

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 1: Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yoga

2/4 (Ślōka 3-11), Sunday, 09 June 2024

Interpreter: GĪTĀ PRAVĪṆA KAVITA VERMA

YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/7-CxB-hBofM>

The Military Might and the Warrior Lineup on the Battlefield

The first chapter of Śrīmad Bhagavadgita is **Arjuna Vishada Yoga - The Yoga of Dejection of Arjuna.**

The evening session started with the ritual of Deepa Prajwalan, lighting of the divine lamp. Prayers were offered to Paramātmā and Guru Parampara.

This chapter lays the foundation for Bhagavadgītā, and is highly significant as it describes the mental state of duality and confusion in the minds of the two important characters of this war. As the name suggests, Arjuna became utterly depressed and despondent after viewing the battlefield, and wanted to abandon the war. He even preferred to accept the life of a hermit. On the other side, Duryodhana was engaged in moral boosting of the warriors of his side, and at the same time getting worried on seeing the great warriors on Pāṇḍavas side. The way he viewed the Pāṇḍavas' army arrayed for the war is described in the second sloka. Arjuna was fortunate to have Sri Krishna by his side as his mentor and guide. The seeds for this war were planted with the discriminatory feelings that King Dhritarastra nurtured throughout his life towards the Pāṇḍavas and his blind love for his own sons, particularly for Duryodhana. His bias is exhibited through his words in the first sloka, the only sloka spoken by him.

mamakah pāṇḍavascaiva (my sons and the sons of Pandu).

Maharshi Veda Vyasa ji had passed on the Divya Drishti to Sanjaya to see the events that happened in the Kurukshetra battle field in real time, and describe it to Dhritarastra. Sanjaya describes these scenes in the upcoming slokas. He said that upon seeing the military formation of the Pāṇḍavas army, king Duryodhana approached his Guru Dronacharya and spoke about the warriors and their positions.

1.3

**paśyaitāṁ(m) pāṇḍuputrāṅām, ācārya mahatīṁ(ñ) camūm,
vyūḍhāṁ(n) drupadaputreṅa, tava śiṣyeṅa 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 asked his guru Dronacharya to view the huge military formation that was led by his own disciple, Dhristadyumna. Dhristadyumna was the son of Drupada, and brother of Draupadi. By referring to Dhristadyumna as son of Drupada, Duryodhana was provoking the emotions of Dronacharya.

Drona was the son of Sage Bharadwaja, in whose Ashrama prince Drupada was studying. The two young boys soon became such close friends, that Drupada promised Drona to share his wealth and kingdom when he becomes the king. Their friendship was as deep as that of Sri Krishna and Sudama. In due course of time Drupada inherited the kingdom of Panchala and became the king. Drona, adopting the Brahmin profession, became a sage and teacher. He did not seek material wealth and hence, led a poor life. His wife had to feed their only child, Ashwatthama, with flour mixed in water, instead of milk. His friends teased him for his poverty. The upset child came to his mother crying. She urged Drona to visit his friend Drupada and ask for financial help. Drona reluctantly approached Drupada, who however rebuked the poor sage for having the audacity to seek friendship with a mighty king. Drona felt very humiliated by his friends attitude and with a personal vow to only meet King Drupada as an equal in future, he walked away without uttering a word. With this event, two close friends became sworn enemies. With no desire to return to his wife, he wandered around, and reached the city of Hastinapura. In fact, Drona would not be going back home or meet his wife for the next twenty years.

In Hastinapura, he saw a group of young boys trying in vain to retrieve a ball that had fallen into a well. He used his archery skills to help the boys retrieve the ball. The boys were none other than young pāṇḍavas and kauravas. They reported the incident to their great grandfather, Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, who instantly realized that such a skilled person could be none other than the great archer Parasurama's most skilled student, Dronacharya. He requested Drona to become the guru/ Acharya for his grand nephews, and teach them the skills of archery. Dronacharya accepted, under two conditions - 1) there should be no interference in his teaching methodology; 2) he would not take any monthly wage but would ask for his Guru Dakshina (Remuneration for a teacher) at the end of their education and when his pupils had become masters of their skills.

