



## ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

### Chapter 1: Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yoga

1/4 (Ślōka 1-13), Sunday, 28 December 2025

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YouTube Link: [https://youtu.be/z\\_ssWovxNsM](https://youtu.be/z_ssWovxNsM)

## The Battle Preparations and the Armies' Formation

The first chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā, *Arjuna Viṣāda Yoga (The Yoga of Arjuna's Dejection)*, sets the stage for the sacred dialogue between Bhagavān Krishna and Arjuna.

The discourse begins with the ceremonial lighting of the Dīpam (lamp) at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān, invoking divine grace and filling the gathering with devotion and reverence.

Bowing in Reverence to Our Guru, The Eternal Source of Wisdom

गुरु ब्रह्मा गुरु विष्णु, गुरु देवो महेश्वरा  
गुरु साक्षात् परब्रह्म, तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः

ॐ कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय हरये परमात्मने ॥  
प्रणतः क्लेशनाशाय गोविंदाय नमो नमः ॥

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं  
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्ये महाभारते  
अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीमष्टादशाध्यायिनीं  
अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्गीते भवद्वेषिणीम्

With deepest reverence, salutations were first offered at the holy feet of Param Pūjya Swāmī Govind Dev Giri Jī Mahārāj, and thereafter, respectful greetings were extended to all present Gītā sādhakas.

Under the compassionate guidance of Param Pūjya Swāmījī, when seekers join the Gītā Parivār, the study of the Bhagavad Gītā does not begin from the First Chapter. Instead, the journey consciously starts with the 12th, 15th, and 16th chapters. This often creates a natural question in the mind of a new seeker:

"Why does the study not begin from the very first chapter? Why do we start from the 12th, 15th, and 16th chapters?"

This question is important, sincere, and meaningful.

The 12th Chapter (Bhakti Yoga) and the 15th Chapter (Puruṣottama Yoga) are relatively small chapters, containing approximately 20–20 śloka each. These chapters are deeply devotional, accessible, and heart-touching. They immediately connect the seeker with Bhagavān, His nature, His qualities, and the path of loving devotion (bhakti). The 16th Chapter (Daivī-Āsurī Sampad Vibhāga Yoga) helps the seeker understand divine and demonic tendencies within human nature, offering clarity about values and inner discipline.

Thus, at the beginning itself, the seeker's heart is oriented towards bhakti, purity, and right discernment. The mind is prepared, softened, and aligned.

When seekers enter L3, the learning process becomes more systematic and deeper.

In the regular classes, the study begins from the earlier chapters, specifically: the First Chapter, Third Chapter, Fourth Chapter, Fifth Chapter, Sixth Chapter, Seventh Chapter

In these chapters, the focus is on correct śloka recitation, pronunciation, rhythm, and familiarity with the sacred text. On weekends, seekers gather on Zoom sessions for vivecana (detailed explanation and reflection) of the same chapters.

An important aspect of this process is continuity. When someone enters L3, they do not restart from the beginning arbitrarily. Instead, they continue from the chapter that is currently being taught in the ongoing L3 batch. This maintains discipline, flow, and collective sādhana.

Today marks a special moment, because the study now begins with the First Chapter, which many seekers naturally long to understand first.

The name of the First Chapter is: Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yogaḥ. This chapter reveals how the entire Bhagavad Gītā begins, not with philosophy, not with instructions, but with Arjuna's sorrow, confusion, and inner collapse.

It is from Arjuna's viṣāda (grief and despondency) that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes the nectar of the Gītā flow. In other words, the divine teaching of the Gītā arises because of human suffering. Without Arjuna's despair, the Gītāmṛta would not have been spoken.

Why Did Bhagavān Speak the Gītā?

This leads to a natural inquiry: What happened before Bhagavān spoke the Gītā? Why was this divine instruction necessary?

**Q: Where was the Gītā spoken, and to whom?**

Diya didi enthusiastically replied **Kurukṣetre**

The speaker affirmed that it was on the sacred land of Kurukṣetra, a dharmakṣetra, a field of righteousness, that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, out of compassion, spoke the Bhagavad Gītā to Arjuna, who stood overwhelmed by sorrow, moral conflict, and attachment.

