

## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 1: Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yoga

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## Arjuna at a crossroad with potential to cross over to Mukthi

The first chapter of Srimad Bhagavadgita is called '**Arjuna Vishada Yog - The Yoga of despondency or dejection.**

The session began with the auspicious lighting of lamps and prayers. This was followed by greetings to viewers and salutations to Guru Govind Dev Ji Maharaj and all Gurus in his lineage.

We will attempt to understand the last part of this chapter. We saw in the earlier three sessions how Arjuna was depressed and why it is called a 'yog.' All the Maharathis in both the Pandava and Kaurava armies were introduced. They all blew their conches symbolizing the start of war. Arjuna with the help of Sri Krishna as his charioteer took a survey of the enemy camp when the chariot was stationed between the two warring factions.

Sri Krishna halted the chariot in a strategic place where Arjuna was easily able to see Bhīṣma pitāmaha and Guru Dronacharya. Not only them but Arjuna could have a full view of the entire Kaurava army as well as his own. In reality, it would suffice to see the warriors of the Kauravas as Arjuna knew all his warriors. Then why did Sri Krishna do so? Bhagavān desired that Arjuna get dejected, which would cause a series of questions to rise within him; which HE could easily clarify. This would enable Arjuna to be in the right frame of mind to fight the war for the cause of dharma.

One end of the bank can be crossed to reach the opposite bank. Then why should there be a third in between? That is why it is amazing how an atheist becomes a theist. One who is totally unrighteous suddenly follows the righteous path. When one is burdened with worries, he cannot cross the bank from one side to another.

A beautiful story: Once king Akbar and his minister Birbal went hunting. Sudden rains made them take cover with their horses. There was a canal in front of them which overflowed because of the incessant rain and flooded the area. Both observed a strange event. They saw a young boy carrying a bundle of wood on his head, swiftly crossing the canal from one end to another. Akbar was taken by surprise and called the young lad. Akbar felt even his horse would be unable to cross the canal while the youth

did and hence wanted him to repeat the action.

The youth was ready as it was a normal everyday thing he did. Akbar promised him a gold nugget. Birbal smiled on hearing this. Akbar wondered why Birbal smiled as he only wanted to reward the youth. Birbal with his head hung low asked Akbar to proceed. The wood cutter was happy at the thought of reward that too a gold nugget. It was pouring and the youth ran to cross the bank. He slipped in the slush and was unable to cross. Birbal smiled once again and this intrigued Akbar. When asked the reason, Birbal replied that when the youth crossed from one bank to the other the first time, all he had was a bundle of wood on his head. But when asked to cross again he had the weight of his thought of one gold nugget, which prevented him from being successful.

The thought of a gold nugget prevented the youth from being successful and this was known to Birbal. Birbal smiled twice for the same reason. This is very true. As long as the mind is burdened it becomes impossible to cross over.

Thus to remove all negative thoughts and dualities from the mind of Arjuna, it was first necessary for him to feel dejected. The knower and creator of all the three lokas/world who is well aware of the past, present, and future; knew well that the seed of attachment had been sown in the mind of Arjuna. HIS task therefore was to remove all traces of it before it germinates and grows within. Bhagavān knew that Arjuna could never do justice at war, so intentionally stationed the chariot in such a way that Arjuna could have a 360 degree view of the battlefield.

Thus began Arjuna's despondency seeing his own in both the armies. He saw his Pitamaha, Guru Ji, his father in law, his son in law, brother in law, and friends. He felt was it necessary to kill them all in order to obtain the kingdom? The attachment disarmed Arjuna who felt weak and therefore sat down refusing to fight the war. Arjuna was dejected, he threw his bow down, his hands and legs shook, and his body was on fire!

His mind was dazed and he lost all capacity to think logically. In such a state, Arjuna opened his heart to Sri Krishna, his dear friend.

### 1.32

**na kāṅkṣe vijayaṃ(ñ) kṛṣṇa, na ca rājyaṃ(m) sukhāni ca,  
kiṃ(n) no rājyena govinda, kiṃ(m) bhogairjīvitena vā. 1.32**

Kṛṣṇa, I do not covet victory, nor kingdom, nor pleasures. Govinda, of what use will kingdom or luxuries or even life be to us!

