

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 2: Sāṅkhya-Yoga

1/6 (Ślōka 1-10), Saturday, 20 May 2023

Interpreter: GĪTĀ VIŚĀRAD ŚRĪ DR. SANJAY MALPANI JI

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

Bhagavan Repudiates Arjuna's Resolution Not to Wage a War in the Midst of The Battlefield

The vivechan started with the customary lighting of the lamp, followed by Guru Vandana.

In the first Chapter, we have seen that Arjuna was very enthusiastic when he entered the battle field. He blew his conch DEVADUTTA, along with the other warriors blowing their respective conches. With the same enthusiasm he instructed Sri Bhagavan, his charioteer in the battlefield, to take his chariot to the center of the battlefield, and place it right in the center of the two forces, who were lined up facing each other and ready for the fierce battle.

Sri Bhagvan is Omniscient. HE was waiting for this instruction from Arjuna. He obeyed, and placed the chariot in the center of the two forces, right in front of the chariots of Bhishma and Guru Dronacharya. Bhishma was the commander of the enemy forces. Both these warriors were very dear to Arjuna, and Arjuna was also the most favourite disciple of Guru Drona and most favourite grand son of Bhishma. Arjuna saw the grey haired Bhishma donned in his white robes in front of him, and then his teacher Guru Dronacharya in front of him. Looking around he saw all his close relatives, his uncles, fathers in law, brothers and brothers in law and his close friends in both the Armies.

Arjuna despaired on seeing all his friends, relatives and acquaintances arrayed in the battle field. He began to wonder about the consequences of the war, how most of the people he had grown up with would be killed in the battle, then what would be the fate of their women and children. Many of whom would be widowed after the war and would have to face the atrocities of the society. He told Bhagavan that many of them would indulge in illicit relationships and the children born from such relationships would have no values. As a result the entire society would degrade.

On seeing all these friends and close relatives, and thinking about the after effects of the war, Arjuna lost all his enthusiasm and confidence, and put down his weapons, and refused to fight. Arjuna was full of sorrow and guilt. His eyes filled with tears, he surrendered himself to Sri Bhagavan.

2.1

sañjaya uvāca taṃ(n) tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam, aśrupūrṇākulekṣaṇam, viṣīdantamidaṃ(ṽ) vākyam, uvāca madhusūdanaḥ.2.1

Sañjaya said:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa then addressed the following words to Arjuna, who was as mentioned before overwhelmed with pity, whose eyes were filled with tears and agitated, and who was full of sorrow.

Sañjaya described the state of Arjuna. He said, Arjuna was full of sorrow and behaved like a coward. His eyes were full of tears, and rolling down. He was unable to see clearly because of his teary eyes. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who watched Arjuna's state, addressed Arjuna with the following words:

Though Arjuna has been described and called a coward here, but in reality, he was NOT a coward. He defeated all his opponents who were present in the enemy army, many times in the past on the battlefield. The prevailing circumstances made Arjuna look like a coward on the battlefield.

Once, when Duryodhana's wife expressed her desire to go for an outing, he saw an opportunity to show the Pandavas, who were living in exile during that time, in a bad light and make them and Draupadi feel jealous. Duryodhana thought, he along with his 99 brothers, Karna, and their wives should go and meet the Pandavas and Draupadi, living in the forest, wearing simple clothes and no ornaments, while they were in their royal attire and expensive jewelry, the Pandavas, especially Draupadi, would feel jealous. So he agreed to his wife's request and ordered all his brothers and their wives to wear their best attire and jewelry. And Duryodhana and his entourage went to the forest where the Pandavas were living in exile.

While the Kauravas and their wives were in the forest, the Gandharvas noticed them. Seeing them wearing expensive jewelry, the Gandharvas decided to loot them and take them as prisoners. The fierce battle between the Kauravas and the Gandharvas started, and the Kauravas were defeated and made prisoners by the Gandharvas. They were being taken to the Gandharva kingdom. This news reached Yudhishtira, and he ordered Arjuna and Bhima to forget their internal family dispute and rescue their brothers.

Arjuna and Bhima, after showing initial reluctance, agreed to go for the rescue of the Kauravas. They both defeated the large Gandharva Army and rescued the Kauravas. This story describes the bravery of Arjuna, who alone, with his bow and arrows, made the large Gandharva Army, which had defeated the Kauravas along with Karna, surrender in front of him. So he was not a coward, as described in this verse..

