

**Svadharmapi chavesya na vikampitum arhasi
Dharmyadi yuddhac chreyonyat kshatriyasya na vidyate**

And moreover, looking at your own duty, you should not waver, for there is nothing higher for a kshatriya than a righteous war.

Lord Manu, the progenitor of the human race, postulated what is popularly known as "Manu Dharma Sastra". It is the code of Manu. It consists of a collection of laws based on custom and precedent and the teaching of the Vedas. Basically it defines the law of conduct and its application to all classes of community.

During the period which is over 5000yrs ago, the society was divided into four classes consisting of Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vysya and Sudra. Arjuna belonged to the Kshatriya group. The duty of the kshatriya was to protect the land and their leaders who were the rulers of the land.

Svadharma: it means one's own dharma/duty. The word has a variety of interpretations which we will take up as we proceed with our study. In this context it means the duty of Kshatriya. Arjuna, belonging to the kshatriya group is reminded by Lord Krishna of his duty.

The present war in which Arjuna was engaged to fight was not an ordinary war. It is known as the "war of righteousness." The Pandavas, treated unlawfully by cousin Kauravas had decided to fight for their rights and protect the land from the clutches of unrighteous cousins. Arjuna, who had wholeheartedly given his willingness to fight the Kauravas, suddenly, in the middle of the battlefield, loses his mental composure and was ready to abandon the wish to fight for their rights. Letting the cousin Duryodhana rule the land would have harmed the subjects badly. Sri.Krishna is reminding Arjuna not to waiver from his ordained duty of a kshatriya towards the subjects of the land.

We should now look at the meaning of the word "Sreyas" (in the second line of the verse). Sri Krishna says "this righteous war is good for you". (refer to sloka 7 of this chapter)

Svadharm, one's own duty fulfilled according to the sastras is a sure way to achieve moksha.

Swadharm in relation to one's own thought imprints: our dharma is that duty which is suited to our temperament which in turn is due to our vasanas which are nothing but our own thought imprints. Until and unless we clear the stored vasanas (Vasana kshaya) the path to freedom is not clear.

Like a good teacher the Lord is trying to make Arjuna take the right decision to fight by approaching the same subject from different angles.