

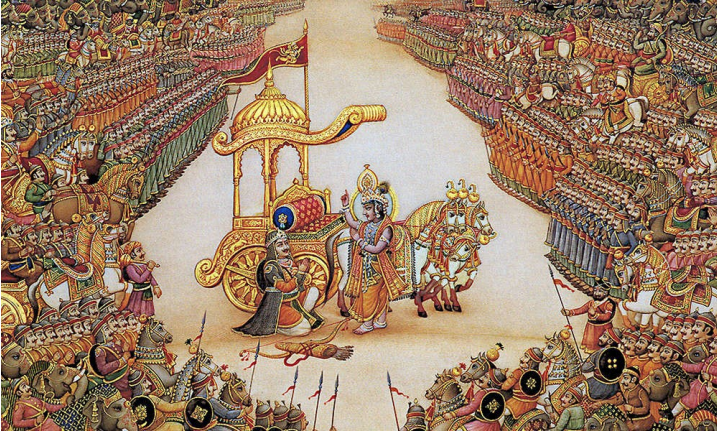
SHRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA

FROM THE EYES OF A DEVOTEE (BHAKT)

CHAPTER - 1

COMPILED BY: DR YATENDRA SHARMA

BASED ON
THE DISCOURSES AND LITERATURE OF SWAMI
SHRI RAM SUKH DAS JI, SWAMI SHRI
BHOLANATH JI AND SWAMI SHRI
DAMODARANANDA JI



SHRI RAM KATHA SANSTHAN
PERTH, AUSTRALIA, WA 6025

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INTRODUCTION

Our Scripture states that Shrimad Bhagwad Gita is ‘the Essence of Life.’ Shrimad Bhagwad Gita is a poetic description composed by Bhagwan Ved Vyas Ji which is based on the teachings of Lord Krishna to Shri Arjuna in the battlefield of Mahabharat. These teachings led to win the Mahabharat war by Pandavas, nearly 5,000 years ago. Many of us think that perhaps these stories and mindsets are related to an ancient era which was some 5,000 years ago, and may not be relevant to the current era, however I do remember a scholarly discourse by a very respected senior monk of Shri Ram Krishna Mission, Shri Swami Muktirupananda Ji which made a deep impression in my mind. The era may have changed but man has the same selfish attitude, same greed, same materialistic desires today as they did 5,000 years ago. The reasons why the great war Mahabharat was fought 5,000 years ago, are the same as today, where so many wars on international and national borders, and arguments within families are being fought every day. So, Shrimad Bhagwad Gita is as relevant today as it was 5,000 years ago. Shrimad Bhagwad Gita, to my understanding, is not a religious or holy book belonging to any particular race, religion, sect or caste, but an essence of life meant for all human race. This is the reason perhaps why this great Scripture is respected by scholarly people of all the faiths.

I learnt the basic principles of Vedic Sanatana Dharma from my grandfather Shri Bhagwan Das Sharma and my Sanskrit Acharya Shri Saligram Agnihotri. Also, I have been a fortunate person to have the inclination to learn Shrimad Bhagwad Gita as a student of Swami Shri Ram Sukh Das (one of the three pillars of establishment of Gita Press Gorakhpur with Shri Jay Dayal Goyanka and Shri Hanuman Prasad Poddar Ji), Swami Shri Bholanath (a companion of Swami Shri Ram Sukh Das)

and Swami Shri Damodaran (A senior monk of Shri Ram Krishna Mission) through their discourses, literature and, in some cases, personal interactions. My compilation of this commentary on this great, sacred book, Shrimad Bhagwad Gita, is mainly a reflection of what these great personalities have taught me.

One may ask, why it was necessary for me to compile this commentary when there are already hundreds of commentaries on Shrimad Bhagwad Gita available in literature? Perhaps my answer could be that Shrimad Bhagwad Gita is an ocean of Bhakti, and millions may dip into it at the same time. Having said that, I also felt that most of the commentaries available in literature is from the point of view of knowledge (Gyan) and philosophy of this great sacred Scripture. I have made an attempt here to present this commentary as seen from the eyes of a devotee (Bhakt).

I am a scientist by profession and have a hobby of writing religious stories/ novels and composing devotional poetry in the Hindi language, which is my mother tongue. I have made an attempt here to express the views of learned personalities as above on Shrimad Bhagwad Gita from the eyes of a devotee in English on the request of several friends. The basic reason for that is, in a foreign land where English is the main language, our younger generation brought up here may not be able to read and write Hindi. I am neither an English literary person, nor is English my primary language, so please forgive me if you find numerous mistakes in my descriptions. My aim is not to contribute towards literature by compiling this description, but to give a message as I understand from the great saints of Sanatana Dharma on this holy book Shrimad Bhagwad Gita.

We all know that after completing 14 years of exile in the forest (Vanvaas) and 1 year of hiding (Agyaatvaas), when Pandavas requested the king Dhratrashta to return their kingdom of Indraprastha, then crown prince Duryodhana (son of the king Dhratrashta), refused to give them even five villages without war. Therefore, on the orders of mother Kunti and blessings of Lord Krishna, Pandavas accepted their fate to go into war against Kauravas. Both sides, Pandavas and Kauravas, thus commenced preparation for the great war, Mahabharat.

Bhagwan Maharshi Ved Vyas had great affection towards king Dhratrashta, father of the Kauravas. Before this great war was to begin, he went to the king Dhratrashta and said, “O the great son of Kuru-vansh Dhratrashta, in spite of my advice to you, you have thrown your sons and Pandavas into this great war Mahabharat. Now, to fight such war is the religion of Kshatriyas, so the warriors of both the sides (Pandavas and Kauravas) are getting ready to fight this war with their abilities. You know that numerous losses of lives are inevitable in any war, so will be in this great war ‘Mahabharat’ too. If you want to see this war with your own eyes (king Dhratrashta was blind from birth), I will bless you with the divine eyes so that you may see the actual happening in the battle field with your own eyes while sitting on your throne in your palace”. Hearing these kind words of Bhagwan Maharishi Ved Vyas, the king Dhratrashta fell at the feet of Maharishi and with folded hands spoke, ‘O great Maharishi, I have been blind since birth. I surely do not want to see the massacre of my own family, whether Kauravas or Pandavas in this war. However, I will be keen to know the outcome of the courageous fights between warriors of both the sides every day.’ Then, great Maharishi blessed the divine eyes to Sanjay, Dhratrashta’s trusted servant and companion, and spoke to Sanjay, ‘O Sanjay, I am blessing you with the divine eyes so that you can see the actual

happenings in the battle field while sitting here, and keep on narrating the incidents to your king.’ Saying these merciful words, Bhagwan Maharishi Ved Vyas blessed divine eyes to Sanjay.

The great war Mahabharat between two cousins, Pandavas and Kauravs, commenced in 3137 BC on Marghsheersh Shukla Paksha Ekadasi day. Sanjay sat before his king Dhratrashtira and kept on narrating each and every incident in the battle field of this great war. The detailed description of his great war Mahabharat is provided in the sacred scripture ‘Bhishma Parva’. Shrimad Bhagwad Gita is part of this great epic ‘Bhishma Parva’.

I gratefully acknowledge the wisdom, direction and advice given to me from time to time by my elder brother Mr Narendra Dutt Sharma, my wife Mrs Manju Sharma, my son Anshul Sharma and my all friends particularly, Shri Sunil Garg Ji, Dr Jugal Agarwalla Ji and Dr Gautam Das Ji.

I also gratefully acknowledge the time and efforts of Ms Raksha Agarwalla B.Hons (English), our Editor (English), for correcting the manuscript. May God bless her.

Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih.

Dr Yatendra Sharma



Shri Ram Katha Sansthan Perth, Australia

Gita Jayanti, 25.12.2020

FIRST CHAPTER

Magnanimity of the First Chapter

The first chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita primarily describes the battle strategies organized by each side - Pandavas and Kauravas, and the confusion in the mind of the great warrior Arjuna not to fight this war. While describing the strategy of the war to his teacher Acharya Drona, Duryodhana mentions the names of each and every warrior in both armies. Interestingly, these people were related in one way or another in their past lives, which became the cause for their being present in this war to fight, face to face, with each other. This teaches us a lesson that we are all here because of our relationship and 'Karmas' in our previous lives. Our Scripture defines that our 'Karma' is the main cause of what we are today and what we will be in the future. Unfortunately, we forget our deeds after death, with the exception of some great souls, and do not remember past incidents in rebirth. Would it not be great if we could remember our good and bad deeds performed in our past lives so we may take lessons from them and behave accordingly in this lifetime? There are some providential reasons why it is not so, which is described very well in our Scripture. Having said that, God has provided some means to peep into our past lives and get lessons from them. The first chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita actually plays an important role in peeping into our past lives and past deeds if read or listened with 'Faith.'

Once mother Lakshmi asked Lord Vishnu, 'O Lord, you look after and nourish this whole universe, yet remain disinterested in taking any credit, and appear like sleeping all the time in Ksheer Sagar (Ocean of milk). What is the reason for that?'

Lord replied, ‘Dear, I never sleep. I am constantly involved in self-contemplation of my thoughts and witness the energy thus created which runs and nourishes this whole universe. I look after all the souls of this universe. The soul is independent of dwait (Plurism) or adwait (Monism), materialism or spiritualism, birth or death. When a soul is enlightened with thus true self-knowledge (Atm-Gyan), then only the soul gets to know my divine personality. To obtain self-knowledge of Atma (Soul) is the real purpose of the human life. Shrimad Bhagwad Gita is the holy book which describes how to obtain the self-knowledge of Atma (Soul). Shrimad Bhagwad Gita has 18 chapters. The first 5 chapters reflect my five mouths, the next ten chapters my ten arms, followed by next one chapter my abdomen and remaining two chapters my two legs. Whomsoever reads or listens even one Shlok (Verse) of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita each day, will be liberated like Susharma and obtain self-knowledge and my divine personality.’

‘Susharma? Who was this Susharma, my Lord?’, then asked mother Lakshmi.

Lord Vishnu commenced narrating the story of Susharma. Susharma was an evil person. He was an atheist, never believed in God and had no respect for cultural values of Sanatana Dharma such as greeting guests (Atithi devobhav’), praying and/ or chanting any hymns in praise of the God etc. He was addicted to alcohol and was very fond of eating meat. He used to collect wood from the forest and sell for his living. One day when he was collecting wood, he died because of being bitten by a poisonous snake. After spending a lot of time in hell, he was reborn on earth as an ox. This ox was purchased by a cruel lame person. This owner used to take hard work from his ox. Thus 8 years passed. Once this ox was riding a hill with heavy

load which he could not bear, thus fell and died. Seeing this, a crowd gathered and showed pity on the poor ox. There was a saintly God devotee person also in this crowd. By sprinkling water from his jug on the dead body of the ox, he recited some Mantras: ‘O God, show mercy on this poor ox. By sprinkling water from my jug, I give the effects of my good deeds to this ox if I have done any to liberate this poor soul’, murmured this saintly person. There was a prostitute also in this crowd. Though she could not understand much what this saintly person did, but by listening few words of prayers and request of mercy to Almighty, she was moved. She also said. ‘O Almighty, I know I am a sinner. Even accidentally if I would have done some good deeds, I donate those to this poor soul of ox too.’ Because of these good deeds donated by the saintly person and the prostitute, he was reborn in a family of a highly knowledgeable, religious and pious Brahmin family. Fortunately, he could also remember his past life. He studied Veda and Vedanta and became a great scholar (Pundit). He was not surprised by the effects of good deeds of the great saintly person which led him to be born in such a pious family, but could not comprehend how a prostitute might have earned the fruits of good deeds? What good deeds sinner like a prostitute can do? Thinking this in his mind, he traced that prostitute and reached her home. He humbly offered his Pranams to the prostitute and said, ‘O mother (she was quite old by that time when he met her), if you remember, several years ago you showed pity to a dying ox on a hill and in a prayer to Almighty, you offered your good deeds for the liberation of the poor soul of the ox. Please bless me once again and tell me your good deeds which you offered. I should be greatly obliged’. Then old lady told this young Brahmin, ‘O pious Brahmin, I do not know what you are talking about? I am a sinner and what good deeds I would have earned? I just followed that great saintly person and just repeated his words. However, I always listen carefully

to my parrot. He always murmurs something. Though I cannot understand even a single word of that, but I feel great happiness after listening to the words of the parrot. If you want to know what he murmurs, please talk to this parrot.’

Then Brahmin asked the parrot, ‘O parrot, I am very curious to know what do you murmur to this lady which gives great happiness to her’.

Parrot humbly offered his Pranams first to the learned Brahmin, and then spoke as following:

‘O great learned Brahmin, by the grace of your great divine personality, I can remember my last birth which I narrate to you. I was also a great learned Brahmin like yourself in my previous birth. However, I became arrogant and greedy. I was always jealous to my Guru as well as to my fellow pious colleagues, and many times I also harmed them. Because of my such bad deeds, I spent lot of time in hell and later was born as a parrot. I lost my parents to a hunter soon after I was born. Alone, not able to fetch my own food and water, in one hot summer, I fell from the tree. Few saints (Rishies) were passing through at that time who saw me in this pity and unconscious state. They took me to their hermit and put me in a cage. They nourished me very well. I was kept in a study room where the children of Rishies used to study Veda and Vedanta. One of the Rishi’s son was very fond of me and used to come to me very often and recite first chapter of Shrimad Bhagvad Gita, which he recently learnt from his Acharya. Listening to him, I used to repeat every word this Rishi’s son was reciting. Thus, I remembered by heart all the verses of the first chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita. Unfortunately, one day when Rishies were not in their hermit, one fowler stole me and sold to this

lady. I always recite and murmur this first chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita which she always listens carefully.’

The great learned Brahmin now immediately understood the effect of listening to the first chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita which led this prostitute to get happiness and achieve good Karma. These good deeds (Karmas) donated to me by her liberated me. The learned brahmin then paid his respects to the parrot and the old lady, and returned to his house.

Thus, Lord Vishnu concluded that whomsoever reads or listens to the first chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita, even if he/she does not understand the meaning of its single word, will be liberated by My grace.

Shlok 1

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच ।
धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय ॥

Dhṛatrāṣṭra Uvācha |
dharmakṣhetre kurukṣhetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ |
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāśchaiva kimakurvata sañjaya ||

Dhratrashtra asked, ‘O Sanjay, after gathering on the holy field of Kurukshetra, and having desire to fight, what did my sons and the sons of Pandu do?’

The battle field is referred here as Kuru-kshetra (place of Kuru) and Dharm-kshetra (holy place) by the king Dhratrashtra? This is referred as Kuru-kshetra because it was named after the great king Kuru of Hastinapur (an ancestor of Pandavas and Kauravas).

Prior to being called as Kuru-kshetra, the Scripture states that this place was known as Bhragu-kshetra. The great Maharishi (Sage) Bhragu had his Ashram (hermit) in this area, and did great penance to please Lord Brahma at this place. Pleased by his penance and meditation, Lord Brahma appeared before Maharishi Bhragu and blessed him, hence this place was also referred as Brahm-kshetra in the Vedas.