In another story, when the Pandavas were living in incognito at Viraat Nagar, the brother-in-law of King Virat, named Keechaka, tried to outrage Draupadi's modesty. On seeing this, Bhima killed him. On seeing Keechaka killed by Bhima, and Draupadi being the main reason for the killing, more than 100 of his brothers the Upaakeechakas / Anukeechakas having asura legacy, decided to tie Draupadi along with the corpse of Keechaka and burn her alive, but were killed by the Pandava hearing Draupadi's cries for help.

When Duryodhana got this news, he immediately came to the conclusion that no one except Arjuna was capable of committing such an act of bravery. This incident revealed the location of the Pandavas, who were living in the one-year agyat vasa at that time, and which was about to end in a few days. Duryodhana knew that if he caught the Pandavas before the end of their *agyaat vaas* they would have to go into 13 years of exile again.

So, Duryodhana decided to attack Virat Nagar from two directions: one with the Kaurava army and the other with himself accompanied by his 99 brothers, Bhishma, and Guru Drona. King Virat, who was unaware of Duryodhana's plans, decided to take on the Kaurava army himself, unaware that the Kauravas, along with Bhishma and Guru Dronacharya, were approaching from the other direction. When this news

reached Virat Nagar, it was decided to send Uttarkumar, the son of the king Virata, to defend from the other direction. Uttarkumar was reluctant to go as he was without a charioteer. Arjuna, who was disguised as Brihannala (transgender), offered to be his charioteer. Uttarkumar agreed.

Brihannala took the chariot to the tree where the Pandavas had hidden their weapons before going into the hiding period, and retrieved his bow and arrows. On seeing this, Uttarkumar was very scared and started to run away from the battlefield. Brihannala tied him to the chariot and ordered him to be the charioteer. Brihannala, who was actually Arjuna, took on the entire Kaurava army, including Bhishma and Guru Dronacharya, and defeated them with his Gandeeva. Arjuna in the guise of brhannala used *Mohini astra* to make the entire army of Kauravas along with Bhishma and Guru Dronacharya sleep for a day, which also marked the end of the hiding period of the Pandavas. Brihannala (Arjuna) ordered Uttarkumar to go and get the upper robes of all the unconscious Kauravas, except those of Bhishma and Guru Dronacharya, as it would be considered a great insult during those times, and Arjuna did not want to insult Bhishma and his teacher, Guru Dronacharya.

When the Kauravas, along with Bhishma and Guru Dronacharya, regained consciousness the next day, the hiding period had ended. This was another occasion when Arjuna had defeated the Kauravas, Bhishma, and Guru Dronacharya before.

Arjuna appeared to be a coward with tears in his eyes and refused to fight because he knew that this battle was not an ordinary one. This battle was a decisive one, and the result would be decided only with the death of either the Kauravas or the Pandavas. Arjuna was also well aware that the Kauravas were a weaker side as the Supreme himself was his charioteer in the pandavas side. It was these circumstances and the certain death of his opponents, who were also his teachers, relatives, and friends, that disturbed him. Therefore, he refused to fight and surrendered himself to Śrī Kṛṣṇa with tears in his eyes, appearing in a state of cowardice.

2.2

śrībhagavānuvāca kutastvā kaśmalamidaṃ(ṽ), viṣame samupasthitam, anāryajuṣṭamasvargyam, akīrtikaramarjuna.2.2

Śrī Bhagavān said:

Arjuna, how has this infatuation overtaken you at this odd hour? It is shunned by noble souls; neither will it bring heaven, nor fame to you.

On seeing Arjuna in such a devastated state Śrī Bhagavān asked Arjuna, how this strong and unreasoning obsession and attachment had overtaken him at such a crucial period, when he as a warrior is on the battlefield ready to wage a war?

HE said this show of cowardice, would earn him infame / bad name (akīrti) in history. Such a cowardice, would never take him to heaven asvargyam. Death in the battlefield, brings fame, brave men who die in the battlefield are called martyrs.

Warriors never fear death in the battlefield, *Narveer Tanhaji* lost his life in the battlefield, the great Chatrapati *Shivaji Maharaj* on his death said, the fort is conquered but the *simha* (the Lion) is lost. So he named the conquered fort as *Simhagarh*. The fort is located near Pune. *Narveer Tanaha Ji* lost his life but earned great fame in the history. Such are the rich legacies of the battlefield and that of the brave men who fight the battle for righteousness.

