|| ŚRĪ HARI ||
vasudevasutaṁ devaṁ kaṁsacāṇūramardanam
devakī paramānandaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ vande jagadgurum

॥ गीता पढ़ें, पढ़ायें, जीवन में लायें ॥

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 1: Arjuna-Viṣāda-Yoga

4/4 (Ślōka 37-47), Saturday, 17 January 2026

Interpreter: GĪTĀ VIŚĀRAD ŚRĪ SRINIVAS WARNEKAR JI

YouTube Link: https://youtu.be/9Z-7_8WithE

The Battlefield Within: Arjuna's Descent from Valor into Viṣāda!

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

The session started with prayers to Bhagavān Śrī Krishna followed by the lighting of the auspicious lamp so that we are guided towards the path of Dharma, with the blessings of the Paramātmā, our Guru and the light of knowledge.

gururbrahmā gururviṣṇuḥ gururdevo maheśvaraḥ.
guruḥ sākṣāt paraBrahmā tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ.

Guru Brahmā, the Creator, Guru Vishnu, the Preserver, Guru Devo Maheshwarah (Śiva), the Destroyer, are the Guru Sakshat ParaBrahmā, the Supreme Being or Almighty. Guru is the embodiment of Para Brahma and to HIM I bow.

kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya haraye paramātmane.
praṇataḥ kleśanāśāya govindāya namo namaḥ.

Obeisance to Krishna, Vaasudeva, Hari the Paramātmā, Govinda, we bow our heads to you for the destruction of all our grief.

Namami Sadguru Shantam Satchidananda Vigram,
PurnaBrahmāparanandamisham Alandivallabham.
ratnākarādhautapadāṃ himālayakirīṭinīm,
brahmarājarṣiraratnāḍhyāṃ vande bhāratamātaram.

One who is washed by ocean, one who wears the Himalayas as her crown, rich in abundance with gems of Brahmārshies and kingly sages, salutations to our Bharat Mata (mother).

oṃ pārthāya pratibodhitāṃ bhagavatā nārāyaṇena svayaṃ,
vyāsena grathitāṃ purāṇamuninā madhye mahābhārate.

advaitāmṛtavarṣiṇīṃ bhagavatīmaṣṭādaśādhyāyinīṃ,
amba tvāmanusandadhāmi bhagavadgīte bhavadveṣiṇīm

O Bhagavad-gītā, you have been told to Arjuna, the son of Prtha by the Bhagavān Narayana Himself and afterwards you were included within the Mahabharata by the ancient sage Vyasa. Your eighteen divine chapters are like a shower of the immortal nectar of wisdom of the Absolute. O mother, destroyer of man's rebirth into the darkness of this mortal world, upon you I meditate.

namo'stu te vyāsa viśālabuddhe,
phullāravindāyātapatranetre.
yena tvayā bhāratatailapūrṇaḥ,
prajvalito jñānamayaḥ pradīpaḥ.

I bow to you, Vyasadeva, for your wide and profound understanding. With gorgeous eyes (not the physical but the Third Eye) like the petals of a fully blossomed lotus (Stories of Śrīmad Bhagavatam). You have lit the lamp of wisdom with the oil called Bharatham.

The discourse thus began with seeking the blessings of our Guru, Param Pujya Śrī Acharya Govind Dev Giriji Maharaj, and a hearty greeting to all the Gītā Sadhaks present at the session.

This was the fourth and final interpretation session of the 1st chapter of Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, where we come to know the background and the circumstances under which Bhagavadgītā was narrated to Arjuna by Bhagavān Śrī Krishna.

On the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Arjuna requested Bhagavān Śrī Krishna to take the chariot to the middle of the battlefield and keep it there so that he could view those who had come to support Duryodhana and fight against him and the Pāṇḍavas.

As soon as Arjuna saw the opponents, the Kaurava army, his state of mind changed. He said to Śrī Krishna that his limbs were trembling, his body was shaking, and he could not even hold his favorite Gandiva bow properly.

How did Arjuna, a great warrior, fall into such a state of mind in an instant?

In reality, Arjuna, despite being a brave and fearless warrior, had a very tender heart. Sant Dnyaneshwar Ji Maharaj described Arjuna's state through a beautiful metaphor. He said, just as a noble woman cannot tolerate another woman in her house, similarly, as soon as compassion arose within Arjuna, his valor diminished.

Arjuna, after gaining his composure a little tells Śrī Krishna that he felt the outcome of the battle was going to be contrary to what he expected.

He expressed his predicament saying, "I see all kinds of inauspicious omens. What will we do with this kingdom that has been gained at the cost of losing family and friends? These are all my teachers, like fathers to me, my friends, companions, and relatives. I do not want to fight against them, nor do I want to kill them. Even if I have to die myself, I will not want to kill anyone of them."