Arjuna told Sri Krishna that he did not desire victory, kingdom, and the comforts associated with it. Why? Arjuna felt there was no use of fighting for the kingdom. What is the advantage of such comforts and in fact his own life! Arjuna desired to end his life as his life would be the cause of bloodshed in the battlefield. It would result in wiping out the entire Kuru dynasty.

One aspect that requires introspection is: does Arjuna not desire the kingdom or desires the kingdom but did not want to kill his relatives? It is important to understand which is true. Arjuna desired the kingdom and in fact the three worlds too as narrated in the following verse.

### 1.33

## **yeṣāmarthe kāṅkṣitaṃ(n) no, rājyaṃ bhogaḥ(s) sukhāni ca, ta ime'vasthitā yuddhe, prāṇāṃstyaktvā dhanāni ca. 1.33**

Those very persons for whose sake we covet the kingdom, luxuries and pleasures-

Arjuna felt that those who desired the kingdom, happiness, and all comforts; have sacrificed everything for the cause of the war. Does he have to kill all such people for a palace of his own? Who will live in the palace? He did not desire the palace at the cost of family. This proves that Arjuna desired the kingdom, happiness, and all comforts that came with it but not at the cost of death of his own people.

This shows the split personality of Arjuna. He had desires but with conditions! Pāṇḍavas desired at least five villages and hence Sri Krishna was sent to Hastinapur as a peacemaker. Sri Krishna placed the wishes of the Pāṇḍavas in the court of the Kauravas. When Kauravas refused the request, war was inevitable and both Duryodhana and Arjuna started gathering their armies. The preparations for war took some months and never such thoughts crossed Arjuna's mind!

While in the battlefield in the midst of the two armies, Arjuna expressed his disinterest for kingdom and happiness! When such opposite pairs of thoughts cross the mind it is commonly referred to as split personality. It is a disease of the mind called a psychological disorder. All the symptoms were exhibited by Arjuna - his mouth went dry, his bow slipped from his hand, and he sat down dejected. He lost all desire and strength to think of anything!

People with such disorders do not desire to even get up from bed. They just give up on life. Arjuna thought that he did not want the kingdom as all wealth and happiness are transient. Moreover the other end of the spectrum of happiness is sorrow. The more regularly one consumes sweets, it results in obesity and associated diseases. Happiness is equivalent to having sweets and sorrow to diseases; and these are the opposite sides of the same coin.

The more happiness, the more diseases. Have one observed closely those individuals who are in extreme misery or those who do physically hard work like a coolie, farmer, or one who shreds rocks? Are they ever obese? They can never be obese. They tend to eat well and are very healthy. One who enjoys happiness will have to be watchful of the food he eats. Otherwise his weight would increase as there is no misery but only happiness.

This results in high blood pressure and/or diabetes in an individual. Happiness and misery do go hand in hand. Arjuna knew this well. When prince Siddhartha stepped out of the palace, he saw a variety of misery all around. If one feels that he should give up happiness and kingly comforts, he becomes a buddha. Mahaveer felt the same way which made him a great saint. If Arjuna had felt the same way, Sri Krishna's teachings would have been totally different and would have led him to his destination.

Sri Krishna knew that Arjuna by nature was a Kṣatriya. His innate nature was to use the bow and arrow and fight. That was Arjuna's duty. In the 18th chapter, Bhagavān had stated very clearly:

**सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत्।**

**सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः॥18.48॥**

The duty that of itself falls to one's lot should not be abandoned, though it may have its defects. All acts are marred by defects, as fire is obscured by smoke.

A Kṣatriya leaves the dwelling to take Saṃnyāsa and in case he sees a tiger in the forest; his hand by instinct will reach for his bow. He will never think that life is transient and death is certain and leave his life at the mercy of the tiger. If such a lack of fear exists in an individual, he may cross over to the

opposite bank. If one is not afraid of death, it signifies the flow of nectar within. That is why lions were found roaming around the huts of our great saints. The animals never attack them as saints see them with equanimity. They see all creatures with kindness and compassion.