2.3

klaibyaṃ(m) mā sma gamaḥ(ph) pārtha, naitattvayyupapadyate, kṣudraṃ(m) hṛdayadaurbalyaṃ(n), tyaktvottiṣṭha parantapa. 2.3

Yield not to unmanliness, Arjuna; it does not befit you. Shaking off this base faint-heartedness stand up , O scorcher of enemies.

In this particular verse, Śrī Bhagavān expressed his frustration at Arjuna and admonished him for his initial reluctance to fight. HE called him unmanly or impotent (*klaibyaṃ*) and faint hearted (*hṛdayadaurbalyaṃ*).

While it may be interpreted as an expression of anger or abuse, it is important to understand the deeper meaning and teachings behind the dialogue. Śrī Kṛṣṇa aimed to remind Arjuna of his true potential as a warrior, highlighting his ascetic practices and the hard work he had put in to acquire his skills and the Divine weapons. The intention was to encourage Arjuna to overcome his weaknesses, including his fear and cowardly behavior on the battlefield. Śrī Bhagavān urged Arjuna to rise above his doubts and fulfill his duty by engaging in the battle.

It is crucial to consider the relationship between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in another light. Their connection encompassed various aspects, such as love, friendship, and the guru-disciple bond. HIS role as Arjuna's charioteer symbolized his guidance and support. Arjuna's choice to have Śrī Kṛṣṇa as his charioteer over HIS Narayani Sena was significant, as it demonstrated his recognition of HIS divine wisdom and guidance.

2.4

arjuna uvāca kathaṃ(m) bhīṣmamahaṃ(m) saṅkhye, droṇaṃ(ñ) ca madhusūdana, iṣubhiḥ(ph) pratiyotsyāmi, pūjārḥavarisūdana. 2.4

Arjuna said:

How Kṛṣṇa, shall I fight Bhīṣma and Droṇa with arrows on the battle-field ? They are worthy of deepest reverence, O destroyer of foes.

Upon hearing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's strong words, Arjuna expressed his deep concern and dilemma. He questioned how he could engage in battle against revered figures like Bhīṣma and Droṇa, who were deserving of worship and held in high esteem. Arjuna acknowledged their greatness and the respect they commanded, making him hesitant to confront them with his Gandeeeva.

He addressed HIM as Madhusūdana, recognizing him as the destroyer of enemies, seeking guidance in this perplexing situation.

2.5

gurūnahatvā hi mahānubhāvān, śreyo bhoktuṃ(m) bhaikṣyamapīha loke, hatvārthakāmāṃstu gurūnihaiva, bhuñjīya bhogānrudhirapradigdhān. 2.5

It is better to live on alms in this world by not slaying these noble elders, because even after killing them we shall after all enjoy only blood-stained pleasures in the form of wealth and sense-enjoyment.

Arjuna expressed his profound inner conflict and moral dilemma by stating that he would rather choose a life of survival through begging, living on alms, than commit the act of killing these two

revered elders. He said that even if he were to defeat them in battle and become victorious, the pleasures and gains derived from their bloodshed would be meaningless to him.

These respected elders, whom Arjuna has cherished and respected throughout his life, and had such deep affection and reverence in his heart for them, that he finds himself unable to reconcile the idea of bringing harm to them.

2.6

**na caitadvidmaḥ(kh) kataranno gariyo,
yadvā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ,
yāneva hatvā na jijīviṣāmaḥ(s),
te'vasthitāḥ(ph) pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ. 2.6**

We do not even know which is preferable for us- to fight or not to fight; nor do we know whether we shall win or whether they will conquer us. Those very sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, killing whom we do not even wish to live, stand in the army ranks.

Arjuna said, he was not clear, what was most preferable and beneficial to him, whether to fight or not to fight.

He told Śrī Kṛṣṇa that he was not even clear about his victory in the battle. He did not know, whether he would win or would he be conquered. The sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, whom he did not wish to kill and live thereafter, were all standing across ready to fight..

2.7

**kārpaṇyadoṣo pahatasvabhāvaḥ(ph),
pṛcchāmi tvāṃ(n) dharmasaṃmūḍhacetāḥ,
yacchreyaḥ(s) syānniścitaṃ(m) brūhi tanme,
śiṣyaste'haṃ(m) śādhi māṃ(n) tvāṃ(m) prapannam. 2.7**

With my very being smitten by the vice of faint-heartedness and my mind puzzled with regard to duty, I beseech you! tell me that which is decidedly good; I am your disciple. Pray, instruct me, who have taken refuge in you.