This situation is like a judge finding it easy to punish a stranger, but extremely difficult to punish someone close to him. Attachment to loved ones is very difficult to break through.

Sant Dnyaneshwar Ji Maharaj says:

जैसा भ्रमर भेदी कोडें । भलतैसें काष्ठ कोरडें ।
परि कळिकेमाजीं सापडें । कोवळियें ॥

He illustrates Arjuna’s situation and attachment with the metaphor of a bee which is otherwise capable to boring a hole on the hard wood, forgets the impending closure of the lotus flower at sunset, when engrossed in gathering nectar from a it, ultimately choosing to remain inside and perish. The bee can easily cut through the lotus petals by being captivated by its beauty cannot bring itself to harm them. Similarly, Arjuna, due to his affection and compassion, has become distracted from his duty as a warrior to fight in the battle.

Arjuna asks what joy could possibly be gained by killing the sons of Dhritarashtra. He explains that although they are aggressors, who usurp others’ wealth, look upon others’ wives with lust, burn down homes, and attempt to kill people through poisoning, killing them would only bring him sin. He declares to Bhagavān Śrī Krishna his inability to kill such people.

Here, Arjuna's dilemma is extremely profound. His intellect knows that the Kauravas are criminals, but his heart cannot accept the fact due to his attachment to them. This is the initial crisis of the Bhagavadgītā, where duty and compassion clash.

1.37

tasmānnārhā vayaṃ(m) hantuṃ(n), dhārtarāṣṭrānsvabāndhavān, svajanaṃ(m) hi kathaṃ(m) hatvā, sukhinaḥ(s) syāma mādhava.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?

Addressing Śrī Krishna as Mādhava, Arjuna says that it is not right for him to kill the sons of Dhritarashtra or those fighting on their side, as they are his own family and friends. He justifies that even though they are wicked, they are still his kinsmen, and it is not befitting to kill one’s own family. He questions how anyone can attain happiness after annihilating their own people.

If we put ourselves in Arjuna's shoes and consider these words, his thinking seems appropriate and logical. His heart is filled with compassion; he is thinking not with violence, but with humanity. Therefore, Arjuna's argument seems correct to us when thought through this angle.

1.38

yadyapyete na paśyanti, lobhopahatacetasaḥ, kulakṣayakṛtaṃ(n) doṣaṃ(m), mitradrohe ca pātakam.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 continues his justification by saying that although these people are unable to see that greed has taken root in their hearts, their intellect has been clouded by this greed. Because of this greed, they are unable to understand the adverse consequences of destroying their own people. They are incapable of comprehending the sins they will incur by annihilating their own kin and kith. Their judgment has truly been compromised.

We must try to understand how Arjuna reached this state of mind in the context of what was unfolding in the Mahabharata. All this is actually the result of Dhritarashtra's political maneuvering. Before the signs of war became evident, Dhritarashtra had sent messengers to the Pāṇḍavas, conveying that since they were virtuous and wise, they should not wage war, urging them to consider the immense destruction that would

result from the war.

History bears witness that virtuous people are always persuaded in this manner. "How can you do this? This conduct does not befit virtuous people." By saying such things, they are diverted from their duty.

In reality, four of the Pāṇḍava brothers did not want war; only Sahadeva believed that war was inevitable. Virtuous people are kept away from politics by being told that politics is the work of the wicked, and that virtuous people should stay away from it.

This very idea was gradually instilled in Arjuna's mind, and he wavered from his dharma and duty as a warrior.

1.39

kathaṃ(n) na jñeyamasmābhiḥ(ph), pāpādasmānnivartitum,
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 says that he was unable to understand why everyone was unable to perceive the sin that will arise from the destruction and annihilation of the family and friends.

While reading these lines, we also feel that what Arjuna is saying is correct. If the wrong is understood first, then understanding the right becomes easier.

Arjuna's statement is not totally false. His feelings and compassion are not wrong. However, the time and circumstances in which he is thinking this is wrong. If a great warrior standing on the battlefield harbors such attachment and fear, it cannot be considered appropriate. At that time, thinking in this way becomes a cause of unrighteousness for both him and society.

Therefore, Bhagavān Śrī Krishna's message to Arjuna was clear. HE says, “You will incur sin is an illusion. Becoming free from this illusion is true righteousness.”

1.40

kulakṣaye praṇaśyanti, kuladharmāḥ(s) sanātanāḥ,
dharme naṣṭe kulaṃ(ṅ) 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.

Every clan or lineage follows a set for traditions and customs. All rituals are therefore carried forward from one generation to another. This is referred to as kula dharma. Such traditions are followed for the welfare of the clan.