The great king Kuru, an ancestor of the Kauravas and Pandavas, made this land a great center of spiritual culture. It is described in the Scripture that to please Mother Nature (Prakarati Devi)-so that his kingdom is always blessed with prosperity and good crop- the king Kuru went to Bhragu-kshetra on a golden chariot. He meditated there for a long period of time to please Lord Shiva and Lord Yamraja with austerity. Pleased with his penance, Lord Shiva appeared before him, blessed him and asked for a boon. King Kuru requested him to loan him His bull Nandi to plough the holy land. Similarly, Lord Yamraja also appeared before him and he requested Lord Yamraja to loan him His buffalo to plough the holy land. Thus, using Lord Shiva's bull Nandi and Lord Yamraja's buffalo in a golden furrow, he ploughed this holy land. Pleased with this act, Mother Nature (Prakarati Maa) and Lord Indra both appeared before him and asked for a boon. Humbly prostrating before them, he asked for eight religious virtues to always reside in his kingdom viz: truth, knowledge, kindness, purity, charity, forgiveness, austerity, and celibacy. From this time onwards, this land was also called Kuru-kshetra, and since he was granted boon to possess the eight religious' virtues at this place, it was also referred as Religious Place (Dharm-kshetra).

Being a spiritual place where their ancestor king Kuru was blessed by the Gods, this place was very dear to both Kauravas and Pandavas. Both of them had the strong belief that this place was very auspicious to all. Hence, since it was suggested by

Bhishma Pitamaha and approved by Lord Krishna, both Kauravas and Pandavas accepted this holy place as a battlefield to fight this great war ‘Mahabharat’. This battle field is thus referred by the king Dhratrashttra as holy field of Kuru-kshetra (Dharm-kshetra Kuru-kshetra).

Samavetā in Sanskrit has two meanings – one is conscience, other is desire. The king Dhratrashttra used the word samavetā for both Pandavas and Kauravas. The word samavetā actually has different meaning when addressed to Pandavas and Kauravas respectively.

Pandavas were forced to enter into this fight because they were denied their rightful authority to have their kingdom back by Kauravas. Hence it was their conscience (Vivek) due to their Kshatiya dharma which led them to fight the war. Hence the right meaning of samavetā when addressed for Pandavas is conscience (Vivek).

For Kauravas, it was their desire to continue to rule the kingdom of Pandavas wrongfully acquired by them for greed and jealousy with their cousins Pandavas, therefore the meaning applicable to Kauravas for samavetā is desire.

It is evident in the Scripture, Pandavas did not want to fight the war with their Kauravas cousins. The Pandavas, led by Dharmaraja Yudhishtira, were the strict followers of righteousness (Dharma/ Religion). Dharma (Religion) here does not mean following a particular tradition such as Sanatana Dharma, but refers to the righteous duties prescribed by Scripture for Kshatriyas (Warriors). When Lord Krishna returned to Drupad kingdom (where Pandavas were residing after their exile) after failing in His ‘Peace Mission’ with king Dhratrashttra (crown prince Duryodhana did not agree even to

give 5 villages to Pandavas and said he would not even give a land equal to the tip of a needle without a war), Dharamaraja Yudhishtira said to Lord Krishna, ‘O Madhav, I have no desire to fight with my own kin and seniors such as Bhishma Pitamaha, Dronacharya etc just for the sake of a kingdom. We will rather live a life of ascetics than deviating from the path of our Dharma (Religion) by killing our own people. (Interestingly similar dialogues were repeated by Arjuna before Lord Krishna at the start of the Mahabharat war which led Lord Krishna to give the teachings of Shrimad Bhagwat Gita).’ Hearing this, mother Kunti got angry. It is said in the Scripture that mother Kunti was never seen angry in her life other than this one isolated instance. Mother Kunti angrily addressed Yudhishtira, ‘O Dharmaraja, you are a Kshatriya. As a Kshatriya, it is your Dharma (Religion) to fight this war to get back your rightful authority to your well-earned kingdom and establish righteousness on the land. It will be cowardice not to do so. I order you to get prepared yourself for this great war.’ This was immediately endorsed by Lord Krishna. Hence, actually Pandavas never wanted to fight this war. It was due to the order of the mother Kunti and endorsement of Lord Krishna which awakened their conscience to do the rightful duties as Kshatriya.

On the other hand, Duryodhana had a great desire to fight this war with an aim to continue to control the kingdom of Pandavas by any means, whether it is right or wrong, justified or unjustified, legal or illegal.

The king Dhratrashtira said, ‘māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāśhchaiv’ (my sons and the sons of Pandu). According to Dharma (Religion) and righteousness for an unbiased king, the king Dhratrashtira should never have been differentiating between two, Pandavas (the sons of Pandu) and his own sons, Kauravas. The Pandavas

always treated the king Dhratrashta as equivalent to their father and always obeyed him without any question being asked. The Pandavas followed even his unlawful instructions without giving any thoughts on the logic. He should have only used the word *māmakāḥ* (mine) which would have been sufficed to address both the Pandavas and Kauravs. His words addressing both Kauravas and Pandavas differently (his own sons as *māmakāḥ* and the sons of Pandu as *Pāṇḍavāśhchaiv*) shows his mentality of having bias towards his own sons. This was one of the main reasons of defeat of Kauravas. When one deviates from the principle of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’, and think in terms of mine and yours, this is the sign of the collapse.

The king Dhratrashta asked Sanjay about his sons and the sons of Pandu, ‘*kimakurvata*’. This word is made of two words, Kim and Kurvata. The Sanskrit word Kim has several meanings – one is virtuous (Lord Vishnu is also called by the name ‘Kim’ in Shri Vishnusahshtanamam as He is the most virtuous), and other meaning is ‘what’. Kurwat means act or deed.

Now again, this word ‘*kimakurvata*’ has different meaning applied for Pandavas and Kauravas respectively. Because Pandavas were fighting this war not for desire, but as a Kshatariya Dharma (religion) to gain control of their kingdom by rightful means, hence asking ‘*kimakurvata*’ for Pandavas means ‘what virtuous acts (Karma) are done by Pandavas in the battle field?’

But contrary to this, since Kauravas were fighting this war for a desire to wrongfully acquire the kingdom of Pandavas, ‘*kimakurvata*’ means ‘what is done by the Kauravas?’

Shlok 2

सञ्जय उवाच ।

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।

आचार्यमुपसङ्गम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥

Sañjaya Uvācha ।

drīṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkaṁ vyūḍhaṁ Duryodhanastadā|

āchāryamupasaṅgamyā rājā vachanamabravīt ||

Sanjay said (to the king Dhratrashtre). ‘On observing the Pandava army standing in ‘Vajravayuh’ military formation, the king Duryodhana approached his teacher Dronacharya, and said the following words.’

A reference of the word ‘king’ (Rājā) was given here for Duryodhana though he was only a ‘crown prince’. It indicated that though Duryodhana was only a crown prince, he had full powers of a king. The king Dhratrashtre was the emperor only for in name; the real power lied with Duryodhana. This was an indication by Bhagwan Maharishi Ved Vyas Ji that if a person of a lower position assumed the power of a higher authority and took decisions without properly discussing with appropriate authority and without taking his permission, his downfall was guaranteed. Such absolute power gave arrogance, and decisions taken by such an arrogant person led to satisfy his ego, selfishness and self-fulfilment without due consideration for the general benefit, and thus led to his downfall. This was exactly happening in Hastinapur under the rule of the king Dhratrashtre which led to an eventual downfall of both, Duryodhana as well as Dhratrashtre.

Seeing a disciplined army of the Pandavas (dṛiṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkaṁ) which was very well organised and standing in the battle field in a ‘Vajravyuh’ formation (a deadly military formation organised in double sword manner), most adapted to the given circumstances of the war, Duryodhana was frightened. All warriors of the Pandavas army appeared to have only one identical view, one aim and one objective - to defeat the enemy. There were neither any differences of opinions nor any disagreements among the warriors of the army of Pandavas. On the other hand, somehow the Commanding General of the Kauravas army Bhishma Pitamaha did not organise his army in any special formation of the battle on the first day of the war. The army was divided into several battalions led by their individual kings or army chiefs. The top warriors, however, were in the front line with Commanding General Bhishma Pitamaha, Dronacharya, Duryodhana, etc. Also, the warriors of Kauravas army were divided in their opinions. Many of them were actually praying and hoping for Pandavas to win though fighting on the side of Kauravas. Because of the certain unavoidable circumstances for them, they were forced to fight on the side of the Kauravas; the king Shalya being just an example. Even Bhishma Pitamaha and Dronacharya in their hearts always prayed for the victory of virtuous Pandavas.

Duryodhana approached his Guru Dronacharya (āchāryamupasaṅgamyā) to describe the formation of the battle field of both the sides, Pandavas and Kauravas. Interestingly, the Commanding General of his army was Bhishma Pitamaha. Ordinarily, respecting the chain of command, he should have approached his Commanding General Bhishma Pitamaha and narrated this story to him. Why did he go to Dronacharya who was only one of the warriors of the war fighting from his side, and not on any commanding position? This shows mistrust

towards his own Commanding General. In his heart, Duryodhana knew that even though Bhishma Pitamaha was his Commanding General and fighting from his side, but in his heart, he loved Pandavas dearly and even had accepted the position of Commanding General on a condition that he would not kill anyone of them in the war. Duryodhana never wanted to elevate either Bhishma Pitamah or Dronacharya to his Commanding General position. In his heart, he wanted Karna to be in this position. But he was helpless. If he would have not chosen Bhishma Pitamaha as his Commanding General, most of his warriors who had great respect for Bhishma Pitamah would have declined to fight on his side. He feared revolt among his army. He had no choice. Also, even though he had no trust in him, but somehow, he was confident that because of an oath taken by Bhishma Pitamaha to protect the throne of Hastinapur and obey the command of the king Dhratrashtira who was enthroned at that time, he was bound to be on his side. But for Dronacharya, he was Guru of both, Pandavas and Kauravs, and he loved Pandavas very dearly. For Duryodhana, perhaps it was more important to show to Dronacharya that he respected him more than even Bhishma Pitamaha. By approaching Dronacharya, his aim was to create an animosity in the heart of Dronacharya towards Pandavas. Again, his selfish motive is very clearly seen from this Shlok (Verse). Any deed done with such a selfish attitude ignoring Dharma (Dharma for the king or crown prince is to respect chain of command) is surely a path of defeat.

Shlok 3

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥

**paśhyaitām pāṇḍuputrāṇāmāchārya mahatīm chamūm|
vyūḍhām drupadaputreṇa tava śhiṣhyeṇa dhīmatā ||**

Duryodhana said (to Dronacharya), ‘O, Respected Acharya (teacher), please see the mighty army of the sons of Pandu, so expertly organised for battle under the command of your own gifted disciple, the son of Drupada.’

By addressing Dronacharya as ‘Respected Acharya’ (as a matter of fact, he never had any deep respect for Dronacharya), Duryodhana is trying here to remind Dronacharya that as an Acharya (teacher) and employed by his father king Dhratashtra, Dronacharya should be faithful to his duties to protect his employer rather than leaning towards his emotions to Pandavas. This showed the great insecurity of Duryodhana. He did not even trust his own Guru Dronacharya, and went to him to remind his duties! Our Scripture says that one can never get success if not having trust in one’s own Guru.

Duryodhana was trying to generate hatred in the mind of Dronacharya against the Pandavas as well as the other warriors of Pandavas army. (tava śhiṣhyeṇa dhīmatā) ‘O Acharya, look at the immorality of the warriors of Pandavas army! You are the Guru of the Commanding General Dhrashitdyumna (drupada-putreṇa) of Pandavas army. You taught him the knowledge of weaponry. Now, he is getting ready to fight with you to kill you, his own Guru! You are a very simple and kind hearted person Acharya. Please do not show any mercy on such disrespectful persons., You should remember that the king Drupada performed Agni-Yagna with the help of the Maharishies Yaaj and Upyaaj to get a son who would kill you. So, this son of Drupada was actually born to kill you only. How could you show mercy on him?’ (It should be noted that in spite of animosity between the king Drupada and Dronacharya, when

king Drupada approached Dronacharya to accept his son as his disciple and teach him weaponry, Dronacharya did oblige him).

By addressing Dhrashitdyumna as son of king Drupada (not by his name as Dhrashitdyumna), Duryodhana is trying to revive the memory of Dronacharya on how Dhrashitdyumna was born?

Once Arjun defeated the great army of the king Drupada led by himself and his son Shikhandi on the orders of Dronacharya (as Dronacharya asked his Guru Dakshina from Pandavas to bring Drupada as a prisoner to him). Dronacharya thus got control of the kingdom of Drupada, but gifted back half of the kingdom to Drupada. Drupada was very furious on his defeat. Knowing that Dronacharya instigated Arjun to fight war against him and defeated him, he was very angry with Dronacharya. There was only one desire in his mind, to take revenge from Dronacharya. He knew that he was old now and his son Shikhandi was no close match to the powers of Dronacharya, so his revenge could only be possible if he could get a mighty son to kill Dronacharya. This might only be possible by a divine blessing. So, he approached Maharishi Bhardwaja. Maharishi Bhardwaja told him that sure he would get a son capable of killing Dronacharya but that would only be possible when Maharishi Yaaj and Maharishi Upyaaj performed Agni-Yagn (prayers of the Lord Fire) for him. He should go to these two Maharishies in their Ashram to request for the same. Hearing this, the king Drupada went to the Ashram (hermitage) of Maharishi Yaaj and Maharishi Upyaaj and prostrated before them. He requested them to perform Agni-Yagna to get blessings of Lord Fire to get a son capable of killing Dronacharya. Both the Maharishies, Yaaj and Upyaaj, agreed to the request of the king Drupada, and performed Agni-Yagna. Lord Fire (Agni Dev), pleased with the prayers and sacrifices made at this Agni-

Yagna, appeared and blessed Drupada with a son who would behead Dronacharya and also a daughter. Both of these, son and daughter, appeared from the Yagna Vedi. The son was named as Dhrashitdyumna and the daughter was named as Draupadi.

Duryodhana said, (paśhyaitāṁ pāṇḍu-putrāṇām āchārya mahatīm chamūm) ‘O Acharya, see at the rascality of the Pandavas (to whom you love more than your own son). They have made their Commanding General a person who is a great enemy of yours and is born to kill you only!’ Duryodhana here wanted to create hatred in the mind of Dronacharya for Pandavas by repeatedly mentioning that knowing Dhrashitdyumna was his greatest enemy, at least they should not have made him as their Commanding General if they had slightest respect for him. O great Acharya, seeing this army of Pandavas led by your greatest enemy, devise a plan soon to annihilate them all.’

Shlok 4, 5 and 6

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।
युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः ॥

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥

**atra śhūrā maheṣhvāsā bhīmārjunasamā yudhi |
yuyudhāno virāṭaśhcha drupadaśhcha mahārathaḥ ||**

**dhṛiṣṭaketuśhchekitānaḥ kāśhirājaśhcha vīryavān |
puruḥjit kuntibhojaśhcha śhaibyaśhcha narapuṅgavaḥ ||**

**yudhāmanyuśhcha vikrānta uttamaujāśhcha vīryavān |
saubhadro draupadeyāśhcha sarva eva mahārathāḥ||**

‘O! Acharya, the army of Pandavas has many powerful warriors who have great weapons and are as good warriors as Bhima and Arjuna, such as Yuyudhan, Virat, and Drupada. There are other accomplished heroes too such as Dhrishtaketu, Chekitan, the gallant king of Kashi, Purujit, Kuntibhoj, and Shaibya. They also have the great courageous warriors such as Yudhamanyu, the gallant Uttamauja, the son of Subhadra, and the sons of Draupadi. All of these are great warrior Maharathis.’

