

## Sloka 38 (Chapter 2)

**sukha dukhe same' kritva labha labhou jaya jayou  
tatho yuddhaya yujyasva naivam papam avapsyasi**

**Having an equal mind in happiness-sorrow; gain-loss; victory-defeat; engage in battle and thereby you will not incur sin.**

This is the secret of karma yoga which means yoga of action.

Detachment and equanimity are essential for the spiritual seeker.

Work as such does not bind any but it is the attachment to the results of actions (fruits of action) that binds the individual.

Life is full of waves of happiness and sorrows. Whether we like it or not, we want it or not, we are born on to this world and have to face the pains-pleasures; experience happiness-sorrow and victory-defeats as a consequence of our actions.

Learning the art of swimming in the ocean of life is the secret of reaching the shore by the seeker of truth.

Considering that it is directed to Arjuna in the battlefield:

There is bound to be deaths on either side in the battlefield of those Arjuna had loved and respected in his life. This would automatically bring in sorrow.

There is bound to be death of the ones Arjuna wished to be killed because they were the real enemies. By these, we mean the Kaurava brothers, Karna, Shakuni etc. This would bring in happiness.

Arjuna and his brothers would gain the entire kingdom back if victorious or on the other hand lose control of all land and wealth if defeated. This is "gain-loss."

Finally, the gain is considered as victory and loss is considered as defeat. It is victory and defeat.

These are the three outcomes of Arjuna's actions on the battlefield.

In our own life, if we consider it as a battle, we will experience these feelings.

The most important word to understand is: "same' kritva." It means "Equanimity in action."

We must continue to discharge our ordained duties irrespective of the results of our actions. This way the work automatically becomes an act of worship.

To conduct any work, we need to fulfil the following criterion:

- we need basic education;
- qualify for the work undertaken;
- follow the job description;
- conduct work pertaining to the speciality;
- continue to discharge daily household duties.

We have to work to the best of our capacity whatever may be the situation in life. Of course there is time for grief, time for elation. But these should not deter one from work. Within reasonable period one must resume duties.

Every action has a reaction.

Actions towards progress is "sadhana." (spiritual effort).

It is the reaction to the actions that hinder our progress.

The results to be experienced/to be faced could be immediate or delayed. It could also be in later births.

When successful, like passing exams, we feel elated.

Waves of elation unbalances the mind.

On facing failure, like failing exams, we get dejected, depressed.

Waves of depression unbalances the mind.

It is also a fact that the events in our life with the beloved ones also brings in happiness or sorrow.

When elated, we lose concentration on the work ahead and when depressed we do not have the mood to work.

These apply to social, moral and religious actions.

It is good idea to consider that success now is not only the result of present actions but also grace of the lord for presenting us with the results of good actions in the past including past births. By developing this view, the ego that comes out of success is diminished.

In a similar vein, we should consider that failure now is also the lord's verdict on results of past actions either in this life or previous lives. We should then say, thank god, at least one of my bad actions in the past has had its results. I have now paid for that mistake and let me try not to commit mistakes in future.

"papa" means "sin": Sin is an act against the injunction of the sastras.

The lord has said: "you will not incur sin."

He did not say: "you are a sinner."

Our sastras are very clear on this issue: they condemn the sin but not the sinner. They pray lord to bless the sinner and make him not commit such acts again.