That which has been continuing since time immemorial will be destroyed. When a lineage is destroyed, the dharma (righteousness/moral order) associated with it is also destroyed. With the destruction of Dharma, the downfall of the entire lineage becomes inevitable, and in its place, Adhama or unrighteousness begins to spread. Dharma is that which is upheld, which keeps life balanced through adherence to principles and rules. It is because of Dharma that the people are sustained and society remains stable. If the observance

of principles and rules is abandoned, unrighteousness spreads, and society begins to decline

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.

When Dharma or righteousness declines, the women of the family become corrupted. In war, mostly young men are killed, and their wives become widows at a young age. Such young widows are then corrupted by the wicked and depraved elements of society. When the men of the family are destroyed, the family's traditions and values also begin to break down, as a result of which women become insecure and the social order collapses. A woman entering a home through marriage is natural, but men and women living together without proper social norms is a perversion. When this perversion increases, the entire culture becomes corrupted. This is what leads to the creation of mixed castes.

According to the scriptures, the system of four varnas (social classes) in society is based on the inherent qualities of human beings. Due to the influence of the three gunas—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas—the nature of each individual is different. This has been mentioned in Chapter – 4 of Bhagavadgītā.

Some children are interested in games and sports, some excel in studies, some are skilled in business, some are proficient in art, and some are adept at manual labor. Just as the lineage of even domesticated animals is carefully maintained, so too is the importance of lineage and tradition in human society.

Arjuna asks, when mixed castes are created, how will such offspring follow their family traditions, rituals, religion, and customs? When it is not even known who their parents are, how can family traditions and social norms be preserved?

1.42

saṅkaro narakāyaiva, kulaghnānāṃ(ṅ) kulasya ca,
patanti pitaro hyeṣāṃ(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 continues to say that the mixing of castes becomes a cause of leading humanity towards hell. It is not limited merely to the personal downfall of an individual but also opens the path of destruction for those who bring about the ruin of their lineage. When a lineage is destroyed, all its generations descend into degradation, and the entire family, as it were, falls into hell.

In such a state, no one remains to perform ancestral rites, such as offering oblations to the ancestors and other rituals. The memory of the ancestors, the duties towards them, and the traditions all cease to exist.

As a result of all these flaws, the eternal and timeless Dharma (righteousness) also gradually begins to disappear, and society, severed from its roots, becomes directionless.

1.43

doṣairetaiḥ(kh) kulaghnānāṃ(v̊), varṇasaṅkarakārakaiḥ, utsādyante jātidharmāḥ(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.

Arjuna’s confused state of mind leads him to say that those who destroy their lineage due to all the flaws that he has talked about, cause the destruction of culture, tradition, caste, and religion leading to everything being lost.

Such serious flaws arise only when there is intermingling of castes. When caste intermingling increases, social norms begin to break down, family traditions are destroyed, and the culture that guides life also begins to disappear.

What will be the future of those whose family traditions are destroyed? They are neither able to fulfill their duties towards their ancestors nor understand their responsibilities towards society. Such people become directionless, their lives become meaningless, and society begins to move towards unrighteousness. Due to all these flaws, those who destroy their lineage cause the destruction of culture, tradition, caste, and religion—everything is lost.

1.44

utsannakuladharmāṇāṃ(m), manuṣyāṇāṃ(ñ) janārdana, narake'niyataṃ(v̊) vāso, bhavatītyanuśuśruma.1.44

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

Arjuna says that he has heard that those whose family traditions are destroyed are destined to go to hell and remain there for an indefinite period.

Here, it is worth noting a particularly important point that until now, Bhagavān Śrī Krishna had not uttered a single word.

Arjuna is continuously expressing his thoughts and arguments as to why he should abandon the battlefield. All the thoughts, doubts, fears, and arguments in his mind are being expressed without interruption.

Bhagavān is calmly listening to everything Arjuna has to say. He did not interrupt Arjuna, nor did he contradict him, because it is necessary to listen to a person's complete
thoughts before offering a solution. This is why the entire first chapter of the Gītā is filled with only Arjuna's words.

This chapter is a complete picture of Arjuna's despair, confusion, compassion, and delusion. Only when the disciple opens up all the knots in his mind, when he becomes completely empty, does the Guru's teaching become meaningful.

Now that Arjuna has finished speaking, his despair is complete.

1.45

aho bata mahatpāpaṃ(ṅ), kartuṃ(v̊) 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 reflects, and in his mind, realizes the magnitude of the sin they were on the verge of committing by standing on the battlefield. He reflects that if they had fought the war, they would have committed a grave sin, and it now becomes clear to him that, driven by greed for happiness and the desire to gain a kingdom, they were about to commit one of the most immoral acts. He then feels relief that he had come to his senses in time and understood the seriousness of the wrongdoing. He feels such recognition of their perceived wrong action had actually saved the day.

