheme in a jñāna just as in Adhyāya VII - the knowledge of two prakṛtis and Kṛṣṇa. We shall show that all the jñānas are schemes of doctrines, serving as an explanation of yoga Disinterested Action.

(2) Sāṅkara reads Prajahihi (= Parityaja) for prajahi & hi. We actually find jahi in v.43. Where the meaning of 'jahi' is not explained by Sāṅkara.

(42) They say that the senses are higher (than this gross body); the mind is higher than the senses; the intellect is higher than the mind; but that (Kāma, desire) is higher than the intellect.

Note(1) This verse is like the following from the Katha Upa.

Indriyabyah parāhyarthā, arthebyasca param manah.
manasastu para buddhir, buddherātmā mahah parah.
mahatah paramavyaktam, avyaktāt purusah parah.
purusat na param kiñcit, sā kāsthā sā para gatih.
(Katha. 1. 3. 10-11.)

The §Katha Upa. uses para in the sense of subtler (sukṣmatara) and also in the sense of the higher one being the cause of the lower one. The Gītā uses para in the sense of more difficult to understand; it only uses the expressions of the katha Upa., not the doctrine.

Śaṅkara - They say that the senses are greater (para=praakrūsta) (than the gross body); the mind is greater than the senses; the intellect is greater than the mind; similarly (tathā for Tu?) that (seer, the paramātmān, whom, as already stated, the desire bewilders through the envelopment of jñāna) is the innermost of all.

Śaṅkara seems to look upon v.42 as giving the jñāna which is said to be enveloped by kāma. He looks upon this verse as identical in sense with the similar verse in the katha Upaniṣad. So, he takes saḥ as meaning soul and @od both there being in his opinion complete identity of jiva and paramātmān.

(43) Having thus understood the Desire to be higher than the intellect (and) having restrained the self by one's own - self, will, O strong-armed, ~~one~~, the enemy in the form of - desire, difficult to be overcome. - 43.