This is the most important verse of the text. Had Arjuna not surrendered to the Divine, Gita may not have been propounded.

Arjuna's surrender becomes complete in this verse. Despite his previous attempts to justify his reluctance to fight and his inclination towards living on alms, he now fully surrendered his mind to Śrī Bhagawan. Arjuna acknowledges that his mind is in a state of confusion and is unable to discern the righteous path regarding his duties. He humbly pleads HIM to guide him and reveal what is truly beneficial for him.

Arjuna surrenders to the Supreme as HIS disciple, by taking refuge in HIM, and requested HIM to enlighten him about his duties and responsibilities on the battlefield.

Here a beautiful Bhajan relating to Arjuna's state of mind was shared:

अब सौंप दिया इस जीवन का सब भार तुम्हारे हाथों में...

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g3X8j_YpPJ9JKYg-0CKTs5qikHMN-k3A/view?usp=share_link

It was explained that our culture teaches us to pay obeisance to the elders by prostrating and touching our forehead at the feet of elders (*natmastak*). This signifies surrender of own intellect at the feet of the elders.

In chapter 12 Bhagavan had said;

संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥१२-१४॥

Herein, Arjuna surrendered his intellect at HIS feet so that HE could guide him in the righteous path. Until now he was using his intellect to discern what was right for him.

2.8

**na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād,
yacchokamucchoṣaṇamindriyāṇām,
avāpya bhūmāvasapatnamṛddhaṃ(m),
rājyaṃ(m) surāṇāmapī cādhipatyam. 2.8**

For, even on obtaining undisputed sovereignty and an affluent kingdom on this earth and lordship over the gods, I do not see any means that can drive away the grief which is drying up my senses.

Arjuna's dilemma persists even after taking refuge in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He expressed that even if he were to attain unrivaled sovereignty and a prosperous kingdom on Earth, or even if he were to conquer the gods in heaven, he would still be engulfed by sorrow. He found no relief for the overwhelming grief and sorrow that was consuming his senses. With these words, Arjuna humbly bowed his head at the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, fully surrendering himself to HIM.

In another instance of surrender, just before the commencement of the Mahabharata battle, Yudhisthira dismounted from his chariot and walked barefoot towards the enemy army. This act of walking barefoot towards the enemy was traditionally seen as a symbol of surrender. Everyone on the battlefield was astonished by Yudhisthira's action, believing that he had surrendered before the battle even began. Yudhisthira approached Bhishma's chariot and explained that, as the eldest, he had come to seek Bhishma's blessings before the battle. With these words, Yudhisthira humbly bowed his head at Bhishma's feet, seeking his blessings. Bhishma blessed him with victory in the battle. This illustrates the power of surrender.

Surrendering oneself, whether to a higher power like Paramatama or seeking the blessings of respected elders like Bhishma, holds great significance and can bring about profound transformations and blessings.

2.9, 2.10

**sañjaya uvāca
evamuktṛvā hṛṣīkeśaṃ(ñ), guḍākeśaḥ(ph) parantapa,
na yotsya iti govindam, uktṛvā tūṣṇīm(m) babhūva ha. 2.9
tamuvāca hṛṣīkeśaḥ(ph), prahasanniva bhārata,
senayorubhayormadhye, viśīdantamidam(ṽ) vacaḥ.2.10**

Sañjaya said:

O King, having thus spoken to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna again said to Him, " I will not fight " and became silent. Then, O Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as if smiling, addressed the following words to Arjuna, sorrowing in the midst of two armies.

After expressing his reluctance to fight, Arjuna fell silent. Observing Arjuna's silence, Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to smile and addressed him.

The significance of Śrī Bhagavan's smile is noteworthy. Despite expressing anger towards Arjuna and even using harsh words like calling him impotent, HIS smile mitigates the impact of HIS words. A smile carries a unique power. Even when words may seem harsh, when accompanied by a smile, they become less hurtful and leave a lasting positive effect on the listener. HIS smile also served as a source of solace for Arjuna, helping him overcome his current state of sorrow.