Kurukṣetra was not an āśrama, not a forest retreat, and not a quiet hermitage. It was a yuddha-bhūmi, a raṇabhūmi, a battlefield. It was right in the midst of the battlefield that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa imparted the sublime knowledge of the Gītā. This itself carries a profound message: spiritual wisdom is not meant only for secluded spaces, but for life as it is, filled with struggle, duty, conflict, and responsibility.

At this point, the learners are gently encouraged to deepen their engagement with the Gītā through interactive means as well.

They are asked whether they are participating in the Olympiad conducted through the platform: [play.learngeeta.com](http://play.learngeeta.com)

This platform offers many quizzes related to the Bhagavad Gītā, and all students are encouraged to participate actively. Those who have not yet enrolled are requested to visit the website and explore it. Since the learners regularly attend vivecana sessions, they already possess substantial knowledge, and these quizzes become a joyful way to reinforce and apply that understanding.

The Mahābhārata was composed by Śrī Vedavyāsa. Due to its vast spiritual, ethical, and philosophical depth, it is revered as the Pañcama Veda — the Fifth Veda.

**Q: What are the names of the four Vedas?**

Aagashtya bhaiya correctly answered as ***Rgveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda***

These are the four canonical Vedas.

**Q: Which scripture is called the Fifth Veda?**

Aagashtya bhaiya replied: **Mahābhārata**

The flow of wisdom in the Sanātana tradition is then beautifully summarized:

- The essence of the Vedas lies in the Upaniṣads
- The essence of the Upaniṣads lies in the Bhagavad Gītā

Thus, the Bhagavad Gītā stands as a distilled form of the highest Vedāntic wisdom, presented through dialogue, lived experience, and practical guidance. It brings the profound truths of the Vedas and Upaniṣads directly into the context of human life, action, and inner struggle.

In this way, what was spoken by Bhagavān on a battlefield becomes timeless guidance for every seeker walking the path of dharma, karma, jñāna, and bhakti.

The Bhagavad Gītā contains 700 ślokas. While the Upaniṣads are composed in the form of mantras, these ślokas of the Gītā are also mantra-maya in nature. The reason is profound: they were sung by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.

Because they emerged directly from the divine lips of Bhagavān, the ślokas of the Gītā are not merely verses of philosophy or poetry. They carry the power, sanctity, and transformative potency of mantras.

Although the dialogue appears to be between Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the Gītā was not sung only for Arjuna. Arjuna was made the nimitta (instrument). Through him, Bhagavān addressed all of humanity, every seeker, every struggling soul, every individual caught in moral conflict and inner confusion.

**Q: Between whom was this war to be fought?**

Ayush bhaiya answered the war on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra was to take place between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas.

Yes, the great Kurukṣetra war was between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas. It was in this setting,

charged with duty, emotion, attachment, fear, and impending violence—that Arjuna stood, and it was here that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad Gītā.

After completing their thirteen years of exile, which included twelve years of vanavāsa and one year of ajñāta-vāsa (incognito living), the Pāṇḍavas returned to claim what was rightfully theirs.

When they approached Duryodhana and asked for the return of their kingdom, his response was one of absolute refusal. Duryodhana clearly declared that he would not return their kingdom. Not only that, he arrogantly stated that he would not give even land equal to the tip of a needle. According to him, if the Pāṇḍavas wanted anything, they would have to fight for it.

Thus, war became inevitable.

This was not going to be a small or ordinary conflict. It was to be a terrible and devastating war, one that would involve vast armies and lead to immense destruction. Many noble souls made sincere efforts to prevent the war. Several attempts were made to bring about peace, to somehow stop the conflict and persuade Duryodhana to accept a compromise and grant the Pāṇḍavas even five villages.

However, Duryodhana refused every proposal. He did not agree to peace under any circumstance.

With this, the war was firmly decided. What happened after this decision, and how events unfolded, is revealed in the First Chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā, which is Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yogaḥ.

## 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? Kurukṣetra, eager to fight, what did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do?

The Bhagavad Gītā contains a total of 700 ślokas. Among these 700, there is only one śloka spoken by Dhṛtarāṣṭra. The very first śloka of the Gītā begins with the words: Dhṛtarāṣṭra uvaca

This raises an important question: Who is Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and why does the Bhagavad Gītā begin with his words?

#### **Who Is Dhṛtarāṣṭra?**

Dhṛtarāṣṭra is the father of the Kauravas, including Duryodhana, the eldest among the hundred sons. He is the king who is blind from birth. Because of this blindness, he could not go to the battlefield of Kurukṣetra to witness the war.