It is interesting to note here that Duryodhana referred front line warriors of Pandavas as Maharathi (mahā-rathaḥ). Depending upon the power and rank of a military General in ancient India, a warrior was assigned a title. There were three type of titles given to the warriors in those days- Rathi, Atirathi, and Maharathi

Rathi was a warrior who was capable of attacking 5,000 soldiers simultaneously.

Atirathi was a warrior capable of contending 12 Rathi warriors or 60,000 soldiers simultaneously.

Maharathi was a warrior capable of fighting 12 Atirathi warriors or 720,000 soldiers simultaneously, and had complete mastery of all forms of weapons and combat skills.

Addressing Pandavas warriors as Maharathis, one could see the importance and powers of these great warriors in the eyes of Duryodhana.

Duryodhana had used the word maheṣhvāsā for these warriors. Ishvās is a Sanskrit word for bow and maheṣhvāsā, is referred to the great warrior having intense knowledge on pulling the string of a bow in a deadly manner as per military skills. Again, he said that these warriors are like Bhima and Arjuna (bhīmārjuna-samā yudhi). We all know how great warriors were Bhima and Arjuna. So, by emphasising that these warriors of Pandavas army were as powerful as Bhima and Arjuna, Duryodhana was trying to convey to Dronacharya not to underestimate other warriors of Pandavas army too.

Interestingly, the names of warriors of Pandavas whose names were chosen by Duryodhana to narrate to Dronacharya were all those which he thought might create hatred in the mind of Dronacharya for Pandavas and their army. This was repeatedly showing his insecurity.

(yuyudhāno) Yuyudhan (Satyiki) was the disciple of Arjuna and one of the Generals of the Narayani Sena of Lord Krishna. We all know that Lord Krishna ordered his Narayani Sena to fight for the Kauravas. Normally, Yuyudhan should be fighting on the side of Kauravas with Narayani Sena, but he revolted against this decision of Lord Krishna and pleaded Him to bless him to fight on the side of the army of Pandavas giving the reason that Arjuna was his Guru, and he could not take weapons against his own Guru. Lord Krishna relented and allowed him

to do so. Duryodhana was saying, ‘O Acharya, look at Yuyudhan. He is so faithful to his own Guru Arjuna that he even revolted against the decision of his king Lord Krishna to join the army of Pandavas. And look at Arjuna! He is your dearest disciple. He is ready to fight against you, his own Guru. He has neither faithfulness nor shame. So why should you show any mercy to Arjuna who is such an unfaithful and treacherous person?’

(virāṭaśhcha) King Virat, once in a battle with Trigarth king Susharma (an ally of Duryodhana) defeated and humiliated him. This was the time when the Pandavas were hiding in the kingdom of Virat during the final year of their exile. Suspecting that Pandavas might be hiding in Virat kingdom, Duryodhana sent Susharma to attack Virat kingdom. He stole thousands of cattle of Virat kingdom. On hearing this, king Virat was very furious and followed Susharma. A fierce battle took place between the armies of king Virat and king Susharma. There were heavy losses of soldiers on both the sides. Susharma realised that he might lose the war, so he thought of a cunning plan. He headed towards the chariot of king Virat and challenged him for a duet fighting. King Virat accepted this challenge, but soon lost to Susharma. Susharma made him captive. Hearing this, Vallabh (Bhima in the disguise of cook) ran towards the chariot of Susharma. Soon Vallabh defeated Susharma, freed king Virat and humiliated Susharma. After insulting him with ill words, he spared his life and allowed him to flee. Since then, Susharma became great enemy of Pandavas. Duryodhana was trying to emphasise to Dronacharya that king Virat humiliated our ally Susharma, and now was the time to take revenge by killing king Virat.

(drupadaśhcha) Drupada and Drona were great friends during their student life in Gurukul. In such a deep friendship, Drupada

promised to give Drona half of his kingdom to his friend Drona when he would be enthroned to the Drupad kingdom. Later, when Drupada was enthroned to the kingdom of Drupad, Drona went to his kingdom to claim his half kingdom as promised by his childhood friend Drupada. Drupada made mockery of Drona and refused to give any part of his kingdom to Drona saying that promises made by children were never real and serious. Drona felt grossly humiliated and took an oath to take revenge. Dronacharya, though took revenge of his humiliation later through Arjuna as his Guru Dakshina, however animosity continued. Duryodhana was making deliberate provocations here to make Dronacharya angry to kill Drupada, the person who humiliated him.

(dhrīṣṭaketu) Duryodhana also told Dronacharya that this Dhrīṣṭaketu did not deserve any mercy because he had no respect for his dead father Shishupal. His father Shishupal was assassinated by Krishna, and look at him, he was fighting along with the side of the killers of his father. Acharya, you should kill him so that the soul of his father Shishupal be satisfied.

(chekitāṇaḥ) Chekitan was also a General of the Narayani Sena of Dwarka. He was a disciple and also very close friend of Yuyudhan. When Yuyudhan (Satyaki) begged Lord Krishna to permit him to fight on the side of Pandavas and Lord Krishna agreed, then Chekitan, a Yadav warrior, also humbly approached Lord Krishna and told him that he would not fight against his own Guru and dear friend Yuyudhan. Either Lord Krishna should permit him to fight alongside with his Guru and friend Yuyudhan or permit him to be a silent observer. Lord Krishna thus permitted him too to fight alongside Yuyudhan on the side of the Pandavas. Duryodhana told Dronacharya that like Yuyudhan, Chekitan was also our great enemy and no mercy should be shown on him too.

(kāshirājaśhcha vīryavān) A great warrior Kashiraj was also fighting on the side of Pandavas. Duryodhana said to Dronacharya, ‘O Acharya, he is our nearest and closest relative as his daughters Amba and Ambalika were married to my grandfather Vichatravirya. However, out of his animosity to Bhisma Pitamaha who took away his daughters to get them married with my grandfather Vicitravirya, which is normal for Kshatriyas any way, he is fighting on the side of Pandavas. This is against the principles of ‘Kshatriyas Dharma’ (A Kshatriya is to protect his dearest and nearest relatives). As such, he also does not deserve any mercy.’

(purujit kuntibhojaśhcha) Duryodhan continued to Dronacharya, ‘O Acharya, Purujit and Kuntibhoj, being brothers of mother Kunti are our maternal uncles too. I requested them to be neutral in this war as they were our maternal uncles too, and should not be biased towards one side. Declining my request, they are fighting on the side of Pandavas, and do not deserve any mercy.’

(śhaibyaśhcha nara-puṅgavaḥ) ‘Maharathi Shaibya is father-in-law of Yudhishtira. It was my father king Dhritrashtra who arranged the marriage of his daughter to Yudhishtira. At that time, he promised alliance to Hastinapur throne but now betraying us he is also fighting on the side of the Pandavas. He should be punished for his betrayal immediately.’

(yudhāmanyuśhcha vikrānta uttamaujāśhcha vīryavān) ‘You know very well Acharya that the princes of Panchal Kingdom, Yudhamanyu and Vikrant, are great warriors and my severe enemies. They will not hesitate to kill me at first opportunity they may get. Hence for my protection, as I am the crown prince of Hastinapur, it is necessary to kill them as soon as possible.’

(saubhadro) ‘Saubhaadra (Abhimanyu) is the son of Subhadra, sister of Krishna. He is a great warrior and has the knowledge even to penetrate ‘Chakravyuh’ like his father Arjuna. He also does not deserve any mercy as he could be deadly to our war plans.’

(draupadeyāśhcha) ‘All the five sons of Draupadi, Prativindhya, Sutsoma, Shrutkarma, Shataneeek, and Shrutsen are great enemies of Kauravas as their mother Draupadi has taken a vow to destroy us. Their mother Daraupadi laughed and made fun of me in Indraprastha. By killing all five sons of Draupadi, please take revenge from her on behalf of your crown prince.’

Shlok 7

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ॥

asmākaṁ tu viśhiṣṭā ye tānnibodha dwijottama |
nāyakā mama sainyasya sanjñārthaṁ tānbraṇīmī te ||

O best of Brahmins, though there are great warriors on the side of Pandavas, but we too have great warriors on our side who are well qualified to lead and win the war. I now tell you about them.

(asmākaṁ tu viśhiṣṭā ye tānnibodha dwijottama) Duryodhana continued to Dronacharya, ‘O great Brahmin, though the army of Pandavas is consisting of several warriors, but our army is also not less than theirs in any way.’

(nāyakā mama sainyasya) Duryodhan continued, ‘Now I will draw your attention to the names of the leaders and warriors of our army.’

(sanjñārtham tñbravīmi te) ‘We have numerous warriors in our army, certainly difficult to count each and every one, however, I will mention few names to you.’

Swami Ji said that seeing the well organised army of Pandavas, Duryodhana was frightened. Though in numbers, the army of Pandavas might be lesser than his own army, but he saw that the army of Pandavas was consisting of religious and virtuous personalities along with Lord Krishna Himself on their side. Seeing the righteous, religious and virtuous personalities in front and facing, even the greatest sinners and cruel persons are affected and moved. Not only humans, even animals, birds, trees, plants etc are also deeply affected by the presence of religious and virtuous personalities. The righteousness and God are indestructible (Nitya). One may have the highest material or physical (Bhautik) powers, but these all are destructible (Anitya). Therefore, though the impression of Pandava’s army on Duryodhana was extreme, still he was gathering courage to narrate to Dronacharya that he was not perturbed by the great religious and virtuous army of Pandavas, as his own side also had similar or might be better warriors than those of Pandavas army, and he would be victorious in the end.

Shlok 8

**भवान्भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिञ्जयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥**

**bhavānbhīṣmaścha karnaścha kṛpaścha samitiñjayaḥ |
aśvatthāmā vikarnaścha saumadattistathaiva cha ||**

There are personalities like yourself, Bhishma (Pitamah), Karna, Kripacharya, Ashwatthama, Vikarna, and Bhurishrava, who are ever victorious in the battle.

(bhavānbhīṣhmaścha) Duryodhan continued to Dronacharya. 'We have warriors like yourself and Bhishma Pitamah.'

(karṇaścha) 'Karna is the greatest warrior of all. I have faith and trust that Karna alone is sufficient to win this army of Pandavas. Even the great warrior Arjuna is nowhere close to his heroism.'

(kripaścha samitiñjayaḥ) 'Guru Kripacharya is also with us who is immortal. He has a boon that no one can kill him. The Scripture states that:

**अश्वत्थामा बलिर्व्यासो हनुमांश्च विभीषणः।
कृपः परशुरामश्च सप्तएते चिरजीविनः॥**

(Ashwathaama Balirvyasa Hanumansha Vibhishanaha, Krupah Parshuramascha Saptaithey Chiranjivinaha)

'Ashwatthama, Bali, Vyas, Hanuman, Vibhishan, Krapacharya, Parashuram and Markendeya are immortal.'

Duryodhana said, 'Guru Kripacharya is our greatest well-wisher and single handedly can defeat the army of Pandavas.'

Swami Ji said that it was expected that Duryodhana should have mentioned the name of Guru Kripacharya immediately after the Dronacharya and Bhishma Pitamaha in order of chain of command and hierarchy. But he mentioned Guru Kripacharya after Karna. Duryodhana had more trust in Karna

than even his Guru Kripacharya. However, since he did not want to offend Dronacharya too as Guru Kripacharya was his brother-in-law and greatly respected, he added word ‘samitiñjayah’ after his name, meaning such a great warrior that no one can defeat him in the war.

(aśhvathāmā) Now Duryodhana mentioned the name of Ashwatthama, who is also an immortal and great son of Dronacharya. He has learnt the knowledge of weaponry from Dronacharya himself and is unconquerable.

(vikarṇaśhcha saumadattis) Duryodhana continued to Dronacharya, ‘There may be many virtuous and religious warriors in the army of Pandavas, but our army also has many religious and virtuous warriors such as brother Vikarna. Bhurishrava, the son of king Somdutt, great grandson of Baahleek, the brother of our great grandfather king Shantanu, is also very religious and virtuous warrior.’

It is worth noticing to observe here that Duryodhana mentioned the names of two great warriors who had the boon of immortality, Guru Kripacharya and Ashwatthama. No one had such boon in the army of Pandavas. He was perhaps trying to impress himself as well as Dronacharya that having such immortal warriors on his side, his army was unconquerable.

Shlok 9

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥

anye cha bahavaḥ śhūrā madarthe tyaktajīvitāḥ |
nānāśhastrapraharaṇāḥ sarve yuddhaviśhāradaḥ ||

Also, there are many other heroic warriors who are prepared to lay down their lives for my sake. They are all very skilled in the art of warfare and equipped with various kinds of weapons.

(anye cha bahavaḥ śhūrā madarthe tyaktajīvitāḥ) Duryodhana was continuing to impress Dronacharya. ‘O Acharya, other than few names which I just mentioned to you, there are numerous other warriors in our army who are prepared to lay their lives for me (Bhisma Prava refers the names of other warriors such as Bhagdatta, Jaydrath etc). Bhagdatta, son of Narakasura, was the king of Pragjyotisha kingdom, a region in modern day Guwahati in Assam. He had a long history of animosity with the Pandavas. His father Narakasura was killed by Lord Krishna. During Rajasuya Yagya, Arjuna fought a war against Bhagadatta for 8 days and after defeating him, he forced him to acknowledge Yudhisthira as the supreme king. Thus, he was very eager to fight war with Pandavas to take his revenge.

Similarly, Jaydratha, brother-in-law of Duryodhana was great enemy of Pandavas. He always had evil eyes towards Draupadi. At the time of their exile, the Pandavas took refuge in the Ashram of Maharishi Trunabindu and Maharishi Dhaumya for some time. One day, when they went to the forest in search of food, Draupadi was alone in the Ashram. Jayadratha, who was also on a hunting trip at that time, saw Draupadi and sent his minister Kotikasya to inquire as to who this lady was? Kotikasya went over to her and after learning about her identity, informed Jayadratha that she was Draupadi, the wife of the Pandavas. Jayadratha, in spite of learning her identity, went to Draupadi and proposed to marry her. Draupadi, welcoming him as the brother-in-law of Kuru family, politely refused his proposal. Infuriated, Jayadratha abducted Draupadi. The Pandavas on return to the Ashrama found Draupadi missing and

learnt the event that had unfolded. Pandavas followed Jaydratha and captured him soon. Bhima seized Jayadratha by his hair, slammed him on the ground with violence and started to kick him on his head. Thrusting him in a chariot in chains, they approached Draupadi. Bhima asked Draupadi for his fate. Draupadi, reading the king Yudhishthira's mind (as Jaydratha was brother-in-law of the family, and Yudhishthira never wanted to kill him), requested Bhima to let him go. Jaydratha felt very humiliated and vowed to take revenge one day. Hence, he was a great enemy of Pandavas. He acquired celestial weapons by his penance later in his desire to defeat Pandavas.