**अद्वेषा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च।**

**निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी॥12.13॥**

He who is incapable of hatred towards any being, who is kind and compassionate, free from selfishness, without pride, equable in pleasure and in pain, and forgiving.

Saints become equanimous even with wild animals. They are free of fear. What Arjuna was going through was not similar to this. **All advices of Bhagavadgītā are for the courageous!** That is why Bhagavān advices that one has to act in accordance to one's nature which becomes his binding duty. Though the duty may entail defects, it is no reason to abandon it. All karmas bear defects and nothing is perfect.

When one prepares roti, the small ants and other insects die in the heat thus generated. When one performs yajna, the heat destroys many creatures. Fire carries smoke as its defect! Similarly, by waging war, the defect of killing is there; but a Kshatriya has to perform his duty as all are culprits or supporters of them. Bhagavān was very clear. By nature, one would not desire to kill his own kith and kin. Who were the ones whom Arjuna felt inappropriate to kill?

**1.34**

**ācāryāḥ(ph) pitarāḥ(ph) putrāḥ(s), tathaiva ca pitāmahāḥ,  
mātulāḥ(ś) śvaśurāḥ(ph) pautrāḥ(ś), śyālāḥ(s) sambandhinastathā. 1.34**

teachers, uncles, sons and nephews and even so, granduncles and great grand-uncles, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grand-nephews, brothers-in-law and other relations-

The Kauravas included Dronacharya, Kripacharya, Bhishma Pitamah, sons and grandsons, uncles, father in law, brothers in law, and other relatives.

**1.35**

**etānna hantumicchāmi, ghnato'pi madhusūdana,  
api trailokyarājyasya, hetoḥ(kh) kiṃ(n) nu mahīkṛte.1.35**

O Slayer of Madhu, I do not want to kill them, though they may slay me, even for the sovereignty over the three worlds; how much the less for the kingdom here on earth!

Arjuna did not desire to kill all his relatives. He felt he could gracefully die if he were attacked by them. He preferred to die alone and thus save all of them. Thus, he did not want to retaliate even if they attacked him. Arjuna did not desire to rule the three lokas - heaven, earth, and hell, by killing them; so where was the question of ruling the earth alone. Arjuna did not desire kingdom at the expense of killing his loved ones but was okay to obtain the kingdom otherwise. This should be read between the lines.

When Arjuna's innate nature of Kṣatriya as ignited by Bhagavān, he agreed for the war. What is inside should come out. If it doesn't then action cannot be performed as it should be. That is called yog and if one does not perform actions as per the mind, then excellence can never be achieved.

**बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते।**

**तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्॥2.50॥**

When a man attends to Pure Reason, he renounces in this world the results of good and evil alike. Cling thou to Right Action. Spirituality is the real art of living.

Bhagavān further said:

**स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः।**

**स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥18.45॥**

Perfection is attained when each attends diligently to his duty. Listen and I will tell you how it is attained by him who always minds his own duty.

If one is an artist, he should bring out the image from within. A singer should open out his throat to bring melody. If one is a literateur, one should learn the language and pen his writings. A child may be very good in learning languages, be it its own mother tongue, or other regional languages, or foreign languages. His friends and relatives may coax him to take up engineering which he would oblige. Parental pressures are also the reason for taking up only engineering.

Once a student failed in a subject in class 11 and the Principal desired to speak to him. The student's father picked up the phone and refused to believe saying that his child had secured 86% in class 10, and 91% in class 11. The Principal clarified that the student did not attend the exam of one subject. The father was surprised as he had dropped his child at college and saw him walk towards the classroom. On checking the camera images it was found that the child left the college through the exit gate skipping the exam.

On searching, he was not found anywhere for the next 3 hours - be it his room, his friend's place, relatives' place, etc. The desperate father filed a missing complaint with the police around 2 pm. The police tried to track the child through his mobile phone but found that he had switched off his mobile. At around 5 pm the same day, the phone when active was tracked and the child was found in a temple at a deserted place. The father thus took his child home.

