

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 1: Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yoga

1/4 (Ślōka 1-10), Sunday, 28 May 2023

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YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/Euc0yDbRgow>

## Dhṛtarāṣṭra's Blind Love led to Destruction and Arjuna's Empathy Established Righteousness

The **1st chapter** of the **Bhagavadgītā** is **Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yoga- The Despondency of Arjuna**.

The session began with the auspicious Lighting of the traditional lamp that lights the steadfast flame, guiding us towards the path of Dharma, cleansing our Antaḥkaraṇa with the light of knowledge shedding the path of Ignorance. Followed by salutations to Pūjya Swami ji.

First chapter is named **Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yoga** for that was the state of Arjuna's mind (sad, distressed and nervous) on seeing his friends, relatives and Gurus standing on the battlefield in the Kaurava army ready to fight which forced him sentimentally to give up the fight. He expressed his distress to Bhagavan and sought HIS guidance. This chapter includes:

- in total 47 shlokas (all are in anustaps chands)
- 1 shloka is said by Dhritarashtra.
- 25 shlokas are said by Sanjay, and
- 21 shlokas are said by Arjuna

Bhagavan Shri Krishna throughout chapter 1 is a mute spectator listening to all that is said without any response either vocal or facial gestures but all along having a playful smile.

Background of 1st Chapter is the story of Mahabharata. Which includes:

- Kauravas & Pandavas fighting with each other.
- Kauravas & Pandavas playing with each other.
- Kauravas sending Pandavas to exile.
- After finishing 12 years of exile and 1 year of agyatavas, Pandavas demanded half of the kingdom which was promised by Duryodhana.
- Before this happened there was a very disgraceful episode wherein an attempt made by Dushasana to publicly disrespect the modesty of Draupadi in a courtroom filled with all the Kuru elders, Pandavas, youngsters and others and

- During Pandava's agyatvas there was continued efforts by Kauravas to locate them so as to send them on exile again as was the conditions laid down by Duryodhana..

Keeping all these in mind Pandavas realized that war was the only option. To avenge all this and to get back their rights which was usurped by Duryodhana. Shri Krishna went to Kauravas as a messenger of peace. HE tried to make them understand that they should give to Pandavas if not half kingdom, at least 5 villages enabling them to lead their lives in peace which could also end the feud between Pandavas and Kauravas. But Kauravas turned down even this peace purposed by Bhagvan declaring that even a land the size of a needle head would not be given to the Pandavas. If the Pandavas wished to get their share of the kingdom then they need to battle them. This was an open challenge by Duryodhana to Pandavas. It was only after this outright refusal and other reasons aforementioned, Pandava's saw no ray of hope for a peaceful negotiation and finally acceded to wage the war.

Once the war was declared, Maharishi Veda Vyas ji was keen to offer Divine Vision (Divya Drishti) to Dhritarashtra, for he was a blind and would enable him to see the happenings on the battlefield. Dhritarashtra declined it saying being blind since birth he never witnessed the different shades of life and now that the war was inevitable and nothing but bloodshed would be the outcome which he did not wish to see. He requested Maharishi Veda Vyas Ji to give the Divya Drishti to Sanjaya, who was an advisor, a companion and a charioteer for the blind king as appointed by Maharishi himself. His intention was to get the details of the battle from Sanjaya. Thus Sanjay happens to acquire the Divine vision from Maharishi Veda Vyasji.

## 1.1

### **dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre, śamavetā yuyutsavaḥ, māmakāḥ(ph) pāṇḍavāścaiva, kimakurvata sañjaya. 1.1**

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

Sañjaya, gathered on the holy land of Kurukṣetra, eager to fight, what did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do?

This particular verse is the only one that Dhritarashtra utters in the entire **Bhagavadgītā** of 700 shlokas. Kurukshetre was a religious place where many Yajnas were performed from time immemorial by the various deities. This land was filled and saturated with spiritual and pious atmosphere. This is the reason the land of Kurukshetre was called as Dharmakshetre. The place was probably selected with a specific purpose that the warriors will attain Salvation / Moksha / Liberation while they pass away at such pious site while fighting. Looking at the history of the world the war takes place due the following three reasons:

- Land
- Wealth
- Money

This war was supremacy over the land. Kauravas did not give the agreed to land to Pandavas. As mentioned earlier Kaurvas declared they would not even part the land as small as the needle head. All the efforts of mediation made by Krishna Bhagavan was futile for Duryodhana was adamant on his

stance. In this verse it is said "**dharmaksetre kuruksetre, samaveta yuyutsavah**": At Dharmakshetre where two groups assembled for a battle. But Duryodhana had a keener desire for a war, because he wanted to snatch away kingdom (part of Pandavas) by hook or by crook. Pandavas on the other hand had righteousness on their side. To uphold righteousness and reestablish it they were prepared to wage the war.