(nānā-śhastra-praharaṇāḥ sarve yuddha-viśhāradaḥ) All these warriors were very skilled in using weaponry system and great Generals knowing the art of organising formation of the soldiers to victory (Vyuh Formation).

Shlok 10

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥

aparyāptaṁ tadasmākaṁ balaṁ bhīṣhmābhirakṣhitam|
Paryatan tvidameteṣhām balaṁ bhīmābhirakṣhitam ||

(Duryodhana continued to Dronacharya) ‘(Only in one scenario) Our army may be unable to conquer the army of Pandavas because we are protected by our Commanding General Bhishma Pitamah who is unbiased towards Pandavas, while the Pandavas army, protected by Bhima, has unity and is very strong.’

(aparyāptaṁ tadasmākaṁ balaṁ bhīṣhmābhirakṣhitam)
Duryodhana was showing his mistrust towards his own

Commanding General Bhishma Pitamaha because he believed he was unbiased (ubhaypakshpati) for both, Pandavas and Kauravs. He loved Pandavas very dearly and also had committed not to kill any of the Pandavas in the war. Also, he was great devotee of Lord Krishna, had great respect to Yudhishtira and love towards Arjuna. The army of Pandavas had unity, fearlessness and no hesitation to achieve the objective. Duryodhana in his heart knew very well that he was on the wrong side of the truth, honesty and religion. Hence, he was feeling very insecure in spite of having 4 Akshohinee more army than Pandavas. Pandavas were having 7 Akshohinee army and Kauravas 11 Akshohinee army. One Akshohinee army was consisting of 21,870 elephants, 21,870 chariots, 65,610 horses and 109,350-foot soldiers.

(Paryatan tvidameteṣhām balaṁ bhīmābhirakṣhitam) Duryodhana was warning Dronacharya here that if he was not careful, Pandavas army could easily conquer Kauravas army because it was protected by Bhima. Bhima was very powerful, great warrior and had defeated him personally many times. Bhima had taken an oath to kill all his hundred brothers. He was so powerful that in spite of once giving himself poison, he did not die.

Another interesting point to note here is that though Duryodhana mentioned the name of Bhishma Pitamah as his Commanding General, but rather comparing his Commanding General with the Commanding General of Pandavas army Dhrastdyumna, he was comparing with Bhima, who did not have any Commanding position in the Pandavas army. It appears that rather than concentrating on Commanding Generals and their strengths, he was concentrating on the strengths of the individual warriors in the respective armies. Here also, he was in conversation with Dronacharya who was

also not the Commanding General of Kauravas army. He was trying to rely more on the strengths of Dronacharya than his own Commanding General Bhishma Pitamah.

Also, it is to be noted here that in the battle field, the warriors of Pandavas army, including Arjuna, did not go to any other senior warrior of their army to discuss any strategy, rather they took weapons in their respective hands and got ready to fight under the command of General Dhrastadyumna, whereas Duryodhana went to Dronacharya to discuss his war strategy. It shows his fear and insecurity even in start of the war.

Swami Ji used to say that it is a natural fact that an unjust, sinful and dishonest person can never have fearlessness, pleasure and peace in his life, which is clearly seen by the behaviour of Duryodhana here. On the other hand, all the warriors of the Pandavas army were honest, religious and followers of justice. Hence in spite of having much lesser number of soldiers in their army, they were confident in winning the war.

Shlok 11

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥

ayaneṣhu cha sarveṣhu yathābhāgamavasthitāḥ |
bhīṣhmamevābhirakṣhantu bhavantaḥ sarva eva hi ||

(Durudhan now addressed other Generals of his army) ‘I call upon all the Generals of the Kaurava army now to stand firmly on their positions and give full support to Grandsire Bhishma Pitamah and defend him from all four sides.’

Dronacharya did not give any reply to Duryodhana on his praises. Hence disheartened, Duryodhana approached his other Generals and spoke thus to them.

Even though Duryodhana had no trust in his Commanding General Bhishma Pitamah, still knowing that Commanding General was the heart of the army, it was necessary to protect him. Any untoward incident to the Commanding General might be disheartening to the moral of the army. He had tried to please Dronacharya in the above verses, but in vain. Now he tried to please his Commanding General Bhishma Pitamah and spoke such kind words to other Generals instructing them to protect Bhishma Pitamaha.

Duryodhana ordered other Generals of his army to protect and defend Commanding General Bhishma Pitamah because he was very afraid that Pandavas might use Shikhandi to have a fight with him. Shikhandi in his previous lifetime was a woman. Bhishma Pitamah had already declared that he would not fight against a woman. In any circumstances, if Shikhandi might come in front of Bhishma Pitamah, he would lay down his weapons and then might be easily killed by Shikhandi himself or any other warriors of Pandavas army. As rightly thought by Duryodhana, his assassination might be very bad for the moral of his army. So, in all circumstances, he should be protected from Shikhandi.

Here Duryodhana was trying to remind the rebirth of Amba as Shikhandi. Amba did great penance only with a sole object to be the reason of killing of Bhishma Pitamaha, and was reborn as Shikhandi to take revenge from Bhishma Pitamah.

Amba was the eldest daughter of the king of Kashi. She had two younger sisters Ambika and Ambalika. The Adi Parva of the Mahabharata narrates the story of Amba's Swayamvara in the kingdom of Kashi. Amba and Shalva (the king of Saubala kingdom) were secretly in love, and Amba had promised to place the Varmala on his neck. Unfortunately, the kingdom of Hastinapur was not invited to take part in this Swayambvara. Bhishma came to know of this ceremony of the three beautiful princesses and went to the Swayamvara to win the princesses for his step-brother Vichitravirya. Once arrived, Bhishma announced his intention to abduct the brides challenging the assembled suitors to stop him, if they could. Bhishma forced the princesses into his chariot and rode away. The kings followed and showered Bhishma with arrows, however, Bhishma returned the attack and defeated them. Shalva challenged Bhishma for a duet. Bhishma overpowered and wounded Shalva but spared his life. Unaware of Amba's feelings, Bhishma proceeded to Hastinapur and presented all the three sisters to mother Satyawati, who made arrangements of their marriage to Vichitravirya. Amba approached Bhishma and the council of Brahmins. She revealed that she and Shalva were in love with each other and that she was going to choose him only as her husband in the Swayamvara if Bhishma would not have abducted her. Bhishma realising that her reasoning was sound, sent her to Shalva with honours, while Ambika and Ambalika were married to Vichitravirya.

Bhishma ensured that Amba was escorted safely to Shalva's kingdom. After reaching to the kingdom of Shalva, Amba informed him her intention of getting married to him. However, Shalva declared that she was rightfully won by Bhishma who defeated him, and as per Kshatriya tradition, he had no right to marry her. Amba pleaded with Shalva, whom she considered her true love to accept her. But Shalva kept on reiterating

Kshatriya Dharma and refused to accept her. Rejected and heartbroken, Amba left Shalva kingdom and went to Bhishma and narrated the whole story. Bhishma then tried to convince Vichitraviraya to marry Amba. But he rejected her on the plea that she was in love with someone else. She then approached Bhishma to marry her. He also refused due to his vow of celibacy. This further infuriated Amba as she had now been spurned by three people. She then went from one kingdom to another to appeal to various kings to defeat Bhishma and do her justice but all of them refused knowing Bhishma's strengths and capabilities. Finally, she went to the forest to please the Gods so that she could get boon from them to have her revenge on Bhishma. In the forest she met Maharishi Shaikhavaty who consoled Amba and promised to guide her in her austerities. In the meantime, she met with Maharishi Hotravahana too who advised her to see Bhagwan Parashuram to find a solution to her problem. Maharishi Hotravahana also introduced her to Maharishi Akritavrana, one of Bhagwan Parashurama's disciples. It is said in the Adi Parva that Maharishi Akritavrana gave Amba two options, either Bhagwan Parashurama should approach Shalva to convince him to marry her or Bhagwan Parashuram should challenge Bhishma in the war. Amba requested Maharishi Akritavrana to advise her on who was the real culprit. Maharishi Akritavrana agreed with Amba that Bhishma was the root cause of her plight and should be the target of her revenge. Maharishi Akritavrana then took her to Bhagwan Parashuram. Bhagwan Parashurama gave his word to Amba that he would punish Bhishma even though he was his disciple, and might destroy his pride.

Bhagwan Parashurama arrived at Kurukshetra and sent a message to Bhishma of his arrival. Bhishma came to see his Guru Bhagwan Parashuram and offered him great respect. A pleased Bhagwan Parashurama commanded Bhishma to accept

Amba in marriage. Bhishma, however, refused, restating that he had taken a vow of celibacy. An infuriated Bhagwan Parashurama then threatened Bhishma with death. Bhishma tried to calm Bhagwan Parashuram, but in vain. He finally agreed to fight with his Guru in a battle to safeguard his Kshatriya duty. Mother Ganga tried to stop this battle by beseeching her son as well as the great sage, but failed. The great battle lasted for 23 days without any results. On the 24th day, when Bhishma was choosing to use a deadly celestial weapon at the behest of the Brahmurishi Narada, Bhagwan Parashurama ended the conflict and the battle was declared a draw. Bhagwan Parashurama then went to Amba, narrated the events and asked her to seek Bhishma's protection. Amba refused to listen to Bhagwan Parashurama's advice and left angrily declaring that she would achieve her objective by asceticism.

Amba then commenced great penance to please the Gods. She gave up food and sleep, and practised asceticism. She continued her penance for twelve years standing in the water of mother Yamuna.

During this time, the Goddess Ganga also appeared before Amba and advised against her objective of penance to kill Bhishma but she did not listen to her too. Finally, Lord Shiva appeared before her and blessed her. He gave a boon to her that in the next birth, she would be born as a man and would be the means of killing Bhishma. In her next birth, she was born as a son of the king Drupada of Panchala kingdom, and became a great warrior. This son of king Drupada was named Shikhandi in the new birth. Amba, now Shikhandi in this birth, continued to remember her previous birth and hatred towards Bhishma.

However, since Bhishma Pitamah knew of her womanhood in the previous birth, he would not fight with Shikhandi, and that was the reason of great worry to Duryodhana.

Shlok 12

तस्य सञ्जनयन्हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥

tasya sañjanayanharṣhaṁ kuruvṛiddhaḥ pitāmahaḥ |
siṁhanādaṁ vinadyochchaiḥ śhaṅkhaṁ dadhmau
pratāpavān ||

Then, the Commanding General of Kauravas and Grandsire of the Kuru dynasty, the glorious patriarch Bhishma, roared like a lion and blew his conch very loudly, giving joy to Duryodhana.

(tasya sañjanayan harṣhaṁ) Bhishma Pitamah did realise insecurity of Duryodhana. As a great psychologist, he understood very well the reason of Duryodhana's praises to Dronacharya to win him. Dronacharya did not reply or give any comments to his praises, so he was disheartened. Somehow, Bhishma Pitamah wanted to cheer his grandson Duryodhana, so he blew his conch very loudly.

(kuru-vṛiddhaḥ) It is interesting to note here why Sanjay had said Bhishma Pitamah is the oldest in Kuru Vansh? Actually, the oldest in the Kuru Vansh present in this Mahabharat war was Bahleek who was the uncle of Bhishma Pitamaha (younger brother of the king Shantanu, father of Bhishma Pitamah). Swami ji did explain this that since among Kuru Vansh present in this war, only Bhishma Pitamah was the most righteous,

religious and God realised person. Irrespective of the age, hence, he was referred as Kuru-vraddh (the oldest Kuru). A righteous, religious, pious and God realised person is always considered as an elder irrespective of his age. This is the reason that irrespective of the age, we always have great respect to Sadhu Sants.

(pratāpavān) Bhishma Pitamah was not only a great warrior, but a great hermit too. He never accepted a kingdom or a woman in his life because of his vow. He was very skilled in the art of the war. When Bhishma Pitamah went to Kashi and abducted three princesses of the Kashi king for his younger brother Vichitrvirya, hundreds of kings of various kingdoms challenged him, and he single handedly defeated them all. Even his own Guru Bhagwan Parashuram could not defeat him. Hence, he was referred as Pratapvan here.

(pitāmahaḥ) Bhishma Pitamah played a role of grandfather here to Duryodhana. We all know that the love of grandfather or great grandfather towards grandchildren and great grandchildren is much more than even their own sons/daughters. When Bhishma Pitamah realised that Dronacharya did not reply or make any comments to the praises of Duryodhana and he was disheartened, his grandfatherly love was awakened, and to cheer him, he blew his conch loudly. Since he played the role of a very loving grandfather, trying to cheer off his great grandson, he was referred here as Pitamah.

(simha-nādaṁ vinadyochchaiḥ śhaṅkhaṁ dadhmau) Swami ji said that we all know when a lion roars in the jungle, all other animals including elephants become fearful. Hence, to make his grandson cheerful, Bhishma Pitamaha roared like a lion so that the warriors of the opposite party may be frightened.

Shlok 13

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥

tataḥ śhaṅkhāśhcha bheryaśhcha paṇavānakagomukhāḥ |
sahasaivābhyahanyanta sa śhabdastumulo'bhavat ||

Thereafter, conchs, kettledrums, bugles, trumpets, and horns suddenly blared forth, and their combined sound was overwhelming.

(tataḥ śhaṅkhāśhcha bheryaśhcha paṇavānaka-gomukhāḥ)
Bhishma Pitamah blew the conch just to cheer off his grandson Duryodhana and not to declare the commencement of the war, but Kauravas army became excited and everyone started blowing their conchs.

The conch is a type of wind instrument that is made from the shell of several different kinds of sea snails. Their natural conical bore is used to produce a musical tone. In Vedic culture, conchs are blown during auspicious ceremonies, religious festivities and in the beginning of the war.

According to the Vedic Scripture, the conch was originated during the 'churning of ocean' (Samudra Manthan) by Surs (Demigods) and Asurs (Demons). Shankh (conch) is a Sanskrit word derived from two Sanskrit words Shum (meaning holy) and Kham (meaning water), meaning a container holding the holy water. That is why conch is filled with water during an auspicious ceremony, and sprinkled all over to purify. When a conch is blown, a divine sound of 'Om' is emanated. The

energy emitted due to blowing of a conch generates a shield of divine consciousness (Chaitanya). The energy aids in reducing the distressing frequencies present in the atmosphere and helps in activating and sustaining divine energy. That is why conchs are blown during auspicious functions. In a war, it is blown to emit radiant energy to distress enemies and bewilder them.

(sahasaivābhyahanyanta) As soon as the Generals of Kauravas army listened the sound of the conch of their Commanding General Bhishma Pitamaha, simultaneously all of them blew their conchs. This was an instant reaction to please Commanding General as well as Duryodhana and a sign of togetherness with them.

(sa śhabdastumulo 'bhavat) The combined sound of all these conchs was terrible.

