

## Shloka 2-38

**Sukh duhake same kritva, labh alabho jaya ajayo  
Tatah yudhaya yujyasva, na aivam papam avapsyasi**

sukh	pleasure, joy
duhake	sorrow, suffering, anguish
same	the same
kritva	having made (prepared)
labh	gain, growth, profit
alabho	loss
jaya	victory
ajayo	defeat
Tatah	then
yudhaya	for battle
yujyasva,	be (get) ready
na	no
aivam	like this
papam	sin
avapsyasi	will incur, acquire, bring upon yourself

**Meaning:** Having made (your intellect react) the same (way) to pleasure and sorrow, to gain and loss, to victory and defeat, then get ready for battle (because fighting) like this (with this attitude) you will incur no sin.

## Explanation

This is another one of the most famous shlokas of the Bhagwad Gita, because through this shloka, Bhagwan Krishna tells us, for the first time, about the frame of mind or the attitude with which a Karma Yogi should conduct his or her “svadharma”. As we will see again and again, “having the proper attitude” is everything in the philosophy of Karma Yoga since having the proper attitude is what helps us renounce the fruits of our work.

We have seen in the previous shloka (Shloka 2-37) that there are always temporary gains when one conducts one’s “svadharma”. For more permanent gains, one must not only do one’s “svadharma”, but the “svadharma” must be done with the right attitude. What is the right attitude? The right attitude is the attitude of the highest Karma Yogi which is to not worry about victory or defeat, or profit or loss. The right attitude is to be not too elated in victory and not too sad in defeat.

According to this shloka, when conducting one’s “svadharma”, it’s not the action itself that decides whether we will incur sin or not, but rather it’s the frame of mind with which we do the action which is the deciding factor. This above sentence is worth repeating again and again since it will remind us to have the right frame of mind throughout the day!

**The moral of this shloka is this:** No sin will be incurred if one conducts one’s svadharma with the right attitude.

## Questions

1. What is the most important thing when doing one’s svadharma?
2. Should one be very elated after achieving something?
3. Should one be very sad if one fails to achieve something?
4. Give the name of a historical figure who nearly always had the right attitude.
5. Bonus Question 1: Does “detachment” (not being too sad or happy) mean “indifference” (not caring)?
6. Bonus Question 2: According to Shloka 2-37, the possible temporary gains for Arjuna were “Svarga” (heaven) in case he died or becoming king in case he lived. What are the more long-lasting gains that he could achieve by fighting as a Karma Yogi?
7. Bonus Question 2: How should a Karma Yogi fight? (**Hint:** see this shloka and also see Shloka 8-7)