HIS smile is praised in the most descriptive lyrics in Madhurāṣṭakam in Eight Stanzas by Swami Vallabhacharya;

॥ मधुराष्टकम् ॥

अधरं(म्) मधुरं(म्) वदनं(म्) मधुरम्, नयनं(म्) मधुरं(म्) हसितं(म्) मधुरम्।
हृदयं(म्) मधुरं(म्) गमनं(म्) मधुरम्, मधुराधधपतेरखिलं(म्) मधुरम् ॥1॥

वचनं(म्) मधुरं(म्) चररतं(म्) मधुरम्, विनं(म्) मधुरं(म्) वसलतं(म्) मधुरम्।
चसलतं(म्) मधुरं(म्) भ्रममतं(म्) मधुरम्, मधुराधधपतेरखिलं(म्) मधुरम् ॥2॥

वेणुममधुरो रेणुममधुरः(फ), पाणिममधुरः(फ) पादौ मधुरौ।

नृत्यं(म्) मधुरं(म्) िख्यं(म्) मधुरम्, मधुराधधपतेरखिलं(म्) मधुरम् ॥3॥

गीतं(म्) मधुरं(म्) पीतं(म्) मधुरम्, भुक्तं (म्) मधुरं(म्) िप्तं(म्) मधुरम् ।
रूपं(म्) मधुरं(म्) मतलकं(म्) मधुरम्, मधुराधधपतेरखिलं(म्) मधुरम् ॥4॥

करणं(म्) मधुरं(म्) तरणं(म्) मधुरम्, हरिं(म्) मधुरं(म्) रमिं(म्) मधुरम्।
वममतं(म्) मधुरं(म्) शममतं(म्) मधुरम्, मधुराधधपतेरखिलं(म्) मधुरम् ॥5॥

गुञ्जा मधुरा माला मधुरा, यमुना मधुरा वीची मधुरा।

िसललं(म्) मधुरं(म्) कमलं(म्) मधुरम्, मधुराधधपतेरखिलं(म्) मधुरम् ॥6॥

गोपी मधुरा लीला मधुरा, युक्तं (म्) मधुरं(म्) मुक्तं (म्) मधुरम् ।
दृष्टं(म्) मधुरं(म्) सशष्टं(म्) मधुरम्, मधुराधधपतेरखिलं(म्) मधुरम् ॥7॥

गोपा मधुरा गावो मधुरा, यष्टष्टममधुरा िष्टष्टममधुरा।

दसलतं(म्) मधुरं(म्) फसलतं(म्) मधुरम्, मधुराधधपतेरखिलं(म्) मधुरम् ॥8॥

इतत श्रीवल्लभाचार्य कृ त मधुराष्टकं सम्पूर्णम्॥

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The session ended with an assignment to perform all activity with a smile on the lips. A question answer round followed.

Question: The fact that there was only one day difference between the end of Agyaat vaas of Pandavas and the defeat of the Kauravas, signifies that there is a very thin line between Dharma and Adharma.

Answer: Intellect plays a vital role to understand the difference. In the Mahabharata the Pandavas resorted to adharma to kill Dronacharya. False news of Ashwathama's death was floated. Krishna knew that Dronacharya would confirm the news from Yudhishter who was known to always speak the truth. So HE told Yudhishter to confirm Drona regarding the death of Ashwathama. However, he was told to faintly add that he did not know whether it was the son or an elephant. When Drona approached Yudhishter to confirm the news, Bhagawan cleverly began to blow HIS Panchjanya conch thereby making Yudhishter inaudible. At the same time Hanuman ji blew gushing winds adding to the noise so that Drona did not receive the correct news.

Another example of a butcher running after a cow was narrated. If the butcher was wrongly informed whether the cow had taken a left or a right at a crossroad, it would not be Adharma as the life of that cow was being saved.

Raghav Sharma ji

Question: Please explain what is Sankhya yoga.

Answer: Sankhya means numbers. Sankhya here denotes the nirguna worship of the Supreme. It showcases that HE pervades all creation. HE resides in every being, river, tree, mountain etc. HE resides in all beings as the Jivatma, thereby making the Jivatma immortal.

Vrinda ji

Question: Please explain the concept of Akshauni sena.

Answer: Mahabharata war was fought by 18 Akshauni senas. (There are millions in one akshauni). Out of the 18 akshauni's, 11 were with the Kauravas and 7 with the Pandavas. Sri Krishna's Narayani Sena and Madra Naresh's (maternal uncle of Nakul and Sehdev) akshauni sena were with the Kauravas. Duryodhan had deceptively taken Madra's sena to his side. The Narayani sena though with the Kauravas favoured the Pandavas as HE was with them. Similarly Madra naresh's sena also would not fight against his nephews. Hence effectively the Kauravas had 9 akshauni senas and the Pandavas also had 9 akshauni senas.



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Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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