Shlok 14

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।
माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ॥

tataḥ śhvetairhayairyukte mahati syandane sthitau |
mādhavaḥ pāṇḍavaśhchaiva divyau śhaṅkhau
pradadhmaṭuḥ ||

After that (hearing the conch sounds of Kauravs army), Madhav and Arjun also blew their Divine conchs from amidst the Pandavas army seated in a glorious chariot drawn by white horses.

(śhvetairhayairyukte) The chariot of Arjun was driven by four divine white horses.

Once Chitrath, a Gandharva, gifted one hundred white divine horses to Arjun. These divine white horses were immortal and could travel with a speed of mind. Out of these one hundred horses, Lord Krishan did choose four horses and harnessed them in the chariot of Arjuna.

According to the Ādi Parva of Mahābhārata, during exile period, the Pandavas were travelling to a holy place namely Somaśravāyaṇam near the bank of Ganga. Arjuna was carrying a fire-stick to light their path and also as a means of protection. In an isolated corner of the Gaṅgā, Chitrath, the king of the Gandharvas was engaged in a water sport with his wife. He heard the Pāṇḍavas approaching and was enraged. He stopped them and angrily told Pandavas that the night time was reserved for Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Rākṣasas only and Pandavas were disturbing their peace. This forest was called Aṅgārapaṇa, and he was the king of this forest. Hearing these rude words of Chitraths, Arjuna got angry and replied, “O Gandharva, who has given you the right over these regions of the Gaṅgā and the valleys of Himālayas? These forests and mother Ganga are for everyone. No one can stop us from entering this region.” This angered the Gandharva and he commenced shooting poisonous arrows on Arjuna. Arjuna warded off the arrows by using the antelope skin he was wearing and the fire-stick he was carrying with him. Arjuna thinking in his mind that the Gandharvas were superior to humans and as such might only be defeated by celestial weapons, used Āgneyāstra against him, a celestial weapon given to him by Guru Droṇacharya. This weapon burned down the Gandharva’s chariot and made him unconscious. Arjuna then brought this unconscious Gandharva to his brothers dragging him by the hair. The Gandharva’s wife came to Yudhiṣṭhira requesting him to let her husband go. She humbly prostrated before Yudhisthira and said, “O Yudhiṣṭhira,

you are the Dharmaraja. I am Kumbhīnasī, the helpless wife of the Gandharva. Please do mercy on me and release my husband from your captivity”. Yudhiṣṭhira then instructed Arjuna to let the Gandharva go. The Gandharva on gaining consciousness, then humbly prostrated before Pandavas and said to Arjuna, ‘O great warrior Arjuna, I lost to you in duet. In your honour, I decorate you with the title of Aṅgāraparṇa. Lord Brahma blessed me once with the special skills of war called ‘Cākṣuṣī’ due to my immense penance to Him. As you spared my life, I pass this skill onto you. A person who possesses this skill can visualise all happenings in the universe. Also, I gift you one hundred divine white horses. They are immortal and capable of running at the speed of the mind’. Thus, Arjun got these divine white hundred horses as a gift from the Gandharva Chitrath.

(mahati syandane sthitau) Arjuna was sitting in a great chariot driven by Lord Krishna Himself. This chariot was gifted to Arjuna by the Lord Fire (Agni Dev). This was quite a large chariot which may store weapons equivalent to nine standard chariots. This was made out of gold and was a meteoric chariot. Its flag shined like electricity. Though this flag was very big, still it was practically weightless, never stopped flying and not trappable by trees. Lord Hanuman was sitting on this flag.

Once Khandav-van became a place of inhumane activities and residence of demons, evil people and dangerous animals. On the request of Maharishi Dhomya, Lord Fire (Agni Dev) wanted to destroy this forest which was haven for such cowardly demons by his fire power. But unfortunately, these demons were worshippers of Lord Indra and were under his protection. So, whenever Lord Fire wanted to destroy the forest, Lord Indra would instigate rain and extinguish the fire. Arjun helped him in destroying this ill-famed Khandav-van by

his Agni-van. Pleased with Arjun, then Lord Fire gifted him this great chariot.

(sthitau) Lord Krishna as charioteer and Arjuna as warrior were sitting in this chariot. This ‘sthitau’ is a unique word in Sanskrit which is used only to describe sitting of divine and virtuous personality. Hence, one might conclude that this specific word used by Bhagwan Ved Vyas was to specify that divine personalities were sitting in this great chariot gifted by Lord Fire to Arjuna.

(mādhavaḥ pāṇḍavaśhchaiva) Bhagwan Ved Vyas has used the word Madhav here to address Lord Krishna. In Sanskrit, Madhav word is made of two words, Maa and Dhav. ‘Maa’ is the name of mother Lakshmi, and ‘Dhav’ means husband. Here it is clearly shown by Bhagwan Ved Vyas that Krishna is none other than husband of mother Lakshmi, that is Lord Vishnu. Arjun is pronounced as ‘pāṇḍavaśhchaiva’ means the best among Pandavas. Lord Krishna in 10th Chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita has clarified why Arjuna is the best among Pandavas (Pandvanam dhananjayah). Arjun was the incarnation of His ‘Nar’ roop (form) where Lord Krishna Himself was the incarnation of ‘Narayan’ (‘Narayanam Namaskratya Naram Narottam). We salute to both Nar and Narayan (as Arjun and Lord Krishna). Wherever there is ‘Nar’ Arjun and ‘Narayan’ Lord Krishna, there will be divinity, victory, fame and justice.

(divyau śhaikhau pradadhmatuḥ) Both Lord Krishna and Arjun also had divine brilliant conchs which were blown by them too.

There may be doubt here that neither Lord Krishna nor Arjuna were the Commanding General of the army of the Pandavas. Usually, when a Commanding General of the opposite side is

blowing the conch, it is first responded by the Commanding General of the other side of the army, followed by other Generals, Commanders etc. Swami ji explained this in a very lay-man language. Even though Lord Krishna might be a charioteer of Arjun, but He was the God incarnate. The importance of divinity is not diminished just by accepting a lower position such as charioteer. Lord Krishna is always the most important divinity and leader irrespective of whomsoever may be the Commanding General. This is a lesson for all of us too. If you are a devotee (Bhakt) of Lord, never mind what position you may have, you will always be at a higher position in the spiritual world. So, do not worry about your position, power, fame etc, just concentrate on Almighty and try to take His blessings. Also remember that those persons in society having feelings of arrogance, pride and being respected because they have somehow got a higher position in a society, are actually the lowest among the eyes of the Lord.

Shlok 15

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनञ्जयः ।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥

pāñchajanyaṁ hrīṣhīkeśho devadattaṁ dhanañjayah |
paunḍraṁ dadhmau mahāśhaṅkhaṁ bhīmakarmā
vṛikodarah ||

Hrishikesh blew his conch called Panchajanya, and Arjun blew the Devadutta conch. Bheem, the voracious eater and performer of herculean tasks, blew his mighty conch, called Paundra.

(pāñchajanyaṁ hrīṣhīkeśho) Lord Krishna blew a conch named Panchjanya.

Lord Krishna got this Panchajany conch after killing the Panchajanya demon. This story is described in the Vishnu Parva of Harivamsa. When Lord Krishna and Lord Balarama completed their education at Maharishi Sandipini's Ashram, knowing that Lord Krishna is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, Maharishi Gurudev Sandipini asked Him to bring back his son which was drowned in the sea in Guru Dakshina to him. Then, Lord Krishna went into the ocean. Seeing Lord Krishna, the ocean appeared with folded hands. Lord Krishna requested the ocean, 'O great Ocean, you are my Kul-guru. I humbly request you to kindly return me son of my Guru Sandipini'. Then the Ocean answered, 'O Madhava, the great demon Panchajanya in the form of a whale has swallowed the boy'. Hearing this, Lord Krishna found Panchajanya demon and killed him, but he did not find the boy in the belly of this demon. This demon was surrounded by a beautiful conch. Lord Krishna took this conch with him and named this as Panchjanaya conch. This conch had great powers combined of that of a demon as well as divine, hence its blowing was very fearful to the enemies. Whenever Lord Krishna blew this conch, it foreshadowed the death of his opponents. The boy later was recovered by Lord Krishna and Lord Balarama from Yamaraja.

(devadattam dhanañjayah) Arjuna blew the conch named Devdatta. Devadatta conch (also known as Varuna Shankha) was a gift to Arjuna from Varuna Dev. During the exile of Pandavas, Lord Krishna ordered Arjuna to go to the forest and to pray Gods (Devatas) to please them and obtain celestial weapons from them. Pleased with his penance, Lord Indra blessed him with powerful 'Gandiva Dhanush' and Lord Varun with 'Devdutta Shankh.' Other Devas such as Kubera, Yama

etc also followed the suit and blessed him with other potent celestial weapons. This Devdutta conch had a power to blow the air with very high speed like a storm, and to bring thunder and lightning enough to frighten the enemies.

(paunḍraṁ dadhmau mahā-śhaṅkhaṁ bhīma-karmā vṛkodarah) Most powerful Bhima blew his most powerful conch Paundram. (paunḍraṁ dadhmau mahāśaṅkhaṁ bhīmakarmā vṛkodarah). It is said in the Scripture that this conch, which originally belonged to the king Bali, was gifted to Bhima by the great grandson of Bali, the king Paundra. Its sound was enough to terrify the enemies.

Shlok 16, 17 and 18

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।
सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्धुः पृथक् पृथक् ॥

anantavijayaṁ rājā kuntīputro yudhiṣṭhiraḥ |
nakulaḥ sahadewaścha sughoṣha-maṇipuṣhpakau ||

kāśhyaścha parameśhvāsaḥ śhikhaṇḍī cha mahārathaḥ |
dhṛiṣṭadyumno virāṭaścha sātyakiśchāparājitaḥ ||

**drupado draupadeyāśhcha sarvaśhaḥ prithivīpate |
saubhadraśhcha mahābāhuḥ śhaṅkhāndadhmuh prithak
prithak ||**

The king Yudhishtir, son of Kunti, blew his conch named Anantavijay, while Nakul and Sahadev also blew their respective conchs named Sughosh and Manipushpak. The excellent archer and the king of Kashi, other great warriors such as Shikhandi, Dhristadyumna, Virat, and the invincible Satyaki, Drupad, the five sons of Draupadi, and the mighty Abhimanyu, son of Subhadra, all blew their respective conchs.

In these three verses, names of the conchs of different warriors of the Pandavas army are described who also blew their conchs respectively after Lord Krishna, Arjuna and Bhima.

(anantavijayaṁ rājā kuntī-putro yudhisṭhiraḥ) It is stated in the Scripture that the conch named Anant Vijay was gifted to Yudhishtira (Kunti Putra) by Dharmaraja, his father. Anant Vijaya means that possessor of this is unbeaten in any war. Though Yudhishtira was not a king yet, but his reference as the king means he is going to be the king soon (he would be victorious in this great war Mahabharat and would be crowned as the king after his victory eventually).

(nakulaḥ sahadevaśhcha sughoṣha-maṇipuṣhpakau) Sughosh conch of Nakul and Manipushpak conch of Sahadev were also celestial gifts to them by their father Ashwini Kumar. (nakulaḥ sahadevaśha sughoṣamaṇapuṣhpakau). ‘Sughosh’ means a very pleasant sound.’ Maṇipuṣhpaka’ is a Sanskrit word made up with two words- maṇi and puṣhpaka, that is a conch made out of the precious stones and in the shape of flower.

All other great warriors and commanders of the Pandavas army also blew their own conchs separately. Here, further special mention was given to the king of Kashi, Shikhandi, Dhrishtadyumna, Virat, Satyaki, Drupad, the five sons of Draupadi, and the mighty Abhimanyu, son of Subhadra.

It is interesting to note here that though Sanjay mentioned the specific names of the conchs of the most of the Generals of the army of Pandavas which they blew, but did not mention any such details from the side of Kauravas army. Swami Ji stated that since Sanjay was not having much respect to the army of Kauravas which was on a destructive path anyway, hence he did not bother to provide great details of the conchs of the Kaurava army. Kauravas army had discord, disharmony and was on the wrong path following evil, immoral, unrighteous and wicked principles. The Pandavas army was on the righteous path with Lord Krishna as their leader, thus Sanjay was having great respect for this side, and so described their acts in details.

Shlok 19

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलोऽभ्यनुनादयन् ॥

Sa ghoṣho dhārtarāṣṭrāṇāṃ hṛidayāni vyadārayat |
nabhaśhcha pṛithivīm chaiva tumuloabhyananādayan ||

The terrific sound (of the conchs) thundered across the sky and the earth, and shattered the hearts of your sons, O Dhratrasthra.

(sa ghoṣho dhārtarāṣṭrāṇāṃ hṛidayāni vyadārayat) The sounds of these conchs of the Generals of the army of Pandavas was so

strong that it pierced the hearts of the Kauravas army. They felt similar pain merely by the sounds of these conchs as if attacked by celestial weapons. This frightened and demoralised the army of Kauravas. Bhagwan Ved Vyas had used the word ‘dhārtarāṣhṭrāṇām’ for the army of Kauravas, which according to Swami Ji means ‘the supporters of the sons of Dhratrashta who have acquired the kingdom of Pandavas by wrongful means’. The army of Kauravas was trying to protect an unjust side hence their hearts were fissured by the sounds of the conchs of the virtuous Generals of the Pandavas army.

It is interesting to note here that though the Generals and great warriors of Kauravas army also blew their respective conchs, that sound had no effect on the hearts and minds of the Pandavas army. Swami Ji said that the hearts and minds of the people following righteous and religious path are very strong and they are never frightened. On the other hand, those who are unrighteous, immoral, wicked and sinners, they are cowards and easily frightened.

There is a great lesson hidden here for all of us to learn. One should never follow a path of injustice and unrighteousness. As soon as these wicked qualities enter the heart of a person, he loses all his virtues. An example given by Swami ji is that Ravan, the king of Lanka, was very powerful and the whole universe was frightened merely by hearing his name. But when he went to kidnap mother Sita, he was trembling with fear. Goswami Tulsi Das Ji in Shri Ram Charit Manas describes:

सून बीच दसकंधर देखा। आवा निकट जती कें बेषा॥
जाकें डर सुर असुर डेराहीं। निसि न नीद दिन अन्न न खाहीं॥

‘soon beech daskandhar dekha, aawaa nikat jateen ke
veshaa |
jaaake dar sur asur daraaheen, nisi na need din ann na
khaaheen ||’

Shlok 20

अथ व्यवस्थितान्द्रष्टा धार्तराष्ट्रान् कपिध्वजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसम्पाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ।
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ॥

atha vyavasthitān dṛiṣṭvā dhārtarāṣṭrān kapidhwajaḥ |
pravṛitte śhastrasampāte dhanurudyamya pāṇḍavaḥ |
hṛiṣhīkeśaṁ tadā vākyaamidamāha mahīpate ||

Seeing that the Kauravs army is ready to fight, the son of Pandu Arjuna, who had the insignia of Hanuman on the flag of his chariot, took up his bow. (Sanjay said) Seeing your sons arrayed against him, O king Dhratrashta, Arjuna then spoke the following words to Lord Krishna.