The very name Dhṛtarāṣṭra is deeply symbolic:

- Dhṛta means “to hold tightly”
- Rāṣṭra means “kingdom” or “nation”

Thus, Dhṛtarāṣṭra signifies one who clings to the kingdom. He held on to a kingdom that rightfully belonged to the Pāṇḍavas. He should have returned their kingdom, but he did not. He retained it unjustly, driven by attachment to his own sons. With this background, the meaning of his question

becomes clearer.

### **Why Dhṛtarāṣṭra Was Not on the Battlefield?**

Because Dhṛtarāṣṭra was blind, he could not physically witness the war. Śrī Vedavyāsa, out of compassion, offered to grant him divya-dṛṣṭi—divine vision—so that he could see the entire war while sitting in his palace.

However, Dhṛtarāṣṭra refused this blessing. He reasoned that since he had been blind all his life and had never seen anything, why should he now witness such a massive and horrifying war in which countless warriors would be killed?

Instead, he made a request: If divine vision was to be granted, it should be given to Sañjaya.

### **Who Is Sañjaya?**

Sañjaya was Dhṛtarāṣṭra's charioteer and minister. Though born a sūta-putra, he possessed knowledge equal to that of a brāhmaṇa. He was also a disciple of Śrī Vedavyāsa.

Accepting Dhṛtarāṣṭra's request, Vedavyāsa granted divya-dṛṣṭi to Sañjaya.

### **What Is Divya-Dṛṣṭi?**

Divya-dṛṣṭi means the ability to see and hear events occurring at a distant place without physically being present there.

In modern terms, it can be compared to live telecast or CCTV surveillance. Just as a person sitting in one city can watch events happening elsewhere through a screen, Sañjaya could see and hear everything happening on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra while seated in the royal palace.

There was no technology, no screen, no device. Through divine grace alone, the entire battlefield appeared vividly before Sañjaya—exactly like a live transmission.

Now, with Sañjaya endowed with divya-dṛṣṭi, Dhṛtarāṣṭra begins the Bhagavad Gītā by asking a question.

**Dharmakṣetre Kurukṣetre**, Kurukṣetra is called a dharmakṣetra, a sacred and righteous field. It is not merely a battlefield; it is a holy land associated with dharma.

**Samavetāḥ yuyutsavaḥ**, Samavetāḥ means “those who have assembled together. Yuyutsavaḥ means “those who desire to fight.” Only those with the intention to fight had gathered on the battlefield.

**Māmakāḥ Pāṇḍavās ca eva**, Here lies the deep psychology of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

He says “my sons” (māmakāḥ) and “the sons of Pāṇḍu” (Pāṇḍavāḥ). Though the Pāṇḍavas were also his own nephews, and in truth, equally Kauravas, he clearly separates them. This reveals his intense putra-moha, attachment to his own children.

**Kim akurvata, Sañjaya?** “What did they do, O Sañjaya?”

Notice the verb akurvata, it is in the past tense. Dhṛtarāṣṭra is anxious and impatient. He wants to know immediately what actions have already taken place.

### **The Root Cause of the Mahābhārata War**

According to Swāmījī, the root cause of the Mahābhārata war is Dhṛtarāṣṭra himself.

Why?

- If Dhṛtarāṣṭra had corrected Duryodhana in time
- If he had prevented the injustice of sending the Pāṇḍavas into exile
- If he had firmly intervened during Draupadī's vastrāharaṇa
- If he had guided his sons toward dharma instead of blindly supporting them, then the war might never have happened.

But he did not act.

Why did he not act? Because of putra-moha, blind attachment to his children. He wanted only his sons to win, even if they were wrong.

Love for one's children is natural and necessary. But leading children toward adharma due to attachment is destructive. This is the silent warning contained in Dhṛtarāṣṭra's very first question.

Even in his speech, he does not say, "What are all our children doing?" He says, "my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu."

This division itself reveals the seed of conflict.

### **What Happens Next?**

Thus, Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks Sañjaya what his sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu are doing on the sacred battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

From the next śloka onward, Sañjaya begins his answer. Through his divine vision, he will describe what he sees, leading step by step to Arjuna's collapse, and from that collapse, to the divine teaching of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This is how the Bhagavad Gītā begins, not with instruction, but with blind attachment questioning the unfolding of destiny.