He taught the princes the art of archery and war skills. Arjuna proved to be the most meritorious and skilled, and soon became his most favored disciple. When it was time for the guru Dakshina, he asked the princes to fight against King Drupada and capture him alive. Kauravas went first but returned empty handed. Arjuna went alone and single handedly defeated Drupada's army, captured him and brought him to his guru. Dronacharya divided Drupada's kingdom into two parts, returned one to him, and gave the other to his own son, Aswatthama. Dronacharya now having avenged his insult and satiated his ego, told King Drupada that now they were equal in stature. But in this process, Drupada's insult was ignited, and he vowed to take revenge. He then performed a yajna to bear a son who would kill Dronacharya. Draupadi and her brother, Dhristadyumna were born as a result of the yajna. Daupadi is also known as Yagyaseni meaning someone who is born from the holy fire. She was also known as **Krishnaa** (not *Bhagavān Krishna*) because of her dark complexion. Drupada sent his son Dhristadyumna to Dronacharya himself to master the art of archery. Being a righteous man of honor, Dronacharya accepted him as his disciple, and taught him the intricacies of the art, though being aware that the young boy was destined to kill him.

So in this Shloka, Duryodhana tauntingly reminds Dronachaya that it is his dear pupils who are standing on the other side of the battlefield as his opponents, including Dhristadyumna, the son of his sworn enemy and the leader of the Pāṇḍavas army. Dhristadyumna was in the fore front of the war to avenge the insult meted out to his sister Draupadi by the Kauravas. The Kurukshetra Battle

was not only a war between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, it was also a war between Drupada and Dronacharya for settling their long-standing score. This feud doesn't just end here with Dhristadyumna being responsible for the death of Dronacharya and subsequently Dhristadyumna being killed by Ashwatthama.

1.4

atra śūrā maheṣvāsā, bhīmārjunasamā yudhi, yuyudhāno virāṭasca, 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) Drupada;

Duryodhana continues to name and describe the other powerful warriors and great bowmen (**maha-ishu-asah**) on the Pāṇḍavas side . He describes many other **Maharathis** who are most powerful warriors with 100 **Rathis** under them and similar in calibre to Bhima and Arjuna. 18 **Maharathis** participated in this battle, with 11 on the Kaurava side and 7 for the Pāṇḍavas. Some of the **Maharathis** on the Pāṇḍavas side were Yuyudhan, King Virata and King Drupad with their immense military prowess.

Yuyudhan was also know as Satyaki. Satyaki was a Yadava and hence part of the Narayani Sena. However, since he was a disciple of Arjuna, he chose to fight for the Pāṇḍavas.

Duryodhana tells Dronaacharya, that he had given all his knowledge in warfare to his most favorite disciple Arjuna, and Arjuna had subsequently imparted that knowledge to Satyaki. Both of them were now fighting against him on the Pāṇḍava side, making Pāṇḍavas almost invincible. This way Duryodhana tries to instigate Dronaacharya.

It is well known that Pāṇḍavas were exiled to 12 years of **Vanavas** (living in the forest) followed by a year of **Agyaatvaas** when they were to live incognito. It was stipulated that if the Pāṇḍavas were recognized during the incognito period, they would then have serve another 12 years in exile. During this period, the Pāṇḍava brothers and Draupadi took shelter in the kingdom of Matsya ruled by King Virata. They established themselves under disguise in different roles at the court of King Virata. Yudhistir assumed the role of king's advisor under the name of **Kanka**. Bhima masqueraded as a cook with the name **Ballabha**. Arjuna assumed the role of a dance teacher for Virata's daughter Uttara under the name of **Brihanala**. Nakul became an equine expert and renamed himself as **Granthika**; Sahadev identified himself as a cowherd and assumed the name **Tantipala**. Draupadi assumed the role of the beautician for Princess Uttara under the guise of **Sairandhri**.

After the year, when the real personas of the Pāṇḍavas were revealed, King Virata wanted Arjuna to marry his daughter Uttara. Arjuna however declined stating that he always considered her as a his disciple and hence could not accept her as his wife. He proposed that Uttara's hand be given in marriage to his son Abhimanyu and thus Uttara became the daughter-in-law of Arjuna. On the basis of this relationship, King Virat and his army aligns with the Pāṇḍavas during the Kurukshetra Battle.

Duryodhana continues to instigate Dronacharya by mentioning Drupada again, and giving him the epitaph of **Maharathi**.

1.5

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

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

Duryodhana further goes on to add the names of other valiant kings like Drishtaketu, Chekitan, Kashiraj, the gallant king of Kashi, Kuntibhoj and Shaibya.