(atha vyavasthitān dṛiṣṭvā dhārtarāṣṭrān) Seeing the army of ‘dhārtarāṣṭrān’ (supporters of the sons of Dhratrashta who have acquired the kingdom of Pandavas by wrongful means) (kapi-dhwajaḥ dhanurudyamya pāṇḍavaḥ) the Pandava Arjun who had Lord Hanuman sitting on his flag of the chariot, took up his bow (Gandiva Dhanush) to fight.

Here Bhagwan Ved Vyas compared the character of Duryodhana with that of Arjuna. When Duryodhana saw the organised army of the Pandavas in Vyuha formation, he was frightened and ran to Dronacharya. But when Arjuna saw the army of the Kauravas, he took up his weapon Gandiva Dhanush

and got ready to fight without any fear. This was the difference between two characters – unjust (Duryodhana) and righteous (Arjuna).

Also, Sanjay was reminding the king Dharatrashtta that Arjuna was having Lord Hanuman as his protector sitting on his flag of chariot, thus unconquerable. All these signs were enough to frighten the army of Kauravas.

There is a very interesting story on how Arjuna got the blessings of Lord Hanuman to be seated on the flag of his chariot during Mahabharat war. When Pandavas were in exile, one day Lord of Wind (Vayu Dev) brought one divine lotus flower and offered this to Draupadi. Seeing this divine, but only one flower, Draupadi requested Bhima to bring him more from the forest. Bhima ventured back into the forest to fulfil the desire of Draupadi. When he reached Kadli-van, he met his elder brother Lord Hanuman. Bhima prostrated before his elder brother Lord Hanuman and begged him to protect him always. Pleased with the devotion of Bhima, Lord Hanuman blessed him, ‘O Bhima, son of Lord Wind (Pawan Putra), when you would be terrifying the army of your enemies by roaring like lion and by the severe attacks of your weapons, I, sitting on the flag of the chariot of Arjuna, would protect both of you and Arjuna, and enhance your roaring which would take lives of your enemies without much efforts (very easily). Thus, Lord Hanuman was seated on the flag of the chariot of Arjuna as His promise made to Bhima which was a sure sign of the victory to the Pandavas.

(pravṛtite śhastra-sampāte) Though the official signal to commence the war was yet to be made, but somehow the conch blown by Commanding General of the Kauravas army Bhishma Pitamah, which was blown merely to please his grandson

Duryodhana who was disheartened from Dronachary, was mistaken as announcement of the commencement of the war. Hence Arjuna also got ready for the war and took up his Gandiva bow.

(hṛīṣhīkeśhaṁ tadā vākyam idam āha mahī-pate) (Sanjay is continuing to narrate) ‘O king Dhratrashtra (after taking up his Gandiv bow), Arjuna spoke to Lord Krishna as following.’

Shlok 21 and 22

अर्जुन उवाच ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥

यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।
कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे ॥

Arjuna Uvācha |
senayorubhayormadhye ratham sthāpaya me'chyuta ||

yāvadetānnirīkṣhe'haṁ yoddhukāmānavasthitān |
kairmayā saha yoddhavyamasmin raṇasamudyame ||

Arjun said, ‘O Infallible One (Achyut, name of Lord Krishna), please take my chariot to the middle of both armies so that I may look at the warriors arrayed for battle whom I must fight in this great combat.

(senayor ubhayor madhye ratham sthāpaya me 'chyuta) Arjuna spoke to Lord Krishna, ‘O Achyut (another name of Lord Krishna), please take my chariot in between the armies of both sides.’

Both the Kauravs and Pandavas armies were standing in front of each other at a distance where the front-line warriors could attack using arrows or by throwing deadly weapons but no physical duets were possible. There was a considerable gap between the position of two armies. Arjuna requested Lord Krishna to take his chariot to this gap so that he could see by his own eyes all the warriors of the Kauravas and Pandava's armies standing in front line.

Swami Ji said that this shows the fearlessness of Arjuna. When Duryodhana was frightened to see the army of Pandavas, he ran to Dronacharya. Here, Arjuna getting ready to fight, requested Lord Krishna to take him to the middle of both the armies to see his enemies as well as warriors of his own army.

(yāvadetān nirīkṣhe 'haṁ) 'O Keshava, I want to see the warriors of Kauravas taking part in this war.'

(yoddhu-kāmān avasthitān) 'I want to see the warriors who are desirous of fighting with us in Kauravas army'.

Here, Arjuna referred that we (Pandavas) were trying to have peace with them (Kauravas), but declining our peace offer, they were more desirous of fighting a war, so I would like to see such war mongers.

(kairmayā saha yoddhavyam asmin raṇa-samudyame) Arjuna continued, 'O Keshava, I want to see with whom I have to fight in this war.'

Arjuna wanted to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of his enemies. This is always a war strategy of the wise Commanders to never consider their enemies as weak in any sense. Each and every warrior is compared for his strengths and weaknesses,

and then strategy is planned keeping an eye on these strengths and weaknesses of the warriors.

Shlok 23

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥

yotsyamānānavekṣhe'haṁ ya ete'tra samāgatāḥ |
dhārtarāṣṭrasya durbuddheryuddhe priyachikīrṣhavaḥ ||

I desire to see those who have come here to fight on the side of the evil-minded son of Dhratrasthra, wishing to please him.

(yotsyamānān avekṣhe 'haṁ ya ete 'tra samāgatāḥ) Arjuna said to Lord Krishna, 'I want to see the warriors who have assembled here to fight with us.'

Arjuna wanted to see the warriors of Kauravas side who have taken the side of unrighteousness and injustice.

(dhārtarāṣṭrasya durbuddher yuddhe priya-chikīrṣhavaḥ) Here, Arjuna used the word 'evil-minded' (durbuddhi) for the son of Dhratrasthra (Duryodhana). Duryodhana hatched numerous conspiracies to destroy the Pandavas including their death. He tried various ways to insult them. Lawfully, the Pandavas were entitled to get back their kingdom of Indraprastha but he wanted to grab their righteous right by illegal means. Hence, he was evil-minded. Arjuna was also showing his surprise on all those kings who had come in the battle field to fight against Pandavas favouring such a wicked man. A true friend is the one who always thinks best of his

friend and gives right, religious and just advises. How could these kings be called friends of Duryodhana who were taking part in his downfall?

Swami ji said that if these friends would have advised Duryodhana to be a righteous person and to return their Indraprastha kingdom, Duryodhana would have enjoyed the kingdom of Hastinapur and looked after his welfare for both the words, this world (Ihlok) and after death world (Perlok).

Shlok 24 and 25

सञ्जय उवाच ।

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरुनिति ॥

Saṅjaya Uvācha |

evamukto hṛīṣhīkeśho guḍākeśhena bhārata |
senayorubhayormadhye sthāpayitvā rathottamam ||

bhīṣhmadroṇapramukhataḥ sarveṣhām cha mahīkṣhitām |
uvācha pārtha paśhyaitānsamavetaṅkurūniti ||

Sanjay said, ‘O Dhrratrastra, having thus been addressed by Arjun, Lord Krishna then drew the magnificent chariot between the two armies. In the presence of Bhishma, Dronacharya, and all the other kings, Lord Krishna said, ‘O Parth, behold these Kurus gathered here.’

(evamukto hṛīṣhīkeśho guḍākeśhena bhārata, senayor ubhayor madhye sthāpayitvā rathottamam) Sanjay continued his

narration to the king Dhratrashtṛa, ‘O king Dhratrashtṛa, listening these words of Gudakesh (This is another name of Arjuna meaning the one who has beautiful curly hair), Hrīṣhīkeśh (This is one of the thousand names of Lord Krishna meaning the one who has control on all the sense organs. Hṛsheek is called for sense organs and one who has control over them is Hrīṣhīkeśh), took the chariot in the middle of both the armies.

(bhīṣhma-droṇa-pramukhataḥ sarveṣhām cha mahī-kṣhitām) Lord Krishna, intentionally by His Wisdom and skill of charioteering, halted the chariot at such a place from where Arjuna could clearly see the Commanding General of Kauravas army Bhishma Pitamah, Guru Dronacharya and other great warriors which might be very dear to Arjuna (such as Kripacharya etc).

(uvācha pārtha paśhyaitān samavetān kurūn iti) Bhagwan Ved Vyas used the word ‘Kuru’ intentionally here to describe Kauravas (which are no different to Pandavas as the king Kuru was the ancestor of both Kauravas and Pandavas and belong to the same clan). This word signified why Arjuna was bewildered. He saw both, Kauravas and Pandavs, as Kurus, and thus members of one clan only. Thus, he questioned in his mind that why was he fighting to kill his own clan? As a great psychologist, Lord Krishna knew this possible behaviour of Arjuna and therefore intentionally wanted that by seeing his own clan people, love, affection and attraction (Moh) of Arjuna towards them should be awakened now. Then, Lord Krishna would be able to destroy this so-called love, affection and attraction (Moh) of Arjuna towards them to fight the war till the end following his Kshatriya tradition. Lord Krishna did not want that somewhere in the middle of the war, his love,

attraction and affection towards his clan was awakened and then he refused to fight. Let it happen in the beginning only.

Swami Ji gave a very good example to understand the way of working of Lord to show the right path to his devotee. When someone has an abscess, the physician wants it to mature first. Once matured, he bursts it and applies the proper ointment to heal it. Similarly, the Lord first develops so called love, affection and attraction (Moh) in his devotees towards materialistic things, and then destroys them. Here, Lord Krishna has developed this Maya Moh in Arjuna now to his nearest and dearest, so that eventually he could destroy this Maya Moh by giving Gyan (knowledge) of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita.

Swami Ji said that in the love, affection and attraction (Maya Moh) towards materialistic things, including love towards your near and dear, the person forgets vice and demerits of the near and dear ones. Similarly, when a person becomes a devotee of God (God loves His devotees so intensely), then God forgets the vice and demerits of the devotee and purifies him. In the materialistic love (including love towards family members), it is love to the body and materials, but in love towards God, primarily it is a feeling of lineament and intimacy towards God. In materialistic love, a person forgets right and wrong in doing his duties because his love is guided by the welfare of his loved ones, but in a love to God, the person performs his duties as per righteous path and understands well the difference between right and wrong.

Shlok 26

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान् पार्थः पितृ नथ पितामहान् ।
 आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातृन्पुत्रान्यौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ।
 श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ॥

tatrāpaśhyatsthitān pārthaḥ pitṛī natha pitāmahān |
 āchāryānmātulānbhrātṛīnputrānpautrānsakhīms tathā |
 śhvaśhurānsuhṛidaśhchaiva senayorubhayorapi ||

Arjuna now could see his seniors (like his father), grandfather (like his grandfather), teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, cousins, sons, nephews, grand-nephews, friends, fathers-in-laws, and well-wishers amidst the army of Kauravas.

Lord Krishna now said to Arjuna, ‘O Partha, now see your kin among both the armies - yours and Kauravas.’ Arjuna saw that in the army of Kauravas, there were his uncles (such as Bhurishrava, who was the brother of his father and for whom he had immense love). He also saw Bhishma Pitamah, Somdutt etc, who were his grandfathers. Also saw Dronacharya, Krapacharay etc, who were his great and loving teachers. He saw Puruji, Shalya, Shakuni etc, his maternal uncles. Abhimanyu, Ghatotkach, Lakhsman (son of Duryodhana) were also there eager to lay their lives. He saw his grandsons such as sons of Lakshman. He saw Ashwatthama, son of his Guru Dronacharya and many his past friends. He saw Drupada, Shaibya etc, his father-in-law. His well-wishers and disciples such as Satyaki, Krativarma and Suhrad etc were also there in the army.

Shlok 27

तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्बन्धूनवस्थितान् ।
कृपया परयाविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ॥

tānsamīkṣhya sa kaunteyaḥ sarvānbandhūnavasthitān |
kṛipayā parayāviṣṭo viṣīdannidamabravīt ||

Seeing all his relatives present there, Arjun, the son of Kunti, was overwhelmed with compassion and deep sorrow. He spoke the following words (to Lord Krishna).

(tān samīkṣhya sa kaunteyaḥ sarvān bandhūn avasthitān)
Bhisma Parva mentioned that in addition to the warriors of both sides, Pandavas and Kauravas, as described above, Arjuna also saw his other relatives such as great grandfather Bahlika, brothers-in-law such as Surath, Jaydrath etc.

Bahlika, the king of Bahlika kingdom was the younger brother of Shantanu, king of Hastinapur and the uncle of Bhishma. He was the oldest warrior (in age) to fight in the Mahabharata war. He had a son, Somadatta and grandson Bhurishravas, who all fought on the side of the Kauravas army in the Kurukshetra war. Bahlika always wanted peace among the Kul (clan) and was a very noble person. He fought on the side of Kauravas because of his love to Bhishma Pitamah.

Jaydrath, as described earlier, was husband of Duhshala, sister of Kauravas and thus brother-in-law of Kauravas and Pandavas. Surath was his son.

When Arjuna saw that the warriors of both sides were his dear and near relatives, his mind was bewildered. He thought that

irrespective of which side's warrior might be killed in the war; it would be a personal loss to him. This thought destroyed his desire to fight the war, and a feeling of cowardice was awakened inside his mind. In the following chapters, Arjuna had accepted this weakness by saying to Lord Krishna 'Hradaydrobalyam' - weakness of the heart.

(kripayā parayāviṣṭo) Bhagwan Ved Vyas said that this thought of cowardice appeared in the mind of Arjuna just now after seeing his relatives. Arjuna was not a coward by nature. Our scripture says that instant circumstantial thoughts are never permanent. Eventually, such thoughts are always overtaken by inherent qualities when shown a mirror by a learned person.

Arjun was a natural great hero and warrior. This was well known by Lord Krishna. Hence, He tried to show a mirror to Arjuna by the teachings of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita to awaken natural heroism within him, and also taught a righteous path for a Kshatriya.

Swami Ji described the meaning of cowardice in a very lay-man language. Cowardice is just not defined for not fighting a war following the righteous Kshatirya dharma. Denigrating someone without any reasons, insulting a senior or fellow person, antagonising someone, having animosity towards anyone, having thoughts to destroy someone, all these traits in a person are categorised as act of 'cowardice'. It is Kshatirya dharma to kill any person who has such cowardice tendencies. Duryodhana, Duhshasana, Shakuni etc most of the warriors of Kauravas side with the exception of few, were having such cowardice tendencies, hence deserved to be killed. Any thought of not killing them, was itself a thought of cowardice. Arjuna was showing mercy to those who wanted to destroy him, his kingdom and his family. Hence his thought of mercy against

such people was against the Kshatriya dharma, and thus cowardice.

(viṣhīdann idam abravīt) Arjuna was very worried and sad on the thoughts of the results of this war. ‘What was going to happen to my clan, my friends and my well-wishers etc?’ this thought bewildered his mind.