## **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 :

Sanjaya now begins answering the question asked by King Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Bhagavān has not yet spoken; this is still the narrative frame where Sanjaya, endowed with divine vision by the grace of Bhagavān Vedavyāsa, describes the events unfolding on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra exactly as they occur. What follows is not imagination or interpretation, but direct witnessing.

Sanjaya states that Duryodhana first sees the army of the Pāṇḍavas. The word **dr̥ṣṭvā** means "having seen," and what he sees is **pāṇḍavānīkaṃ**, the military force of the Pāṇḍavas. Notably, his attention is immediately drawn to the opposing army rather than his own, revealing an inner unease. The army he observes is described as vyūḍhaṃ, meaning carefully arranged in a strategic battle formation (vyūha). This indicates discipline, preparation, leadership, and confidence. It is not a scattered

gathering but an organised, purposeful force, similar to how soldiers stand in precise formations during a ceremonial Republic day parade, each unit in place, each warrior alert and ready.

The moment Duryodhana sees this (*tadā*, at that very moment), his reaction is triggered. Without delay, he approaches the Ācārya. The phrase *ācāryam upasaṅgamyā* tells us that he goes directly to Droṇācārya, the revered teacher of both the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas. This choice is significant. Droṇācārya knows the strength, skill, and training of the Pāṇḍavas intimately. Duryodhana's approach reflects not confidence but anxiety, an unspoken fear that the Ācārya's heart may still lean towards his former and beloved students.

Sanjaya refers to Duryodhana as *rājā*, king. Though, in the formal sense, Dhṛtarāṣṭra still sits on the throne and Duryodhana is technically the *yuvārāja*, this word is not accidental. In reality, all authority, decisions, and control rest with Duryodhana. He commands the army, directs policy, and acts as the true ruler. In this sense, he functions fully as the king. At the same time, Sanjaya's usage subtly mirrors the truth back to Dhṛtarāṣṭra: power has already passed to his son, along with its responsibility and consequences.

Finally, Sanjaya says ***vacanam abravīt***, Duryodhana spoke. However, the content of his words is deliberately withheld in this verse. The scene is set, the characters are positioned, and the psychological tension is established. What Duryodhana says, and what it reveals about his inner state, will be unfolded in the next śloka.

Thus, even before the war begins, the Gītā reveals a deeper battle, between composure born of dharma and agitation born of adharma. The Pāṇḍavas stand silently in disciplined readiness, while Duryodhana, upon merely seeing them, is compelled to seek reassurance. The war has not yet started, but its outcome has already begun to take shape in the mind.

### 1.3

#### **paśyaitāṃ(m) pāṇḍuputrāṅām, ācārya mahatīṃ(ñ) camūm, vyūḍhāṃ(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.

Having approached Droṇācārya, Duryodhana now begins to speak. His very first word, *paśya*, "behold" or "look", is not casual. It is an alerting call. He is deliberately drawing the Ācārya's attention towards the Pāṇḍava army, urging him to notice something significant. This itself reveals Duryodhana's inner state: instead of calm assurance, there is urgency.

He refers to the army as ***pāṇḍu-putrāṅām camūm***, the army of the sons of Pāṇḍu, and describes it as *mahatī*, very large, vast, formidable. The word *camū* means an organised military force, not merely a gathering of soldiers. By using *mahatī*, Duryodhana emphasises its imposing nature. This emphasis is striking because, in terms of numbers, the Kauravas actually possess the larger army, eleven *akṣauhiṇīs*, whereas the Pāṇḍavas have only seven. Therefore, Duryodhana's description cannot be taken merely at face value.

The army is further described as *vyūḍhā*, arranged in a precise and intelligent battle formation. This formation has been designed by Drupada-putra, the son of King Drupada, namely Dhṛṣṭadyumna. Duryodhana deliberately highlights this fact and adds a pointed phrase: ***tava śiṣyeṇa dhīmatā***, "by your own intelligent disciple."

This is not an innocent statement. Dṛṣṭadyumna was indeed trained in military science under Droṇācārya, just like the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas. By calling him dhīmat (intelligent), Duryodhana acknowledges his strategic brilliance. At the same time, he subtly reminds Droṇācārya that the very skills now strengthening the enemy have come from the Ācārya himself.