Pandavas always regarded Dhritarashtra as a fatherly figure, but Dhritarashtra was always partial to his own children and thought of their well being and did never cared about Pandavas. In north India even now the elder brother of Father is called as "Bade Papa" (Senior Father). Pandu died at a early age, so Pandavas regarded their Bade Papa as their Father. But Dhritarashtra's heart was never beat for Pandavas, he had love only for his sons.

The word "**mamakah**" (mine/my sons) used by Dhritarashtra in this shloka is the root cause of Mahabharata. And this led to total destructions of family of Kauravas. All the 100 Kauravas died in the war. Not a single one survived. The lesson for mankind is never to be biased to the members of the family. If one has to establish love and harmony, one must remain impartial to all the people in all the situations.

"**māmakāḥ(ph) pāṇḍavāścaiva**" (my sons and Pandu's sons) this distinction caused attachment and aversion and resulted in a war. As we realize now the commotion in the mind of Dhritarashtra was the war. While Arjuna's mind was racing in turmoil as to how could he even think of slaying his kith and kin and dear ones; and to refrain from that better to not wage the war. One definitely can conclude Dhritarashtra's turmoil caused the war and Arjuna's distress led to the revelation of the Gita. If Arjuna did not have this kind of sentiments for his friends and relatives Gita would not have happened.

We all know Dhritarashtra was physically blind whereas common people (like us) were intellectually blinded by unawareness / ignorance / inertia. And such a blind person commits all sorts of unconscious actions. But when one has to face fruits of one's own deeds, questions come up why one has to suffer? One must understand that we forget the actions committed by us in the past and there is no escape from the consequences of the bad karmas. One has to face it there is no running away. In such situations people run to temples, run to gurus, to astrologers, to tantric and so on. They wish for some kind of miracle to happen which can save them from the calamity which has already fallen on them or going to fall on them. In short all of us want to cling to pleasures and want to avoid the pains. This is natural instinct to run after pleasures avoiding of pains. Message is keeping eyes open to the reality. Interesting observation of Bhagavadgītā is:

- Gita starts with words **dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre**
- And the usage of word **mamakah**

## 1.2

**sañjaya uvāca**  
**dr̥ṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkaṃ(ṽ), vyūḍhaṃ(n) duryodhanastadā,**  
**ācāryamupasaṅgamyā, rājā vacanamabravīt.1.2**

Sañjaya said:

At that time, seeing the army of the Pāṇḍavas drawn up for battle and approaching Droṇācārya, King Duryodhana spoke the following words :

After seeing Pandavas military formation Duryodhana went to his Guru and spoke the above words.

The formation was done in a very smart and intricate way. Though their army consisted of only 7 regiments compared to Kauravas army of 11 regiments, but they spread-out in such a way that it was looking bigger and mightier.

This psychological game played on Duryodhana, though he was pretending to be brave, however his conduct reflected otherwise. Pandavas used the mind game and that scared Duryodhana. That is why he went to Guru Dronacharya the way a child goes to his parent when in distress. Just like lie detector system used during investigation, detects the mind body reflections, fears of Duryodhana were evident in his conduct.

### 1.3

**paśyaitāṃ(m) pāṇḍuputrāṇām, ācārya mahatīṃ(ñ) camūm,  
vyūḍhām(n) drupadaputreṇa, tava śiṣyeṇa dhīmatā. 1.3**

Behold, O Revered Master, the mighty army of the sons of Pāṇḍu arrayed for battle by your talented pupil, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, son of Drupada.

Duryodhana is also trying to play the mind game by provoking Dronacharya (his Guru) pointing to his disciples in the camp of Pandavas. In a way saying that his disciples were fighting against him and were standing bravely in the enemy's camp. He is conveying to his Guru how cleverly Dhṛṣṭadyumna, son of Drupada had arranged his army in order to scare Kauravas.

Duryodhana was fearful despite knowing that his army was greater in number than Pandavas army. In fact, he had other reasons also for getting scared which will be revealed in the next verses. Few have been already mentioned in the earlier verses.

### 1.4

**atra śūrā maheṣvāsā, bhīmārjunasamā yudhi,  
yuyudhāno virāṭaśca, drupadaśca mahārathaḥ. 1.4**

There are in this army, heroes wielding mighty bows and equal in military prowess to Bhīma and Arjuna-Sātyaki and Virāṭa and the Mahārathī (warrior chief)

Duryodhana, continues with his banter saying that in this army of Pandavas there are many valiant warriors armed with huge bows and arrows and archers like Yuyudhana, Virata and heroic chariot warrior Dhrupada. This was only to incite and provoke Dronacharya.

They are all equal to none other than Bhima and Arjuna in their fighting prowess. It is known that Bhima had colossal strength and had previously defeated Duryodhana in many so-called friendly matches (held frequently).