Here, Arjuna's mind is trying to justify his decision to himself in the garb of righteous. He has begun to consider retreating from his duty as righteousness. This is the final and most subtle stage of despair, where a person begins to consider their escape as a virtue.

To dispel this illusion, Bhagavān Śrī Krishna's teachings now become essential, because righteousness is not recognized merely by feelings, but by duty and discernment.

1.46

yadi māmapratīkāram, aśastraṃ(m) śastrapāṇayaḥ,
dhārtarāṣṭrā raṇe hanyuḥ(s), tanme kṣemataraṃ(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 says that it would still be for his own good, if he does not retaliate or take up arms, and even if the Kauravas kill him.

The same Arjuna who had earlier declared that he wished to see who had come to fight against him has now reached a state where he thinks that even being killed by the enemy would be for the best. The contradiction in his mind is complete.

This thought is not ordinary. It is a state of profound mental despair. This thought is almost akin to the thought of self-annihilation or suicide.

Suicidal thoughts also arise in a similar way when one thinks, "If I die, all my problems will end. I will be freed from struggle, suffering, and responsibility." Little do they realize that in such a cowardly act they manage to just destroy the mortal body while the soul lives on to face the consequence of their actions.

Arjuna's state shows that he is not merely afraid of war but has reached a point of wanting to escape from the responsibilities of life.

This is why this chapter of the Bhagavadgītā becomes not just a depiction of war, but a portrayal of a deep crisis of the human mind.

It is from this extreme state of despair that Bhagavān Śrī Krishna's teachings begin, where He instructs Arjuna not only about war, but also about seeing life from the right perspective.

1.47

sañjaya uvāca
evamuktvārjunaḥ(s) saṅkhye, rathopastha upāviśat,
visṛjya saśaraṃ(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.

Sanjaya reports to Dhritarastra that after expressing these thoughts, Arjuna went and sat down on his seat on the chariot in the battlefield. Arjuna, who until now had stood as a supreme warrior, with the conch shell having been blown and the battle about to begin, at that very moment, sat down, placing his bow and arrows beside him.

His mind was extremely disturbed, and he was overwhelmed with grief. In his despair, Arjuna had now forgotten his duties, for in a state of grief, a person forgets all their responsibilities. This was Arjuna's despair.

But one may wonder why the name of this chapter is not simply ***Vishada or Despair***, but **Arjuna Vishada Yoga** (Arjuna's Despair Yoga)?

This is because Yoga means becoming one with the Paramātmā, the Supreme Being. It is in a state of extreme suffering that a person takes refuge in Bhagavān. Arjuna here is extremely fortunate because Bhagavān Śrī Krishna himself is present with him to counsel him.

This very despair of Arjuna became a means for him to take refuge in Bhagavān. For this reason, this chapter is named "**Arjuna Vishada Yoga**."

The teachings that Bhagavān Śrī Krishna imparts to the despondent Arjuna begin in the second chapter, and that is what Sanjaya narrates to Dhritarashtra.

In today's world, it is Bhagavān in the form of Bhagavadgītā who holds our hand to help us overcome our despair and reach a state of spiritual vitality.

The session concluded by offering our understanding the importance and power of the Bhagavadgītā at the lotus feet of Bhagavān Śrī Krishna.

This was followed by a Questions and Answers session and chanting of the Hanuman Chalisa.

<u>Questions and Answers</u>

Padmini Ji

Q: The sky has its own special sound which exists in the form of waves. A person receives the type of waves that correspond to their inner nature. Please explain this a
little more clearly.

A: Here, the word "sky" refers to space. Wherever there is empty space, there is sky. Sound exists in the sky in the form of vibrations or waves. A person attracts the type of waves that correspond to their nature.

Sunil Ji

Q: What is the meaning of ***Pinda-Daan*** (offering of rice balls to the spirit of the dead)?

A: Our relationship with our parents is through the physical body (Pinda). Certain rituals have been prescribed for the liberation of that soul and for the alleviation of the suffering of its relatives, so that the soul can leave the attachments of this life and proceed on its journey, attaining a good destiny. These rituals are called ***Pinda-Daan.***

Vaijayanti Ji

Q: How can we know if our mind is clouding our judgment?

A: When we make our decisions in the pursuit of the Paramātmā and believe that we are doing everything according to Bhagavāns guidance, then we realize whether we are acting from he mind or using our intellect. Just as Shivaji Maharaj said that he was establishing the kingdom and religion due to Bhagavān's command, if we keep this in mind, no decision will prove to be wrong.

om tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṃ(ẏ) yogaśāstre śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṃvāde arjunavishadayogo nāma prathamo'dhyāyaḥ

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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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

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|| OM ŚRĪKṚṢṆĀRPAṆAMASTU ||