The mention of Drupada is also deliberate and layered with meaning. King Drupada was Droṇācārya's childhood friend, and later his sworn enemy. A deep personal history lies here. Humiliated earlier by Droṇa, Drupada had performed a sacrificial ritual seeking a son destined to kill Droṇācārya. From that sacrificial fire was born Dṛṣṭadyumna, whose very purpose, as per destiny, was the death of Droṇācārya. Along with him were born Draupadī and Śikhaṇḍī, three children central to the destruction of the Kaurava cause.

By bringing all this into a single sentence, Duryodhana is effectively reminding Droṇācārya of unresolved past enmities, karmic destinies, and personal dangers. It is psychological pressure, not merely battlefield observation.

Commentators of the Bhagavad Gītā observe that beneath these words lies fear. Duryodhana is not a righteous warrior. His life has been marked by deceit, manipulation, and adharma. Such a person, even when outwardly powerful, is inwardly insecure. Standing on the battlefield, confronted with a disciplined, dharma-aligned force, that insecurity surfaces.

At the same time, Duryodhana's words serve another purpose: provocation and alertness. Droṇācārya's affection for the Pāṇḍavas is well known. Though bound to fight for Hastināpura due to obligation and livelihood, his heart still carries warmth towards them. Duryodhana therefore seeks to awaken Droṇācārya's warrior instinct, to harden his resolve, and to ensure that no softness remains during combat.

This is similar to how, before a battle, soldiers are stirred with slogans and calls, meant to heighten energy, focus, and aggression. Just as modern armies shout rallying cries before combat, Duryodhana here is verbally beating the war drum, attempting to ignite intensity in his commander.

The use of mahatī camū can thus be understood in multiple ways. It may reflect genuine fear, exaggeration born of anxiety, or even subtle sarcasm, "Look how formidable they appear", despite numerical inferiority. Either way, the words betray Duryodhana's unsettled mind.

The verse ends without listing the warriors of that army. That detailed enumeration will follow in the next śloka. For now, the Gītā reveals something far more important than numbers, the inner psychology of a leader standing on the edge of a righteous war, already shaken before the first arrow is released.

#### 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) Drupada;

#### 1.5, 1.6

**dhṛṣṭaketuścekitānaḥ(kh), kāśirājaśca vīryavān, purujitkuntibhojaśca,  
śaibyaśca narapuṅgavaḥ. 1.5  
yudhāmanyuśca vikrānta, uttamaujāśca vīryavān,  
saubhadro draupadeyāśca, sarva eva mahārathāḥ. 1.6**

Dhṛṣṭaketu, Cekitāna and the valiant King of Kāśī, and Purujit, Kuntibhoja, and Śaibya, the best of men, and mighty Yudhāmanyu, and valiant Uttamaujā, Abhimanyu, the son of Subhadrā, and the five sons of Draupadī - all of them Mahārathīs (warrior chiefs).

Duryodhana continues speaking to Droṇācārya and now says “atra”, meaning “here”, in this Pāṇḍava army itself. He is deliberately drawing the Ācārya’s attention inward, asking him not to underestimate what stands before them. He describes the warriors as śūrāḥ, brave and fearless, and maheṣvāsāḥ, those who wield mighty bows. This indicates extraordinary martial skill. These are not ordinary fighters; they are expert archers capable of tremendous force in battle.

Duryodhana then makes a very revealing statement: “bhīma–arjuna–samāḥ yudhi”, there are many warriors here who are equal in battle to Bhīma and Arjuna. He does not name all the Pāṇḍavas; he names only Bhīma and Arjuna. This is psychologically significant. Duryodhana has been defeated and humiliated many times by Bhīma, and that fear still lingers deep within him. Arjuna, on the other hand, represents unmatched skill, divine association, and precision. By saying that many warriors are equal to them, Duryodhana unconsciously magnifies the threat before him.

He then names specific warriors, starting with Yuyudhāna, better known as Sātyaki. At this point, a question is naturally raised during the teaching:

**Q: Who was Sātyaki, and which side did the Nārāyaṇī Sena fight on?**

Agasthya bhāya answered enthusiastically: “Arjuna chose Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Duryodhana chose Bhagavān’s Nārāyaṇī Sena.”

The response is correct. Before the war, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave Arjuna and Duryodhana a choice, one could choose HIM, unarmed, while the other could choose HIS Nārāyaṇī Sena, a full akṣauhiṇī army. Arjuna chose Bhagavān Himself, accepting HIM as his charioteer, without weapons. Duryodhana chose the massive army. However, Sātyaki, who was the commander of that Nārāyaṇī Sena, refused to fight on the Kaurava side and instead stood with the Pāṇḍavas. This itself shows that dharma attracts strength beyond numbers.

