

CHAPTER XVIII -The Bhagavad-Gita

In Chapter XVIII of the Bhagavad-Gita, titled "Mokshasanyasayog," or "The Book of Religion by Deliverance and Renunciation," Arjuna queries Krishna about the true nature of renunciation (Sannyas) and abandonment (Tyaga), seeking clarification on what differentiates them. Krishna explains that Sannyas involves the forsaking of actions driven by desire, while wise sages see Tyaga as the relinquishment of the fruits of one's actions. He clarifies that not all actions are to be renounced; actions such as worship, penance, and almsgiving are purifying and should be performed without attachment to their outcomes.

Krishna further distinguishes between actions performed in ignorance, passion, and darkness, and elucidates on true knowledge, action, and doer, characterized by their disposition towards duty, devoid of selfish motives. This discourse delves into the Sankhya philosophy, detailing the five causes of action and highlighting the lack of wisdom in seeing oneself as the sole actor in deeds.

Krishna emphasizes the importance of performing one's own duty (dharma), however imperfect, over executing another's duty perfectly, advocating for action in accordance with one's nature and the renunciation of the fruits of one's actions as the path to perfection. He describes the qualities that distinguish the duties of the different societal roles—Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras—rooted in the inherent qualities bestowed by nature.

The final teachings of Krishna to Arjuna underscore the supreme importance of devotion to God, urging Arjuna to dedicate his actions to the Divine, promising that such surrender will lead to the ultimate liberation and peace, the eternal resting place with the Divine. This devotion, Krishna asserts, transcends the mere performance of prescribed duties, leading to true knowledge and liberation.

Krishna's final words to Arjuna are a profound assurance of salvation and peace for those who offer their love, faith, and devotion to him, emphasizing the liberating power of divine knowledge and grace above all else. The chapter concludes with Sanjaya, narrating the discourse to King Dhritarashtra, expressing his awe and joy in recounting the divine conversation, solidifying the Bhagavad-Gita's eternal message of action, knowledge, and devotion as paths to the divine realization and ultimate liberation.