Drishtaketu was the son of Shishupal. Shishupal was Bhagavān Krishna's cousin, and a rough and abrasive person. His mother knew his son's shortcomings and had requested Bhagavān Śrī Krishna not to kill her son. Bhagavān Krishna promised his aunt, that he would pardon Shishupal's hundred mistakes. However, if he crosses hundred, HE will have no other option but to kill Shishupal. In Dritarashtra's court, Shishupal started hurtling abuses at Sri Krishna. Bhagavān watched Shishupal's misdemeanors as he continued to malign HIM. Once the threshold of hundred misdemeanors was crossed, Bhagavān killed Shishupal with HIS Sudarshan Chakra. Duryodhana, while taking the name of all Yoddhas (warriors) was surprised to see Shishupal's son, Drishtaketu fighting alongside of Pāṇḍavas. He did not expect him to fight for Pāṇḍavas as Sri Krishna was responsible for his father's death.

Purujit and Kuntibhoj were brothers of Kunti, and hence expected to fight on the side of the Pāṇḍavas. Kashiraja and Cekitan were from Viraj Nagar. Shaibya was the father-in-law of Yudhistir. He was a very powerful King of Chedi Kingdom.

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).

Duryodhana further added that in the battlefield, the Panchal-Desh was also represented by the gallant Yudhamanyu and the courageous Uttamauja, sons of King Draupad. Abhimanyu the very brave son of Subhadra and the five sons of Draupadi from the five Pāṇḍavas were also arrayed on the battlefield.

1.7

asmākam(n) tu viśiṣṭā ye, tānnibodha dvijottama, nāyakā mama sainyasya, saññārtham(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.

In the previous Slokas Duryodhana described the military preparedness of the Pāṇḍavas and praised their brave generals in order to provoke the fighter instinct of Dronacharya and the Generals on the Kauravas side who were listening on to the conversation. In this Sloka, he tries to boost the morale of the warriors of his side. Although he appeared to be talking to Dronacharya, his message was loud and clear and meant for all the warriors on his side.

He selectively uses the words **Asmakam** meaning **Ours** and **Vishistah** meaning **Special**. What Duryodhana meant to say was that the Kaurava side too had very a special and gallant army.

While addressing Dronacharya, Duryodhana says **Tanni-bodha Dwijottama**. *Dwijottama* meaning twice born refers to Brahmins. They are therefore said to be born twice once from their mother's womb and second time during their Upanayan ceremony. As Dronacharya was a Brahmin by birth, he is addressed as **Dwijottama**. Duryodhana refers to Dronacharya as the Best of Brahmanas.

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);

Duryodhana details the list of valiant warriors on the side of the Kauravas, like Dronacharya himself, Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, Karna, Kripacharya and Ashwatthama who are born fighters and ever victorious in wars. Very tactfully, he took the names of all powerful persons who are fighting on their side. As we all know the two most powerful persons in the entire Mahabharat war were Bhīṣma Pitāmaha and Drona who were fighting on Duryodhana's side.

He mentions the name of Karna before Kripacharya though Kripacharya was supposed to be more valiant than Karna. He took Karna's name first because Karna was his dearest friend though he is not known to have come to Duryodhana's rescue when needed. There is one instance in the Mahabharat when Karna ran away and did not save his friend Duryodhana from the attacks of Gandarvas. Infact, Pāṇḍavas had to come to his rescue.

Duryodhana continues the roll call of great warriors on their side and mentions the name of Aśvatthāmā, who was Dronacharya's son, Vikarna who was a very pious person and the only person on the side of the Kauravas who stood against the disrobing of Daupadi in court, and Bhurishrava, son of Somadatta to be on their side.

Aśvatthāmā had a boon from Brahmādev, that he would never die. When Dronacharya was killed, infuriated Aśvatthāmā wanted to destroy the entire dynasty of Pāṇḍavas, to avenge his father's death. In that raged condition, under the darkness of night, he entered the Pandava's camp and found five persons sleeping in a row. He mistook them as the five Pāṇḍavas brothers and slayed them all. However, they were the five sons of Draupadi from five Pāṇḍavas and not the Pāṇḍava brothers themselves. When he realized his mistake, he wanted to kill the remaining offsprings of the Pāṇḍavas. The only person from that clan remaining was Parikshit who was at that time in his mother Uttara's womb. Aśvatthāmā used his Brahmāstra on Parikshit lying inside his mother's womb but Sri Krishna destroyed the Brahmāstra with his Sudarsan Chakra and saved Parikshit.

Before the start of the war, both Duryodhana and Arjuna were dejected and depressed. However, the reasons for their depression are completely different. Arjuna, being a Sattvic person was depressed since the thought of killing his own kinsmen in the war was weighing heavily on him. Duryodhana on the other hand was depressed as he was anxious about the outcome of the war and not assured of his own victory.