Let us see how Duryodhana's distress is surfacing. He had suffered defeat at the hands of Bhima on several occasions hence he mentions Bhima in the first place. Of whom he was most scared. But there was a greater reason behind this which was related to humiliation of Draupadi, when disrespectful attempt was made to disrobe her in public. There Bhima on seeing highly distraught Draupadi shedding tears had roared ferociously and taken a vow, "I Bhima son of Kunti take a solemn oath that Duryodhana you will die at my hands. I pledge to crush your chest and wash Draupadi's hair locks with your blood. And I won't rest until I do so". This oath remained in mind of Duryodhana.

Also, when one is outraged the person's strength gets multiplied. Even a weak person becomes stronger under the influence of anger and is ready to fight. Duryodhana was not only aware that Bhima was immensely powerful along with that the fire of vengeance and anger burning in his heart had multiplied power and determination many folds. And that made him extremely formidable opponent for Duryodhana.

The speaker also discussed the fates of warriors Yuyudhana, Virata and Dhrupada whose names got quoted in this shloka. Yuyudhana did not die during the war but later while fighting another battle with Yadavs he got killed. Virata along with his three sons got killed in the war. Dhrupada (Draupadi's father) also died in the war. He was killed by Dron Acharya.

## 1.5

**dhṛṣṭaketuścekitānaḥ(kh), kāśirājaśca vīryavān, purujitkuntibhojaśca, śaibyaśca narapuṅgavaḥ. 1.5**

Drupada; Dhṛṣṭaketu, Cekitāna and the valiant King of Kāśī, and Purujit, Kuntibhoja, and Śaibya, the best of men,

Duryodhana continues naming the warriors from Pandavas army. There were great, powerful, brave warriors like:

- Dhṛṣṭaketu (son of Shishupal who was beheaded by Bhagavan Krishna). He was killed by Dronacharya.
- Cekitāna was a Yadava king and was killed by Duryodhana in the war.
- King of Kāśī also got killed in the war.
- Drupada father in law of Yudhistira was also killed by Dronacharya.
- Purujit and Kuntibhoja are maternal uncles of Pandavas were killed by Dronacharya.

This verse also says noblest of men are also there on the Pandavas side.

One can conclude that from the battle it was not just Kauravas who suffered losses. Even the Pandavas side suffered huge losses.

## 1.6

**yudhāmanyuśca vikrānta, uttamaujāśca vīryavān, saubhadro draupadeyāśca, sarva eva mahārathāḥ. 1.6**

and mighty Yudhāmanyu, and valiant Uttamaujā, Abhimanyu, the son of Subhadrā, and the five sons of Draupadī- all of them Mahārathīs (warrior chiefs).

Abhimanyu was killed by Dushasana's Son. He was stabbed in the back. Sons of Draupadi (Prativindhya, Satanika, Sutasoma, Srutakriti and Srutasena) were killed by Ashwatthama. They were killed while in sleep. Some interesting incidents before the war also got discussed here.

- Due to the presence of Bhagavan Krishna, Pandavas received Guru Dronacharya's blessings. (Vijayi Bhava)
- So did Guru Kripacharya.
- Bishma Pitamah their grandfather was a Stalwart yogi and devotee of Krishna. He had to fight from the side of Kauravas as he had promised his father to protect his kingdom (Hastinapur). Same was true for Dronacharya and Kripacharya as they were also obligated in a similar manner.

## 1.7

**asmākaṃ(n) tu viśiṣṭā ye, tānnibodha dvijottama,  
nāyakā mama sainyasya, sañjñārthaṃ(n) tānbravīmi te. 1.7**

O best of Brāhmaṇas, know them also who are the principal warriors on our side- the generals of my army. For your information I mention them.

It was explained here as to why Duryodhana addressed Dronacharya as dvijottama (twice born). In society a person gets one's social status twice. One is through birth and other is when the person acquires knowledge / wisdom.

## 1.8

**bhavānbhīṣmaśca karṇaśca, kṛpaśca samitiñjayaḥ,  
aśvatthāmā vikarṇaśca, saumadattistathaiva ca. 1.8**

"Yourself and Bhīṣma and Karṇa and Kṛpa, who is ever victorious in battle; and even so Aśvatthāmā, Vikarṇa and Bhūriśravā (the son of Somadatta);

Dronacharya got killed by Dhrishtadyumna (Son of Drupada). Karna got killed by Arjuna. Bhishma Pitamaha gave up his Prana after the beginning of Uttarayana. Actually, he was seriously injured during Dakshinayan. But he had free will (a boon from his father Shantanu) to die at the designated time he wished. So, he waited for few days and left his body when Uttarayana arrived. In 8th Chapter of **Bhagavadgītā** it is said that yogis who die during Uttarayana are liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Bhishma Pitamaha being a yogi waited for the said time period and left his body. Vikarna got killed by Bhima and Bhūriśravā got killed by Satyaki.