Next, Duryodhana names Virāṭa, the king of Matsya-deśa. Virāṭa had sheltered the Pāṇḍavas during their year of incognito exile and later became their ally. He is an experienced ruler and a capable warrior.

Then comes Drupada, king of Pāñcāla. Drupada has already been mentioned earlier, but his name is repeated deliberately. Drupada was once Droṇācārya’s childhood friend and later his sworn enemy. From Drupada’s sacrificial fire were born Dṛṣṭadyumna, destined to kill Droṇācārya, along with Draupadī and Śikhaṇḍī. By naming Drupada here, Duryodhana subtly presses upon Droṇācārya’s unresolved past and karmic tension.

All these warriors are called mahārathāḥ. A mahāratha is one who can fight ten thousand archers alone. This is the highest classification of warrior, indicating supreme courage, skill, and endurance.

Thus, while Duryodhana outwardly appears to be briefing his commander, inwardly he is revealing

fear, insecurity, and the need to overemphasise the enemy's strength. Though the Kauravas possess a larger army numerically, his mind is unsettled. The Gītā, therefore, is already showing us that adharma never brings inner confidence, even when supported by power and numbers.

In the next verses, Duryodhana will continue listing warriors, both on the Pāṇḍava side and his own, further exposing the contrast between dharma-rooted steadiness and adharma-born anxiety.

Duryodhana continues listing the warriors on the Pāṇḍava side, and here he names several powerful allies, all of whom are described as vīryavān, full of strength, courage, and martial energy. This itself shows that he is consciously building a picture of how formidable the opposing side is.

First, he mentions Dhṛṣṭaketu. Dhṛṣṭaketu is known as the son of Śísupāla, a powerful king who bore deep enmity towards Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Despite his father's hostility, Dhṛṣṭaketu stands firmly with the Pāṇḍavas, showing that lineage does not always determine allegiance.

Next comes Cekitāna, another valiant warrior, followed by Kāśirāja, the king of Kāśī, who is explicitly called vīryavān, a mighty and courageous fighter. Each name adds to the weight of the Pāṇḍava alliance.

Then Duryodhana names Purujit and Kuntibhoja. At this point, it is explained to the listeners that both Purujit and Kuntibhoja are maternal relatives of the Pāṇḍavas. Kuntī Māta, the mother of the Pāṇḍavas, belonged to this lineage, and these kings were closely connected to her family. Their presence shows that the Pāṇḍavas are supported not only by friends but also by strong family alliances.

After this comes Śaibya, who is described as narapuṅgavaḥ—the best among men. This title is not used lightly. It indicates excellence not just in strength, but also in character and leadership.

Duryodhana then moves to the next verse and continues naming warriors. He mentions Yudhāmanyu, who is called vikrānta, one who is exceptionally bold and powerful in combat. Along with him comes Uttamaujā, another warrior described as vīryavān, again emphasising heroic strength.

Then comes Saubhadra, which refers to Abhimanyu, the son of Subhadrā. At this point, clarification is given in the class: Subhadrā is Arjuna's wife and the sister of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Abhimanyu is her son, not her husband. Abhimanyu, though very young, is already recognised as a fearless and highly skilled warrior, destined for great sacrifice.

Next, Duryodhana names the Draupadeyāḥ, the five sons born to Draupadī from the five Pāṇḍavas. Each Pāṇḍava, Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva—had a son through Draupadī, and all five are present on the battlefield, standing with their fathers.

Finally, Duryodhana concludes this list with a powerful collective statement: **“sarva eva mahārathāḥ”** all of them, without exception, are Mahārathas.

Here, an important grammatical and conceptual point is highlighted. Earlier, in verse 1.4, the word mahārathaḥ appears in the singular, referring to individual warriors. But here, in verse 1.6, “mahārathāḥ” is plural and elongated, emphasising that every single warrior named so far belongs to the highest category of fighters.

A Mahāratha is one who can single-handedly fight ten thousand bowmen at once. This means that every name Duryodhana has mentioned, without exception, represents extraordinary military power.

Thus, by verses 1.5 and 1.6, Duryodhana has already listed a formidable array of heroes on the Pāṇḍava side. Outwardly, he appears to be briefing Droṇācārya. Inwardly, however, he is revealing his anxiety. He keeps stressing strength, bravery, and numbers, even though his own side is numerically superior.