The next day the father brought his son to the speaker. The child cried and accepted that he had a dislike for science and was totally disinterested. He loved languages and not maths. The child was enrolled in the science stream and thus his life was made miserable. The speaker then discussed this aspect with the father who was agreeable to the advice given. So the child was advised to continue studying class 11 in order to be promoted else would have to repeat a year. He assured he would pass grade 11 but would not like to continue in the science stream in grade 12. He thus successfully completed grade 11, and shifted to the arts stream in grade 12. The child had the intention of committing suicide as he disliked the stream in grade 11. He did not have the courage to end his life and was thus saved.

We therefore have to search what is within us. One has to delve within and converse with the self in order to know the self. Arjuna was a Kshatriya within but his mind was in a whirl. His focus was elsewhere.

**1.36**

**nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrānaḥ(kh), kā prītiḥ(s) syājjanārdana,  
pāpamevāśrayedasmān, hatvaitānātātāyinaḥ.1.36**

Kṛṣṇa, how can we hope to be happy slaying the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; by killing even these desperadoes, sin will surely accrue to us.

Arjuna addressed Sri Krishna as Janardhana and said what happiness would he derive by killing all of

king Dhritarashtra's men. He felt he would commit sin by killing the culprits. He was convinced that killing the sinners would incur sin.

There is a beautiful shloka in Vashishta Smriti which enumerates six types of sinners:

**अग्निदो गदरवैश्व शस्त्रपाणिर्धनापहः।  
क्षेत्रदारापहर्ता च षडेते ह्याततायिनः॥**

- One who **kills by fire.**
- One who **loots others wealth.**
- One who **kills by giving poison.**
- One who **kills using weapons.**
- **Killing of women or putting them to shame.**
- **Land grabbers.**

All the above traits were found in Duryodhana. He set fire to Lakshagriha and tried to kill the Pāṇḍavas. He tried to kill Bhima by poisoning him. He was always conspiring to kill the Pāṇḍavas. He usurped their kingdom and deceived them by winning the game of dice. He usurped their wealth. He put Draupadi to shame and his brother Dushasana dragged her by her hair and tried to disrobe her (during her menstruation period) in the palace filled with courtiers. Who can be a sinner more than him?

Even if one of the above is done a person is considered a sinner, and Duryodhana had done all of the above.

**अहिंसा परमो धर्मः तथाहिंसा परो दमः**

Non violence is the ultimate duty. It is wrong to kill others.

**ahimsā paramo dharma**

We have been taught only half the truth of the verse in Mahabharata.

The rest of the verse being:

**dharmahimsā tathaiva ca|**

Violence is justified as a last resort and only after peaceful methods of conflict resolution are exhausted.

**ahimsā paramaṃ satyaṃ yato dharma pravartate||**

Dharma dictates that the highest form of truth is non violence.

Mahaveer Swami ji has written a lot of on the first part of the verse with respect to non violence as the ultimate duty. The actual verse further explains that action to safeguard righteousness, be it violence is also called non violence. In fact, this is the best karma in the larger interest of the society.

What is dharma then, which has been dealt with in detail in the Gita. From the first letter of the Gita uttered by king Dhritrashtra:

**धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः।**

**मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय॥१.१॥**

The King Dhritarashtra asked: "O Sanjaya! What happened on the sacred battlefield of Kurukshetra, when my people gathered against the Pāṇḍavas?"

The first letter of the gītā is 'Dha' and the last letter uttered by Sanjay is 'Ma' and between these two letters lies the importance of dharma or action as strung together in the gītā. Gītā teaches us that dharma is our duty which naturally is within us. Humankind in order to safeguard his species has the right to kill and it is his dharma. That is why sinners or terrorists are killed. The prime duty of soldiers is to kill terrorists invading the country and thereby they are honoured with medals by the President as a mark of respect for honouring one's duty.

This is because the soldiers prevent the death of innocent lives by killing the terrorist whose intention is only to massacre. Dharmashastra pertains to more social, moral and religious aspects while Arthashastra is more political and economic in nature.

### **ArthaŚāstra tu balavat DharmāŚāstra miti sthiti**

in Yajavalkya smriti

Any basic action for material gain of self is called Arthashastra and 'Ahaituki kriya' - actions without selfish motive or gain, but only for the welfare of all, is called Dharmashastra. That is why Dharmashastra is nobler than Arthashastra, because the feeling of 'Me' and 'Mine' is not there.