Now one can notice Duryodhana talking about all the mighty warriors on his side. Which is Dronacharya, Bhishma Pitamah, Karna, ever victorious Kripacharya, Ashvatthama, Vikarna and son of Somadutta. Bhishma Pitamah was senior to Dronacharya, yet, Duryodhana addressed Dronacharya first. He refers him as the most distinguished Brahmana. This was just to flatter him and to make him feel superior. Duryodhana was also an intelligent man. He was also the disciple of the same Guru, as Pandavas were. Although it is another matter that despite being disciple of the same Guru one became Arjuna and other became Duryodhana. That is why one should never say that disciple mirrors his Guru. It is not true. Were Arjuna and Duryodhana alike? No, they were actually contrasting personalities.

Duryodhana further flatters Dronacharya by naming his son Ashvatthama among the valiant generals of his army. Aim was to evoke his paternal feelings. A father may consider losing but he will never want his son to be defeated. So in a way he was saying to Dronacharya that if not for sake of Kauravas you look towards victory for sake of his son who was fighting from his side. So, he was shrewdly using his sentiments and exploiting Dronacharya's weakness for his son.

In addition, he mentions Karna because he was Duryodhana's dearest friend. And two names (Ashwatthama and Kripacharya) which he included were Chiranjeevis (immortals). They were never to die. So, in a way consoling that they were going to win this war as he had two people on his side who were immortals. Pandavas did not had any immortal persons on their side. So, as per him this was a plus point for them.

In Hindu scriptures, there are eight immortals (Chiranjeevis), their names are:

- Ashwatthama,
- Guru Kripacharya,
- Maaharishi Veda Vyasa,
- Vibhishana,
- Bhagvan Parashurama,
- Hanuman ji,
- King Mahabali, and
- Sage Markandeya.

## 1.9

**anye ca bahavaḥ(ś) śūrā, madarthe tyaktajīvitāḥ,  
nānāśāstrapraharaṇāḥ(s), sarve yuddhaviśārādāḥ. 1.9**

And there are many other heroes, all skilled in warfare equipped with various weapons and missiles, who have staked their lives for me.

He continues to talk about his army. The words that he says "**sarve yuddhaviśārādāḥ.**" The declaration that he made here reflects his arrogance. And all along he is mentioning Dronacharya (his Guru). This infact is to indirectly convey to him that he too is working for him. Ignorant and deluded by power Duryodhana asked for Narayani sena from Shri Krishna while displaying trust and clarity in intellect Arjuna chose the unarmed Shri Krishna. It was **like choosing between Limited (Bhagavan's Maya) and Unlimited (Bhagavan HIMSELF).**

## 1.10

**aparyāptaṁ(n) tadasmākaṁ(m), balaṁ(m) bhīṣmābhirakṣitam,  
paryāptaṁ(n) tvidameteṣāṁ(m), balaṁ(m) bhīmābhirakṣitam. 1.10**

This army of ours, fully protected by Bhīṣma, is unconquerable; while that army of theirs, guarded in everyway by Bhīma, is easy to conquer.

From the context of Gita, its interpretation has been done by various people. And the same keeps varying. The same thing is understood in different ways by different people. Here the interpretation we draw is that Kauravas strength was huge, and Pandavas's strength was limited.

But some thinkers draw a wonderful interpretation from this shloka. According to them our forces of desires and sensory temptations though unlimited in number and protected by the strong ego power may not be inadequate because our strength is related to our body identification. Our Kamanas and our ways of sense gratification are unlimited, but they are attached to the body. Whereas, Pandavas army may be limited in number consisting of absolute principles of unchanging truth and defended by power of Soul guided life force (Bhagavan Shri Krishan). Together they are capable of destroying this body identification.

The session concluded with Q & A

## Question & Answer Session



## Nanak Chand ji

**Question:** When Arjuna chooses Bhagavan over his Army, he was not aware of His Divine stature. Then what made him choose Shri Krishna Bhagavan?

**Answer:** Arjuna came to know who Krishna ji was when HE discussed His Vibhuti's with him. Before the war he was not aware who HE actually was. But one must not forget both were together since childhood. They had seen 14 times Mathura was attacked by Jarasandha and Shri Krishna alone fought with Rakshasas at that time. Infront of Arjuna HE had defeated so many asuras. He may not be knowing that he is Paramātmā HIMSELF, but he could definitely sense that he is superior in many a ways. Above all HE was his Best friend and childhood companion. He had complete trust in HIM. So, he was sure that he would get the right advise from him whenever he needed it. So that is why he choose Bhagavan over Narayani Sena. And sometimes intelligence of a person is more important then his physical strength. Besides the entire clan treated HIM with lot of respect (as is given to a God).



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### Jai Shri Krishna!

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