1.9

anye ca bahavaḥ(ś) śūrā, madarthe tyaktajīvitāḥ, nānāśastrapraharaṇāḥ(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.

After praising and recognizing all the brave warriors of his side, Duryodhana goes on to add that there are also many other warriors equipped with many weapons. They are all **Yuddha-Visharadah**, highly skilled in the art of warfare. He acknowledges that they are all fighting on the Kauravas side and are ready to give up their life for his sake.

1.10

**aparyāptaṃ(n) tadasmākaṃ(m), balaṃ(m) bhīṣmābhirakṣitam,
paryāptaṃ(n) tvidameteṣāṃ(m), balaṃ(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.

The commander-in-chief of Kauravas army was the grandsire Bhīṣma Pitāmaha and on the other side Pāṇḍava army was being steered by Bhima. Duryodhana said the Kaurava army is unlimited and were safely marshalled by Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, an epitome of gallantry and valor. As mentioned earlier, there were eighteen Akshauni senas fighting the Mahabharata war. Kauravas had eleven Akshauni senas and Pāṇḍavas had seven. The word **Aparayaptam** means unlimited. He used the term to describe his own army whose strength seemed unlimited in contrast to the strength and valor of warriors fighting for the Pāṇḍavas, their strength being described as **Parayaptam** which means limited.

These two adjectives **Aparayaptam** and **Paryaptam** used in this Sloka have been interpreted differently by different schools of **Gītā-Visharadas**. One is the interpretation as given above and the other as given by Ramanujacharyaji is that Duryodhana meant to say that the Kaurava army although bigger and seemingly unlimited would be insufficient in face of the Pāṇḍavas limited but brave army.

To note however is the fact that Duryodhana was a proud and boastful person with a inflated ego. He wanted to demonstrate that he had a very powerful army and could easily defeat the Pāṇḍavas. This was his **Ahankar** (ego) and **Darpa** (pride). At the same time at the bottom of his heart he was scared about the power of the Pāṇḍava army and the outcome of the battle.

1.11

**ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu, yathābhāgamavasthitāḥ,
bhīṣmamevābhirakṣantu, bhavantaḥ(s) sarva eva hi. 1.11**

Therefore, stationed in your respective positions on all fronts, do you all guard Bhīṣma in particular on all sides.

Duryodhana was well aware that Bhīṣma Pitāmaha had the boon of **Ichha Mrityu**, i.e. he could decide when and how to die. He assured all the warriors, that they were all in the safe hands of the grandsire Bhīṣma Pitāmaha and hence need not worry.

However, Duryodhana still instructed all his senas to protect Bhīṣma Pitāmaha from all sides. They were required to protect Bhīṣma Pitāmaha from all sides and protect their own strategic positions. Thus Duryodhana's words were self contradictory. On the one hand he reposed faith on Bhīṣma Pitāmaha valour, and on the other hand he asked other warriors to protect him from all sides.

The next session will talk about the **Bherighosha** or the sounds made by different instruments to announce the start the battle.

The vivechan session was followed by a Questions and Answers session, and concluded with the prayer to the Supreme, and rendition of Hanuman Chalisa.

Question and Answer:

Bhagavat Nemane Ji

Q: Is there some guidance from Gītā on how to improve our health?

A: Chapters 6 and 17 specifically deal with health issues. If you are following the guidance around **ahaar** (food) or **daan** (donation), your health is likely to be good and your life will be better.



We are sure you enjoyed reading the Vivechan write-up. Please invest three minutes of your time to provide us your feedback. Use the link below:

<https://vivechan.learngeeta.com/feedback/>

Thank you-For reading the summary

You have enjoyed this vivechan writeup! In spite of intense editing and proofreading, errors of grammar, as also of omission and commission may have crept in. We appreciate your forbearance.

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

Har Ghar Gītā, Har Kar Gītā !

Let's come together with the motto of Geeta Pariwar, and gift our Geeta Classes to all our Family, friends & acquaintances

<https://gift.learngeeta.com/>

Geeta Pariwar has taken a new initiative. Now you can watch YouTube videos and read PDFs of all the interpretation sessions conducted earlier. Please use the below link.

<https://vivechan.learngeeta.com/>

Learn Geeta, Spread Geeta, Live Geeta

|| OM ŚRĪKṚṢṆĀRPAṆAMASTU ||