Arjuna's mind was in turmoil as he saw all his relatives in the battlefield and to safeguard them was his prime duty. At the same time to kill the sinners was kshatra dharma. He was thus in a dilemma as his mind instructed him to follow the duty towards safeguarding his family. He remembered the affection showered by Bhishma Pitamah in his childhood years. How could he raise his bow to kill the grand sire?

His guru Dronacharya held his hand and taught him the skill of archery. How could he use the same skill to annihilate him? His mind could not accept what the intellect was instructing him - to kill all the sinners! One who sides the sinners are also labelled sinners. The war within Arjuna was greater than the war at Kurukshetra and that was why he reached out to his companion Sri Krishna to understand what was happening.

When there is a battle between two dharmas, one has to shed the feeling of 'Me and mine' and stand for the cause of dharma. Between the selfish need of 'mine' and the need of the family; the need of the family comes first.

A famous sanskrit saying:

**त्यजेदेकं कुलस्यार्थे ग्रामस्यार्थे कुलं त्यजेत् ।  
ग्रामं जनपदस्यार्थे आत्मार्थे पृथिवीं त्यजेत् ॥**

Forsake a member to save a family; leave a family to save a village; reject a village to save a country, and give up the whole earth for the sake of the self.

In the Mahabharata, the question of saving the kingdom was of utmost importance and all the sinners were at war; and Hastinapur was to be freed of them. Bhagavān Sri Krishna had to explain to Arjuna that Kshatra dharma was nobler than dharma towards one's family. This could be done only when Arjuna was done with his outpourings.

Arjuna laid down his reasons for not fighting the war.

**1.37**

**tasmānnārhā vyaṃ(m) hantaṃ(n), dhārtarāṣṭrānsvabāndhavān,  
svajanaṃ(m) hi kathaṃ(m) hatvā, sukhinaḥ(s) syāma mādharma.1.37**

Therefore, Kṛṣṇa, it does not behove us to kill our relations, the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. For, how can we be happy after killing our own kinsmen?

Arjuna said to Sri Krishna that they were not capable of killing the relatives of Dhṛthraashtra as how could one be happy by killing one's own? Why didn't this perspective of Arjuna not occur to Duryodhana? Why did he not yield at least five villages to his own brothers - the Pandavas? Their natures were poles apart which we should understand.

**1.38**

**yadyapyete na paśyanti, lobhopahatacetasah,  
kulakṣayakṛtaṃ(n) doṣaṃ(m), mitradrohe ca pātaka.1.38**

Even though these people, with their mind blinded by greed, perceive no evil in destroying their own race and no sin in treason to friends,

Arjuna felt that his lineage would be destroyed if he killed his relatives, that too for his greed for the kingdom. The loss of discernment because of the greed of Duryodhana and the sin thereby accumulated by killing one's family was the fault of Duryodhana. He felt the Pāṇḍavas knew very well the foolishness of the Kauravas and hence felt why accumulate sin by fighting the war. Kauravas were sinners and unrighteous but Arjuna felt that Pāṇḍavas should not tow their path.

**1.39**

**kathaṃ(n) na jñeyamaśmābhiḥ(ph), pāpādasmañnivarjitum,  
kulakṣayakṛtaṃ(n) doṣaṃ(m), prapaśyadbhirjanārdana.1.39**

why should not we, O Kṛṣṇa, who see clearly the sin accruing from the destruction of one's family, think of desisting from committing this sin.

Arjuna felt that Pāṇḍavas knowing right from wrong should desist from wrong doings resulting in sinful acts. If a dog bites us, should we bite it in return? A dog's nature is to bite and the Kauravas nature was to be unrighteous. Arjuna felt that it was unrighteous to kill the Kauravas.

**1.40**

**kulakṣaye praṇaśyanti, kuladharmāḥ(s) sanātanaḥ,  
dharma naṣṭe kulaṃ(ñ) kṛtsnam, adharmo'bhibhavatyuta.1.40**

Age-long family traditions disappear with the destruction of a family; and virtue having been lost, vice takes hold of the entire race.