The Gītā subtly shows us here that adharma produces fear, while dharma produces quiet strength. Before the war even begins, Duryodhana's words betray the unease in his heart.

After naming all these warriors on the Pāṇḍava side, Duryodhana will now turn his attention to his own army and begin listing the warriors fighting for him.

## 1.7

### **asmākam(n) tu viśiṣṭā ye, tānnibodha dvijottama, nāyakā mama sainyasya, sañjñārtham(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 this verse, Duryodhana speaks directly to Droṇācārya, beginning with the respectful salutation "Dvijottama", best among the twice-born.

Dvija means "twice-born." The first birth is biological, like all humans. The second birth occurs when one takes up the Brahminical studies, learning the Vedas, scriptures, and performing initiation (Upanayana).

Dvijottama therefore, indicates the highest among the Brahmins, one who excels in knowledge, discipline, and spiritual merit.

In this context, Droṇācārya is being addressed as Dvijottama because he is both the spiritual and martial teacher of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas.

Duryodhana then declares: "**Asmākam tu viṣaya tāt bodhamāmi**", "Now I shall make you aware of the notable warriors on our side."

- **Asmākam**: "on our side" (the Kaurava army)
- **Viṣaya tāt**: "the important, distinguished subjects/warriors"
- **Bodhamāmi**: "I am informing you"

Here, Duryodhana's tone has two purposes:

- Informing Droṇācārya of the chiefs in the army for his own observation.
- Demonstrating the strength of his forces, even though he himself feels a subtle fear of the Pāṇḍava army.

"Even though Droṇācārya already knows who is in the army, Duryodhana wants to personally verify and reassure himself that his side is strong. This is why he lists the commanders and notable warriors, emphasizing their competence."

The phrase "nāyakā mama sainyasaṁarthā tānvīte" is also important:

- **Nāyakāḥ**: leaders or chiefs
- **Sainya-saṁarthāḥ**: competent in the art of war, capable of commanding troops

- **Tānvīte**: enumerated/listed

So, Duryodhana is telling Droṇācārya that he will now enumerate all the competent commanders of the Kaurava army, giving full clarity about who stands ready for battle.

This verse sets the stage for the next several śloka, where Duryodhana will begin listing the names of his own warriors and commanders, just as he did for the Pāṇḍavas.

## 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 now begins to enumerate the key warriors on his own side, starting with the greatest among them. He says "Bhavān", meaning you, referring respectfully to Droṇācārya, his commander.

- **Bhīṣma** — also called Pitāmaha, the grandfather and supreme protector of the Kaurava side. His courage, wisdom, and experience are unmatched.
- **Karṇa** — Duryodhana's close friend, and a central figure in the Kaurava army.

#### **Karṇa's unique background and relation to the Pāṇḍavas:**

Karṇa was born to Kuntī before her marriage, through a boon granted by Bhagavān Sūrya. She had received a mantra that allowed her to bear a child by invoking a deity. When she tested it, Karṇa was born from Sūrya.

Since Karṇa was born before her marriage, Kuntī placed him in a box in the river, and he was found and raised by a charioteer, which is why he is called a Sūta-putra.

Karṇa and the Pāṇḍavas were therefore biological brothers, though none of them knew this at the time. Despite this, Karṇa remained Duryodhana's loyal friend and key ally.

Next, Duryodhana mentions Kṛpa (Kṛpācārya): the teacher who trained both the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas in warfare. Kṛpācārya is referred to here with his other name, Samitinjaya, meaning the one victorious in battle.

Then comes Aśvatthāmā, the son of Droṇācārya. Aśvatthāmā is a young but formidable warrior, trained from childhood in advanced warfare.

Duryodhana also names Vikarna, one of the Kaurava brothers, and Saumadatta (Bhūriśrava), son of Somadatta, both of whom are considered brave and competent warriors.

## 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.

Duryodhana explains that many brave warriors have joined his side, fully equipped with various weapons and ready to fight. These warriors have renounced their own lives for the battle, showing great courage and skill. He emphasizes that all of them are experts in warfare, highly capable with all kinds of weapons, and are present to support his army.

**Q: If you wanted to get many classmates on your side for a group task, what tricks would you use?**

Saadhya didi answered one way is to praise and appreciate people, give small gifts or encouragement, and show respect.