Shlok 28, 29, 30 and 31

अर्जुन उवाच ।

दृष्ट्वेमं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ।
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ॥

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥

गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।
न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।
न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥

Arjuna Uuvācha ।

drīṣṭvemaṁ svajanaṁ kṛīṣhṇa yuyutsum samupasthitam
sīdanti mam a gātrāṇi mukhaṁ cha pariśhuṣhyati ॥

Vepathuśhcha śharīre me romaharṣhaśhcha jāyate ॥

gāṇḍīvaṁ sraṁsate hastā ttvakchaiva paridahyate ।
na cha śhaknomy avasthātum bhramatīva cha memanaḥ ॥

nimittāni cha paśhyāmi viparītāni keśhava |
na cha śhreyo'nupaśhyāmi hatvā svajanamāhave ||

Arjun said, 'O Krishna, seeing my own kinsmen arrayed for battle here and intent on killing each other, my limbs are giving way and my mouth is drying up. My whole body is shuddering. My hairs are standing on end. My bow, the Gāṇḍīva, is slipping from my hand, and my skin is burning all over. My mind is in quandary and whirling in confusion. I am unable to hold myself steady any longer. O Krishna, killer of the Keshi demon, I only see omens of misfortune. I do not foresee how any good may come from killing my own kinsmen in this battle?'

(dṛiṣṭvemaṁ sva-janaṁ kṛiṣṇa yuyutsuṁ samupasthitam) Swami Ji said that Arjuna was very fond of the name 'Krishna', and he usually preferred to address Dwarkadheesh by this name. In Shrimad Bhagwad Gita, Arjuna has used this name 'Krishna' nine times. Similarly, Lord Krishna was very fond of the name Partha for Arjun. 'Yatr Yogeshwarah Krashno yatr Partho dhanurdharah'

Arjun said to Lord Krishna, 'O Krishna, (dṛiṣṭvemaṁ sva-janaṁ) I am seeing my family members all over'.

Swami Ji said that Arjuna had addressed here the same gatherings of the warriors of the war (both Pandavas and Kauravas) in a different way than the king Dhratrashttra. The king Dhratrashttra addressed this gathering using the word 'Mamkaa Pandvaschaiv' (my sons and the sons of Pandu), thus differentiating both sides in mine and yours. But Arjuna said dṛiṣṭvemaṁ sva-janaṁ, seeing my kin (from both the sides, Pandavas and Kauravas). Arjuna did not differentiate in mine

and yours. This is a great quality of the righteous person which Arjun had and eventually led to the victory to Pandavas.

In these Shloks, Arjuna is very sad and worried about the results of this war. This worry was affecting his ability to fight and his courage. Swami Ji said that this is a normal effect of worries anyway. Arjuna said, 'All the organs of my body, hands, legs, mouth are loosening the grip. My mouth is drying up and I am having difficulties even to speak. My whole body is trembling. I am having a feeling of horripilation. The noise of stringing of my bow Gandiva was enough to frighten my enemies, now, the same Gandiva bow is slipping out of my hands. All my body is having burning sensation. I am bewildered. I do not know what to do? It appears that soon I will be unconscious and fall down. It seems to me a great sin even to see this war.'

(nimittāni cha paśhyāmi viparītāni keśhava) Arjun further said, 'I am only seeing bad omens.'

Swami Ji said that it is strange that a knowledgeable person like Arjun was confused between the signs of bad omens and symptoms of his body because of his worries. If one has enthusiasm in the beginning to do any task and this is maintained throughout, it is a sure sign of success and victory. But if enthusiasm tapers down, then the desired results of that task are doubtful. Drying up of mouth, trembling of the body, horripilation etc are the signs of deep worry, and not regarded as omens. On the other hand, meteor from the sky, off season eclipse of Sun or Moon, earth quake, frightening sounds by animals and birds, showering of blood from the sky etc are considered as bad omens. Though these bad omens too happened in the beginning of the war, but had nothing to do with the defeat or victory of any particular side, but forecasting destruction of millions of human lives.

(na cha śhreyo 'nupaśhyāmi hatvā sva-janam āhave). Arjuna continued, 'O Krishana, I do not see any benefit in killing my own kin. In my opinion, I am destroying this life (Ihlok) as well as the life after death (Parlok) by involving in this sinful deed of the war. This is a great sin to kill near and dear relatives, and will lead me to hell.'

Shlok 32 and 33

न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण च राज्यं सुखानि च ।
किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥

येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ।
त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ॥

na kāṅkṣhe vijayaṁ kṛiṣṇa cha rājyaṁ sukhāni cha |
kiṁ no rājyena govinda kiṁ bhogair jīvitena vā ||

yeṣhāmarthe kāṅkṣhitaṁ no rājyaṁ bhogaḥ sukhāni cha |
ta ime'vasthitā yuddhe prāṇāṁstyaktvā dhanāni cha ||

O Krishna, I do not desire the victory, kingdom, or the happiness accruing from it. Of what avail will be a kingdom, pleasures, or even life itself, when the very persons for whom we covet so much, are standing before us in the battle to give up the hope of their lives and kingdoms etc?

(na kāṅkṣhe vijayaṁ kṛiṣṇa na cha rājyaṁ sukhāni cha) Arjuna continued, 'O Krishna, even if I win the war and become controller of the whole earth, so what? Though we may get materialistic happiness by winning the war, but can we ever

recover from the losses which we may encounter by winning this war? I do not want any pleasure which may come out to me by winning this sinful war.'

(kiṁ no rājyena govinda kiṁ bhogair jīvitena vā) 'When I have no desire to get pleasure from winning this war, then does it really matter that I should go for it? If we kill our near and dear ones and we live for several years, what is the benefit of such a living that every day we will be haunted by the memories of our dead near and dear relatives.'

(yeṣhām arthe kāṅkṣitaṁ no rājyaṁ bhogāḥ sukhāni cha) 'Am I not right that we want kingdom, happiness and materialistic pleasures to enjoy with the family members? I do not give any value to the victory at the cost of my kin. Our duty is to serve our elders and teachers, and to give love and affection to our next generation. We only want kingdom, pleasures etc for these family members. What is the use of this kingdom and collecting materialistic pleasures if they are not going to be there to enjoy with you?'

(ta ime 'vasthitā yuddhe prāṇāṁs tyaktvā dhanāni cha) 'Seeing all my near and dear relatives in this war on both sides, it looks they have given up hopes of their lives and standing here in the war to fight for us selflessly. It appears to me that by giving up hope of their lives, their kingdoms, their own materialistic pleasures, they are here to fight for our victory and our pleasure. Victory and pleasure to us for what? Is it not a sin to kill these innocent people for meeting our selfish end of gaining kingdom and materialistic pleasures?'

Shlok 34 and 35

आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ।
मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः सम्बन्धिनस्तथा ॥

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ।
अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ॥

āchāryāḥ pitaraḥ putrāstathaiv cha pitāmahāḥ |
mātulāḥ śhvaśhurāḥ pautrāḥ śhyālāḥ
sambandhinastathā ||

etānna hantumichchhāmi ghnato'pi madhusūdana |
api trailokyarājyasya hetoḥ kiṁ nu mahīkṛite ||

Teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers, maternal uncles, grandsons, fathers-in-law, grand-nephews, brothers-in-law and other kinsmen are present here staking their lives and wealths. O Madhusudan, I do not wish to slay them even if they attack me. If we kill the sons of Dhratrashtra, what satisfaction will we derive from the dominion over the three worlds, what to speak of this Earth?

The war is fought basically for two reasons - to counter misadventures or for greed. Swami ji said that when someone is doing misadventure against you, anger is developed. This anger leads you to try to destroy the one who is doing misadventure against you. Greed is caused by the desire of collecting materialistic things such as kingdom or items of pleasures etc. Arjuna, in this state of mind, neither could think that Kauravas have done any misadventure against him or his family nor he has any interest in greed, that is winning kingdom

and so on. So, there is no interest in the mind of Arjuna to go for the war. He is trying to justify this action in these two Shloks.

Arjuna said to Lord Krishna, ‘O Madhusudan (Name of the Lord Krishna after he killed Madhu demon), if these my kin want to attack me in anger considering that I have done any misadventure against them in the past, I do not want to retaliate their actions in anger in the form of war. If they want to fight with me to gain control of the kingdom for greed, still to regain control of that kingdom, I do not want to attack them. Both types of the actions, either to retaliate misadventure in anger or for greed, open the door for the hell.’

Arjuna used the word ‘api’ to describe his state of mind. He meant that let him not be an obstacle in achieving their selfish goal. If he was not an obstacle in achieving their selfish motives, there was no animosity between them. In that case neither they would have any inclination to kill him nor he would have any desire to kill them. Even if they believed that in the past, he had been an obstacle in achieving their selfish goals (ghnto’ pi), and because of that they wanted to kill him now, still he did not want to kill them. Arjuna said, ‘If I kill them, sure I may get this kingdom. But what about this kingdom, even if I get the kingdoms of all the three worlds, I do not want to kill them (api trailokya-rājyasya hetoḥ)’.

Swami Ji said that Arjuna has deviated in addressing Krishna in this Shlok from his usual tone as Krishna to Madhusudan. Madhusudan is an angry form of Lord Krishna depicting his image killing Madhu demon. Arjun was trying to give an argument here to Lord Madhusudan that his teachers such as Dronacharya, Kripacharya, his kin such as Bhishma Pitamah and even sons of Dhratrashtira were no demons like Madhu, so

why should he kill them? These Acharyas (teachers) have contributed in their (Pandavas) development and they owe their lives to them. Arjuna said, 'we should be serving them with our hearts and souls rather than taking weapons against them. The Scripture says that the righteous path for us is to surrender ourselves to the lotus feet of these Acharyas. The elderly persons and other seniors of the family have given us this body (pitarah). We are the part of their gene. Just to satisfy our anger and greed, how can we justify to kill our own blood? I can see the sons of my brothers standing in this war (putrah). It is our duty to nourish them, not to kill them. Most respected persons of status of grandfather (such as Bhishma Pitamah and others) are there (pitamahah). They have every right to punish us. They can even kill us. We should be trying to make sure that they do not have any sadness and troubles in their old ages and enjoy their lives with all possible pleasures. How can I even think of killing them? I am seeing my maternal uncles (matulah) here such as Shalya, Shakuni etc. These are brothers of our mothers and highly respected as my mother. There are our fathers-in-law (shwashurah) which are also highly respected as our own father. I can also see our grandsons (poutras) here. You know grandsons are dearer than even sons. There are brothers-in-law (shyalah) standing in front of me. These are most loving brothers of our wives. How can we kill them? Further, there are numerous relatives (sambandhinah) to whom we have high respect. I am finding highly unjustified to kill them.'

Shlok 36 and 37

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ।
पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान् हत्वैतानाततायिनः ॥

तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान्स्वबान्धवान् ।
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥

nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrāṇṇaḥ kā prītiḥ syājjanārdana |
pāpamevāśhrayedasmānhatvaitānātātāyinaḥ ||

tasmānnārḥā vayaṁ hantuṁ dhārtarāṣṭrāṇsabāndhavān
svajanaṁ hi katham hatvā sukhinaḥ syāma mādḥava ||

O Maintainer of all living entities (Janardan), what pleasure will we derive from killing the sons of Dhratrasthra? Even though they are villainous, by killing them sin will certainly come upon us. Hence, it does not behove us to kill our own cousins, the sons of Dhratrashtra, and friends. O Madhav (Krishna), how can we hope to be happy by killing our own kinsmen?

Arjuna continued, ‘O Janardan (a name of Lord Krishna which means the one who maintains and nourishes the whole world), what benefits we will drive by winning this war by killing the sons of Dhratrasthra and his army? If we kill them in anger and due to greed of the kingdom, once our anger is pacified, our lives will be miserable as we will be repenting the killings of our own blood. We will be missing them a lot after we win the war. Our hearts will remain full of remorse. How can we enjoy any pleasure in this condition? I think by killing them we will be miserable in this world (Ihlok), and because of the sin on us by killing them, we will go to the hell (Parlok).’

Arjuna continued, ‘O Janardan, I know Duryodhana and his supporters are villainous persons (ātātāyinaḥ), still they are part and parcel of me.’

Swami ji defined the 6 characteristics of the villainous person – an arsonist, a person giving poison to living being, killing innocents, acquiring wealth by cheating, seizing lands of others by illegal means, and insulter/ kidnapper of ladies. Duryodhana had all these six characteristics and hence justified to be called as villainous person. He was an arsonist as he tried to kill Pandavas in Lakshagrah by setting fire to their residence. He gave poison to Bhima to kill him. He was always ready to kill innocent Pandavas. He acquired the wealth and kingdom of Pandavas by cheating in gambling, and tried to kidnap his own sister-in-law Draupadi (considered equivalent to mother in Sanatana Dharma) by provocation to Jaydrath (during exile of Pandavas) and also insulting her through his own brother Duhshasana (instigator of Cheer Haran).

Our scripture says that killing a villainous person does not bring sin upon the person who is killing such a villainous person, rather considered a noble deed. (naattaayivadhe dosho hanturbhavati kaschan). Goswami Tulsi Das wrote in Shri Ram Charit Manas that Lord Ram said to Bali:

अनुज बधू भगिनी सुत नारी। सुनु सठ कन्या सम ए चारी॥
इन्हि कुदृष्टि बिलोकइ जोई। ताहि बधे कछु पाप न होई ॥

‘anuj badhu bhagini sut naaree
sunu sath kanyaa sam e chaaree |
Inhin kudrashti bilokai joi,
taahi badhen kuch paap na hoi ||’

Having known that Duryodhana was a villainous person, Arjuna was still trying to give an argument here that we should not kill anyone through violence (war is sure a violent act). ‘n

hinsyaatsarvaa bhutaani’ and ‘ahinmso paramo dharmah’. A person should never do any violent act. Non-violence is our prime duty (religion). Also, the one who destroys his own vansh (kin), he is the greatest sinner. ‘sa ev paapishthtamo yah kuryaatkulnaasham’. Shruti says that if you have a villainous person in your family, detach yourself from that person but do not kill. For example, if your own son becomes a villainous person, just disown him.

(tasmān nārḥā vyaṁ hantum dhārtarāṣṭrān sa-bāṁdhavān) Therefore, based upon the arguments as above, Arjuna was justifying to Lord Krishna that we should not be killing our cousins, sons of our own uncle Dhratrashttra, other relatives and their friends. Any act of killing our own relatives was absolutely unjust and unfair. We are noble people, hence, could not involve in an act against the religion.

(sva-janaṁ hi katham hatvā sukhinaḥ syāma mādḥava) Arjuna continued, ‘O Madhava, just a thought of killing these my kin is giving me great sadness, just think if I actually kill them, how much grief will I feel? How can I be happy by killing them?’

Swami ji said that this was materialistic attachment and affection (Moh) of Arjuna which is compelling him to think in this way. When there is a materialistic attachment and affection, conscience (Vivek) dies. When conscience dies, person cannot think straight. Hence, for worldly persons like us, it is important to be away with such materialistic attraction and affection (Moh Maya) and do our rightful duties by following righteous and religious path.

Shlok 38 and 39

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्विर्जनार्दन ॥

Yadyapyete na paśhyanti lobhopahatachetasaḥ |
kulakṣhayakṛitaṁ doṣhaṁ mitradrohe cha pātakam ||

kathaṁ na jñeyamasmābhiḥ pāpādasmanñivartitum |
kulakṣhayakṛitaṁ doṣhaṁ prapaśhyadbhirjanārdana ||

Their (Kauravas) thoughts are overpowered by greed and they see nothing wrong in annihilating their own relatives or wreaking treachery upon friends. Yet, O Janardan (Krishna), why should we, who can clearly see the sin in killing our kin, not turn away from this sin?