Arjuna felt the family lineage would be destroyed. This would result in the destruction of the family dharma as well. It would also result in unrighteous acts towards the family by others, as no male member would survive the war; and only women would be left behind. The children would not have their fathers around and hence would have to lead a miserable life.

**1.41**

**adharmābhibhavātkṛṣṇa, praduṣyanti kulastriyaḥ,  
strīṣu duṣṭāsu vārṣṇeya, jāyate varṇasaṅkaraḥ.1.41**

With the preponderance of vice, Kṛṣṇa, the women of the family become corrupt; and with the corruption of women, O descendant of Vṛṣṇi, there ensues an intermixture of castes.

Arjuna felt that the absence of men in the family would result in great danger to the women folk who would be more vulnerable to outsiders who would take advantage of them. The unrighteousness that would prevail because of women being helpless would result in a generation of people of mixed classes.

**1.42**

**saṅkaro narakāyaiva, kulagnānām(ñ) kulasya ca,  
patanti pitaro hyeṣām(ì), luptapiṇḍodakakriyāḥ.1.42**

Progeny owing to promiscuity damns the destroyers of the race as well as the race itself. Deprived of the offerings of rice and water (Śrāddha, Tarpaṇa etc.) the manes of their race also fall.

Arjuna in his depressed state thought too negative. He felt the women folk would be raped as none would remain to protect them. The offsprings thus produced would result in sinners; as the thought at the time of consummation would attract only disturbed souls. Such individuals who make up the society would be totally unethical and the lineage of the Kuru dynasty would be lost forever.

The ancestors would not be prayed by the resultant corrupt society. This would cause great shame to them. The lineage would be lost and unrighteousness would prevail. Arjuna wanted to be saved from such disastrous repercussions.

**1.43**

**doṣairetaiḥ(kh) kulagnānām(ṽ), varṇasaṅkarakāraiḥ,  
utsādyante jātīdharmāḥ(kh), kuladharmāśca śāśvatāḥ.1.43**

Through these evils bringing about an intermixture of castes, the age-long caste traditions and family customs of the killers of kinsmen get extinct.

The righteousness that ever prevailed through family lineage would all be destroyed forever because of the new generation of mixed classes. This would destroy the 'Jati dharma - the natural order'. How would the ancestors feel?

**1.44**

**utsannakuladharmāṅām(m), manuṣyāṅām(ñ) janārdana,  
narake'niyataṅ(ṽ) vāso, bhavatīyanuśúruma.1.44**

Kṛṣṇa, we hear that men who have lost their family traditions, dwell in hell for an indefinite period of time.

Arjuna further justified that if the family dharma was lost then one has to live in hell for a long period of time. He felt he should not be the cause for his ancestors to lead a life in hell. He had heard about life in hell and hence would not like to be blamed. That kind of sin would also lead him to hell.

1.45

**aho bata mahatpāpaṃ(ñ), kartuṃ(ṽ) vyavasitā vayam,  
yadrājyasukhalobhena, hantuṃ(m) svajanamudyatāḥ.1.45**

Oh what a pity! Though possessed of intelligence we have set our mind on the commission of a great sin; that due to lust for throne and enjoyment we are intent on killing our own kinsmen.

Arjuna felt that without thinking of such repercussions, the Pandavas had decided to commit sin by killing their own family. He was ashamed that for the sake of greed of wealth and happiness, he was reading to kill his relatives. Such was his attachment towards his own family. Arjuna who was a great warrior of valour had expressed his inability to fight as he was overcome by attachment. He had become so delusional and was ready to give up his life.

1.46

**yadi māmāpratīkāram, aśastram(m) śāstrapāṇayaḥ,  
dhārtarāṣṭrā raṇe hanyuḥ(s), tanme kṣemataram(m) bhavet.1.46**

It would be better for me if the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, armed with weapons, kill me in battle, while I am unarmed and unresisting.

Arjuna felt that if Duryodhana and his men kill him in the process, it would be for his own welfare. So saying Arjuna lost all logic and sat beside his bow in the middle seat of the chariot. He was under the grip of attachment which resulted in dejection and disappointment.