Similarly, Duryodhana had used friendship, support, and favors to bring many skilled warriors to his side. He is now informing Droṇācārya of these loyal and expert warriors, highlighting the strength and readiness of his army.

### 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.

Duryodhana comments on the strength of the armies on both sides. He says that the Kaurava army, protected by Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, is “**aparyāptam**”, insufficient. Even though they have a large number of soldiers, their strength alone may not guarantee victory because their army is reliant on Bhīṣma.

On the other hand, the Pāṇḍava army, protected by Bhīma, is “**paryāptam**”, sufficient. Their army is well-organized and capable, suggesting that even with fewer soldiers, they can effectively face the Kaurava forces.

To understand the scale:

- The Kauravas had 11 akṣohīṇīs and the Pāṇḍavas had 7 akṣohīṇīs, making a total of 18 akṣohīṇīs in the battlefield.
- One akṣohīṇī roughly includes: 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 65,610 cavalry, and 193,500 foot soldiers, totaling around 287,000 warriors per akṣohīṇī.
- Multiply this by the number of akṣohīṇīs, and we can imagine the immense scale of the Mahābhārata battlefield.

Thus, when Duryodhana says “aparyāptam” for his army and “paryāptam” for the Pāṇḍavas, he is making two points:

- Even a large army may not be enough if not fully reliable.
- The Pāṇḍavas’ army, though smaller, is sufficiently strong under capable leadership to challenge the Kauravas.

This shows both the quantitative and qualitative assessment of the armies in the battlefield.

### 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 explains that although his army is considered “aparyāptam” (insufficient), it is protected by Bhīṣma Pitāmaha, the supreme commander. He informs all warriors that they must remain alert in their respective battle formations (vyūhakāra) and protect Bhīṣma at all costs.

Bhīṣma, being extremely strong and experienced, is not only the grandfather of the Kauravas but also their most formidable warrior. Observing Duryodhana’s fear and anxiety, Bhīṣma reassures the troops, inspiring confidence and maintaining order among them. He gives clear instructions to stand firm in their positions and safeguard him as the battle is about to begin.

This shows that even if the army seems insufficient, proper leadership and coordination under a powerful commander like Bhīṣma can stabilize the forces and prepare them for the imminent war.

### **1.12**

## **tasya sañjanayanharṣaṃ(ñ), kuruvṛddhaḥ(ph) pitāmahaḥ, siṃhanādaṃ(ṽ) vinadyocaiḥ(ś), śaṅkhaṃ(n) dadhmau pratāpavān.1.12**

The grand old man of the Kaurava race, their glorious grand-patriarch Bhīṣma, cheering up Duryodhana, roared terribly like a lion and blew his conch.

To inspire and encourage Duryodhana, Bhīṣma Pitāmaha performed a grand display of valor. Being the senior of the Kuru dynasty, he blew his conch with tremendous force and energy. The sound of his conch was compared to the roar of a lion, loud and powerful, signaling the commencement of battle.

The other warriors, hearing Bhīṣma’s mighty conch, responded by blowing their own conches in unison, creating an atmosphere charged with courage, strength, and readiness. This act both pleased Duryodhana and motivated the Kaurava forces to prepare for the impending war.

### **1.13**

## **tataḥ(ś) śaṅkhāśca bheryaśca, paṇavānakagomukhāḥ, sahasaivābhyahanyanta, sa śabdastumulo'bhavat. 1.13**

Then conches, kettledrums, tabors, drums and trumpets blared forth all at once and the noise was tumultuous.

After Bhīṣma Pitāmaha blew his mighty conch, the other warriors followed suit. Conches, drums (mridangas), and other war instruments were sounded simultaneously, creating a thunderous and fearsome noise across the battlefield. Each warrior used the instrument at hand, amplifying the atmosphere of courage, energy, and readiness for war.

This vivid scene is described in the first 13 ślokas of the Bhagavad Gītā, where Sanjaya replies to Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s question about the battlefield. The narrative sets the stage for the Pāṇḍava army’s response, which will be explored next.

The discourse concludes with reverence, offering all these teachings at the feet of Bhagavān.

## **Om Śrī Kṛṣṇapraṇamastu. Jai Śrī Kṛṣṇa!**

The discourse concluded with a prārthanā (prayer) offered at the padakamala (lotus feet) of Śrī Hari, followed by the recitation of the **Hanumān Chalisa**.

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