1.47

**sañjaya uvāca  
evamuktvārjunaḥ(s) sañkhye, rathopastha upāviśat,  
visṛjya saśaram(ñ) cāpaṃ(m), śokasaṃvignamānasaḥ.1.47**

Sañjaya said:

Arjuna, whose mind was agitated by grief on the battlefield, having spoken thus, and having cast aside his bow and arrows, sank into the hinder part of his chariot.

Did Bhagavān inspire the Pāṇḍavas to wage war? Not at all. HE went to great lengths to avoid the war. There was no need but HE still went as a peace maker to convince the Kauravas against the war. Bhagavān Sri Krishna was acceptable to play any role to prevent the war. Bhagavān was ready to assume the role of a charioteer. Duryodhana sowed the seeds of war. Dharma entails the destruction of such a sinful act. The battlefield was therefore necessary for Bhagavān to make Arjuna understand his dharma.

**The chapter thus ends on a sorrowful note where a once powerful Arjuna was brought down to his knees!**

The session ends with prayers.

**Question and Answer session:**

## Jeyashree Ji

**Question:** Can one donate the body after death?

**Answer:** The gross body is of no use after death. The subtle body comprising the atma cannot be annihilated.

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः।।2.23।।

Weapons cleave the atma not, fire burns It not, water drenches It not, and wind dries It not.

Hence one should worry more about the atma and not the physical body. It can be donated, buried, thrown into a river, or burnt. Donating the body for scientific studies therefore is a noble deed. There is a difference between rituals of the dead body and 'Anteshti sanskar' or funeral rites. Funeral rites are a must to be performed. Mantras are to be chanted. For this reason, a dummy is made out of wheat flour and burnt. This ritual is for the atma and not the body.

## Nikhil Ji

**Question:** Should we follow all protocols for prayer? What if we inadvertently miss something?

**Answer:** Bhagavan is not here to find fault or punish us. The process was enumerated for people to understand. It was to instill fear so that one prays. When we feed kids we create fear saying if they don't eat they will fall sick. The intention of fear was to make us do certain things.

Bhagavān said:

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति।

तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्रामि प्रयतात्मनः।।19.26।।

Whatever a man offers to Me, whether it be a leaf, or a flower, or fruit, or water, I accept it, for it is offered with devotion and purity of mind.

Bhagavān desires only feelings of devotion and there is no need to pay attention to nitty gritty. Bhagavān is only here to give and receive love. We have attached fear to follow a process and, abiding out of fear is of no use. One should endeavour to merge into HIM out of love and devotion. To express our devotion to Bhagavān, it is natural for us to go within. Only then we will find HIM as HE is not outside. We have to shut our senses to perceive HIM within.

Only in the absence of all thoughts can we instill HIM within. Else we will only be mired in desires. It is the desires originating in the mind which takes us away from Bhagavān. So one should sacrifice all thoughts and desires. Actually, Arjuna could have just expressed his belief in Bhagavān and asked HIM to guide.

There was no need to take this long course. We despite reading the gita take the long route. All one has to do is sit straight, close our eyes, delve within and create the shunya or no thought stage. Remove the feeling of 'I' and express our devotion to Bhagavān.

## Ravindranath Ji

**Question:** What is kula dharma? How to protect it?

**Answer:** Every family has a lineage and follows a set of rules which is called kula dharma. We all have family deities whom we pray to everyday and especially on occasions within the family. When the family becomes mixed with other classes, the tradition would be lost as there would be none to teach the practice. The younger generation learns from the older generation. Women are the torch bearers of kula dharma which is proof of the existence of sanatana dharma even today.

## Anju Ji

**Question:** What is the takeaway from chapter 1?

**Answer:** Arjuna's dejection was a spark to ignite the dialogue between him and Sri Krishna and thus the birth of gita. In a yajna, the purohit would rub two sticks to light fire and then the yajna is performed. In the gita, the spark is likened to the attachment overcome in Arjuna and his dejection, the cause of teaching by Bhagavān.

Arjuna's despondency is not focussed on the self but the interest of others and hence is referred to as yog. He was at just a precarious point that he could cross over towards mukti with a little help. There were many wars, but Mahabharat war in particular is remembered even today because of the rendition of the gita by Bhagavān. Usually soldiers are inspired in war but never the outcome mentioned. For eg. soldiers were instructed to drop atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They were never told of its repercussions.

The news of the droppings and repercussions on the lives of the people in those areas made the soldiers lunatics. Arjuna was worried about the result of war. Similarly, if we desire to not become crazy, we should think of the repercussions of our actions. We should have clarity over our actions. Knowledge is the key to every action. Pondering over it will liberate us of our actions. Only such actions would result in the welfare of all. Otherwise, Arjuna would have just killed all his relatives and may be would have turned mad.

What we can learn from this chapter is to be like Arjuna. He put forth his distress in front of his friend Sri Krishna and other well wishers including his family. One should open out and seek advice when one is confused. Another takeaway is to learn to listen. Sri Krishna was a silent listener to Arjuna's outpourings. Whenever we are caught in dualities of dharma and are at a cross road, gītā shows us the way.

## Manjula Ji

**Question:** What book should I read to understand gita better?

**Answer:** Sadhak Sanjeevani is an excellent book.

**Question:** While praying various thoughts keep disturbing. Why?

**Answer:** One should practice meditation regularly. The gītā leads us to the path of yog. It teaches us how to sit, how to breathe, how to be aware of one's thoughts. We should learn the gītā and bring it to practice else we will remain ignorant. That is why Swamiji advices: 'Gītā pade, padayein, aur jeevan mein layein.'

Arjuna also had the same problem and he addressed this question.

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम्।

तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम्॥6.34॥

Bhagavān! Verily, the mind is fickle and turbulent, obstinate and strong, yea extremely difficult as the wind to control.

**Bhagavan replied:**

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलं।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते॥6.35॥

Śrī Krishna replied: Doubtless, O Mighty One, the mind is fickle and exceedingly difficult to restrain, but, O Son of Kunti, with practice and renunciation it can be done.

Alternatively, Bhagavān suggested in chapter 12 to perform actions and offer them to HIM without any expectation of results.

### **Padmini Ji**

**Question:** When two dharmas are at conflict, how to take the right decision?

**Answer:** Gita teaches us the way. Evaluate which dharma when followed would have more positive impact and tread the path of dharma.

### **Chitra Ji**

**Question:** Why is Sri Krishna referred to as Varshneya?

**Answer:** The various names of Arjuna and Sri Krishna used in the verses of the gita have deep meanings. Vrishni is the name of the lineage of Sri Krishna. Verse 41 deals with lineage and hence Sri Krishna's lineage is referred and he is addressed as Varshneya.

### **Swamy Ji**

**Question:** Is the present day caste system different from Kula?

**Answer:** Kula refers to family lineage and tradition. The caste system was created much later and was imposed on society more during the British rule. Earlier, the society worked based on the class order. The class was never defined as family lineage. One can be born a kshatriya but perform the duties of another order. eg. a doctor can be born in a kshatriya family but does the work of a shudra (providing service to society).

During covid times doctors served the patient and the speaker did not desire the visit of his friend who is a doctor. Social distancing was the norm. In earlier times also such calamity would have occurred and shudras being service providers would have been asked to maintain social distancing. Was it wrong or right? It was right for that short period of time considering the prevalence of infection.

Sri Krishna clearly states that the four classes of society are based on gunas (qualification) and karmas (experience). Sanjay in Mahabharata was born in a shudra family but because of his actions was classified as Brahman.

### **Bhushan Ji**

**Question:** Meaning of 'Dhartharashtra'?

**Answer:** It has two meanings.

- 1. It refers to those culprits who usurp the kingdom.
- 2. It refers to the sons of king Dhritarashtra.

Donation must be given to the deserving without discrimination.

**दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे।**

**देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम्॥17.20॥**

The gift which is given without thought of recompense, in the belief that it ought to be made, in a fit place, at an opportune time and to a deserving person - such a gift is Pure.

**om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṃ(ŷ)  
yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṃvāde arjunavishadayogo nāma  
prathamodhyāyaḥ**

Thus, in the Upaniṣad sung by the Lord, the Science of Brahma, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, ends the first chapter entitled "The Yoga of Dejection of Arjuna."

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**Jai Shri Krishna!**

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar - Creative Writing Department

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