(Yadyapyete na paśhyanti lobhopahata-chetasah) Arjuna continued, ‘Though I can see that because of the greed, their (Kauravas) conscience is dead’.

Swami Ji said that thoughts such as I have only so much, it will be good if I can get some more, and should continue to get more and more, lead towards materialistic things such as wealth, land, houses, respect, fame, position, authority etc, which is considered ‘greed’ (lobh). Whenever anyone is involved in this sort of greed tendency, his conscience dies. Duryodhana, because of his greed to acquire kingdom of his cousins Pandavas unlawfully, had lost his conscience, and therefore he was not able to differentiate between right and wrong.

(kula-kṣhaya-kṛitaṁ doṣhaṁ mitra-drohe cha Pātakam) Arjuna continued, ‘Duryodhana is seeing the pleasure of acquiring our kingdom, but cannot see the sin he will acquire by killing his own kin. He is not able to think straight that even he acquires our kingdom, how long he is going to enjoy this pleasure? He is not immortal. He will die one day, and then what?’

Whenever there is a war, tremendous loss of time, wealth and energy take place. Even two good friends become bitter enemies. For example, Drona and Drupada were very close childhood friends. Drupada promised to gift his half kingdom to Drona during his schooling days whenever he would be coronated as king of Drupad. Now, this was a truthful act in the eyes of Drona to have rightful authority on half of the kingdom of Drupada when he became adult. But once Drupada became adult and king, for him this was a foolish childish promise made by him as an innocent child, and had no value. Both appear to be right. This is just a perception how two different people think on the same issue. How can one say who is right and who is wrong? But this difference of opinion led to great animosity between these two. Drona forcibly acquired the kingdom of Drupada through Arjuna as Guru-Dakhsina. Of course, he returned half of the kingdom saying that though Drupada did not remember his childhood promise, but he did, and thus would gift him half of the kingdom. This animosity never ended. Drupada got blessings from Lord Fire in the form of his son Dhrashtudumnya only to kill Drona, and in this great war, they were standing against each other. Both of these perhaps could not visualise the sin they were committing being enemy of each other.

Swami Ji said that this is our greed which makes our attitude to acquire more and more even if we may not need that for our

righteous living. Covid-19 situation in the year 2020 had taught us very well that how less actually is our requirement to live comfortably. However, if because of greed tendency, we acquire items of pleasures which may not be necessity, and suppose we lose those items for some unforeseen reasons, the grieve to loss them is usually very high. When we are not having such items of pleasure, our lives still move on very well and we become accustomed to that sort of life. But once we acquire these items of unnecessary pleasures, we get used to them, and their loss for some reasons may become unbearable to us. Nothing is permanent in this world. The items which we may have acquired due to greed tendencies today will sure perish one day, and that loss will give us great grief. In that way, if you think seriously, acquiring of items due to greed, is actually an invitation to grief.

(katham na jñeyam asmābhiḥ pāpād asmān nivartitum, kula-kṣhaya-kṛitam doṣham prapaśhyadbhir janārdana) Arjuna continued, ‘O Janardan, though Duryodhana and his supporters are not realising the sins accumulated by killing own blood, but we are wise people. We do understand very well the results of such sins. I have read in the Scripture that if your friend is giving you some trouble because of circumstantial changes, that is not considered malefic. Also, troubles brought unto us eradicate our sins and purify us. But if we keep on having animosity, our soul for the next birth carries that imprint which continues to be the cause of downfall. In view of that, why should we entertain thoughts which may continue to create animosity among our own kin and friends ultimately leading us for our downfall? By all means, we should keep away from such sins.’

Swami Ji said that though Arjuna is able to visualise greed of Duryodhana, but is not able to visualise his own attraction and

affection (Mamta Moh) towards his own blood which is preventing him to think straight and do his righteous Kshatriya dharma duties. This gives us a lesson that when one concentrates on the evils and wickedness of others, he loses his own ability to see evils in himself. For Arjuna, Duryodhana is an evil person and he is very righteous and religious person. Such thoughts bring glory in vain and take person towards his downfall.

Shlok 40

**कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥**

**kulakṣhaye praṇaśhyanti kuladharmāḥ sanātanaḥ |
dharme naṣṭe kulam kṛitsnamadharmo'bhibhavatyuta ||**

**When a dynasty is destroyed, its traditions get vanquished
and the rest of the family becomes involved in irreligion.**

(kula-kṣhaye praṇaśhyanti kula-dharmāḥ sanātanaḥ) Arjuna continued to Lord Krishna, 'When there is a war, whole clan (Vansh) is annihilated. Our Scripture has stated the sacred traditions and code of conduct for each clan (Vansh). When clan (Vansh) is annihilated in a war, these traditions and sacred values are also destroyed, thus our traditional religious values are dead.'

(dharme naṣṭe kulam kṛitsnam adharmo 'bhibhavaty uta) 'When the religious values are dead, then our sacred demeanour are also destroyed. If that happens then our conscience to differentiate between right and wrong ceases. This may lead to irreligiousness in the clan.'

Here Arjuna was referring that the war might lead to kill most of the male members of the clan (Vansh). There may remain no one experienced and noble in the family to teach the religion (righteous things) to the younger generation. This might lead them to be ashtray, and thus might bring downfall of the whole clan eventually.

Shlok 41

अधर्माभिभवत्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्णसङ्करः ॥

adharmābhibhavātkṛiṣhṇa praduṣhyanti kulastrīyaḥ |
strīṣhu duṣhṭāsu vārṣhṇeya jāyate varṇasaṅkaraḥ ||

With the preponderance of vice, O Krishna, the women of the family become immoral. From the immorality of women, O descendent of Vrishni, unwanted progeny is born.

(adharmābhibhavāt kṛiṣhṇa praduṣhyanti kula-strīyaḥ) Arjuna continued to Lord Krishna, ‘The heart is purified by doing the righteous deeds and following religion (by doing the virtuous deeds). Having thus pure, honest and truthful mind, the conscience to do the right thing is awakened. When irreligion is grown in the family, then impure demeanour destroys the purity, righteousness and honesty of the person. Because of these evil influences, the mind becomes devilish. When mind is devilish, the person cannot differentiate between right and wrong and thus commence working against the teachings of the Scripture. Because of this, the women of the clan (Vansh) become completely impure and adulterous.’

(strīṣhu duṣṭāsu vārṣhṇeya jāyate varṇa-saṅkaraḥ) ‘When the women of the clan (Vansh) become adulterous, they give birth to cross-breeds (Varn shankar). (In our Scripture the child born out of two different clans is called Varn shankar). This will lead to the destruction of the purity of the clan.’

Swami Ji said that here Arjuna addressed the Lord by the name of Krishna. This is very significant. Out of several meanings of Krishna in Sanskrit, the one is ‘Attractor’. So Arjuna was asking Lord Krishna, in which direction He might attract him to lead his clan? Towards destruction of clan by ordering him to kill his kin or to save his clan by ordering him to follow non-violence?

Shlok 42

सङ्करो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।
पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥

saṅkaro narakāyaiva kulaghñānām kulasya cha |
patanti pitaro hyeṣhām luptapiṇḍodakakriyāḥ ||

An increase in unwanted children (cross-breeds) results in hellish life both for the family and for those who destroy the family. Deprived of the sacrificial offerings, the ancestors of such corrupt families also fall.

(saṅkaro narakāyaiva kula-ghñānām kulasya cha) Arjuna continued to Lord Krishna, ‘The children born as cross-breeds (Varn shankar) do not have religious set of minds. They do not follow decorum of the family and the teachings of the Scripture. Because they themselves do not know to which clan they

actually belong to, so do not appreciate the decorum, religion and virtuous deeds of their ancestors of their clan. Hence, may behave against the tradition of the clan. The one who destroys his own clan in a war like this, is called ruinous of the family. The cross-breeds take such ruinous persons to the hell and destroy all family traditions and good deeds done by the ancestors.’

(patanti pitaro hy eṣhām lupta-piṇḍodaka-kriyāḥ) Arjuna continued, ‘Because these cross-breeds (Varn shankars) do not understand and appreciate the significance of, for example funeral ceremonies (Shraaddh) and libation (Tarpan) according to the traditions of the clan and the Scripture, this leads to the unhappiness and decay of the ancestors in after death world (Parlok). When our ancestors after death do not receive holy water (Pind Paani) through their children, they are devoid of the results of their virtuous deeds of this life and cannot enjoy the high status in after death world (Parlok).’

Swami Ji explained this further. Arjuna was trying to say that since all the seniors, learned and experienced persons may be killed in this war, there might not be any person left to guide the younger generation of the clan. This might lead our women to be polluted and to give birth to cross-breeds (Varna Shankar). These cross-breeds neither might have any respect for the ancestors nor any appreciation for traditional values such as offering holy water (Pind Pani) to the dead ancestors. Also, from the Scripture point of view, they might not have proper rights to make such offerings. So, even though they might make such offerings, these offerings might not be accepted by the Gods. Hence, in any case, whether they make such offerings or not, the ancestors might be devoid of the fruits of such offerings and lead miserable lives in the after-death (Parlok) world.

Once a person is dead, depending upon his deeds, he may turn into either ‘Ajan Pitar’ living in ancestor’s adobe or may take rebirth on this earth as ‘Martya Pitar’. If living in ancestor’s abode, it may be alright for them even if such offerings are not made by their children as after death rituals. But if the person has taken rebirth on this earth, and such offerings are not made by their children for them, our Scripture says that they may lead the life of a hell on the earth being dissatisfied and discontent. One of the reasons that why so many people in our modern world may be dissatisfied and discontented, perhaps their children fail to perform such duties for their ancestors.

Shlok 43

दोषैरेतैः कुलग्नानां वर्णसङ्करकारकैः ।
उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥

doṣhairetaiḥ kulaghnānāṁ varṇasaṅkarakārakaiḥ |
utsādyante jātidharmāḥ kul-dharmāśhcha śhāśhvataḥ ||

Through the evil deeds of those who destroy the family tradition and thus give rise to unwanted progeny, a variety of social and family welfare activities are ruined.

(doṣhair etaiḥ kula-ghnānāṁ varṇa-saṅkara-kāarakaiḥ) Arjuna continued to Lord Krishna. ‘O Krishna, when clan is annihilated in the war, then (as said above) cross-breeds (Varn shankars) take birth in the family.’

(utsādyante jāti-dharmāḥ kula-dharmāśh cha śhāśhvataḥ) ‘These cross-breeds (Varn shankars) not only destroy the righteous duties and traditions (Jati-dharma) of the clan, but

also destroy the moral, ethical and religious code of conduct (Kul-dharma) of the clan.’

Swami Ji specifically explained the difference between Jati-dharma and Kul-dharma.

Jati is a caste such as Brahmin, Khstriya, Vaishya and Shudra. The traditions of that particular caste as described in the Scripture are called Jati-dharma. For example, Brahmins are supposed to be the spiritual Gurus and learned persons with full knowledge of Vedas, Scripture etc. Kshatriyas are the warriors and protectors of our land. Vaishyas are the businessmen, and Shudras are the ones who do services to the mankind. The Scripture has laid down rules and regulations to be followed by each caste and that is referred as Jati-dharma. However, within a Jati, there are several Kuls (Clans). For example, in Kshatriya clan, one may be Suryvanshee, Chandrvanshee, Yaduvanshee and so on. For each Kul (Clan), again there are certain rules and regulations which depict the moral, ethical and religious code of conduct for that Kul (Clan), that is called Kul-dharma. If a clan does not follow both of these Jati-dharma and Kul-dharma, then that clan moves towards its downfall.

Shlok 44

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।
नरकेऽनियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥

utsannakuladharmāṇāṃ manuṣhyāṇāṃ janārdana ।
narake‘niyataṃ vāso bhavatītyanuśuśhruma ॥

O Janardan, I have heard from the learned that those who destroy family traditions dwell in hell for an indefinite period of time.

(utsanna-kula-dharmāṇām manuṣhyāṇām janārdana, narake 'niyataṁ vāso bhavatītyanuśhuśhruma) The God has provided us intelligence and with that intelligence, we have conscience (Vivek) too. We have freedom of do any act the way we may like to do. This is our decision (according to our desire or conscience) that we may choose to do the right thing or wrong thing. We should only be doing right things as per our Scripture and conscience (Vivek) but due to pleasures in materialistic things, greed, attraction and affection (Maya Moh) towards the dear and near ones, we disrespect our conscience and act against our expected demeanour and dignity (Maryada) of our clan (Kul). It results in condemnation, disrespect and humiliation among the wise people of the society in this world and open the door of the hell after death. We are forced to live in the hell for a very long time and suffer there because of our such sins. This is what narrated to us by our seniors, parents and grandparents.

Shlok 45 and 46

अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥

aho bata mahatpāpaṁ kartuṁ vyavasitā vayam |
yadrājyasukhalobhena hantuṁ svajanamudyatāḥ ||

yadi māmāpratīkāramaśhastraṁ śhastrapāṇayaḥ |
dhārtarāṣṭhtrā raṇe hanyustanme kṣhemataraṁ bhavet ||

How strange it is that we have set our mind to perform such great sins. Driven by the desire for materialistic (kingdom) pleasures, we are intent on killing our own kinsmen. Will it not be better if with the weapons in hand the sons of Dhratrashttra kill me unarmed and unresisting on the battlefield?

(aho bata mahat pāpam kartum vyavasitā vayam, yad rājya-sukha-lobhena hantum sva-janam udyatāḥ) Arjuna continued, ‘O Lord, Duryodhana and his supporters are wicked people. They are greedy and irreligious. Hence, if they are ready for this battle, what is strange in it? But we are wise people and fully understand virtuous and unvirtuous deeds, worthy and unworthy acts, saintly and sinful activities. Knowing this, if we act irreligiously, are we not going to commit grave sins? Is it not surprising that being wise, righteous and religious people, we are getting ready for this irreligious battle to kill our own kinsmen with our divine weaponry? Disrespecting the teachings of our Gurus and ancestors, we are here to fight this battle to commit severe sins (Mahatpapam).’

Swami Ji said that these Shloks have used two very important words to define the feelings of surprise. ‘Aho’ word was used to express surprise that knowing terrible results of this battle, still we were getting ready to fight. What a surprise! ‘Bat’ word was used to express sorrow. Knowing that if we might win this war at the cost of killing our own kinsmen, how long we could enjoy this materialistic pleasure of kingdom? We are not immortal and our lives may be few years only after this battle. So, again what a surprise that knowing the results of this war

which is going to give us sorrow in the end, we are still getting ready to fight!

Arjun continued, ‘we are committing ourselves to perform this heinous act of going into this battle for the greed of the kingdom. I know, if we win this war, we will have pleasures of the kingdom and all possible materialistic things. We may have respect, wealth, name and fame in the society. But will it not be a selfish act at the cost of millions of lives of the same society? In my opinion, this is absolute non-sense.’

It is obvious from this mindset of Arjuna that he is only thinking from one aspect of the war, killing his own kinsmen and thus committing sins in doing so. He is perhaps not thinking straight because of his affection and attraction (Moh) towards these irreligious kinsmen. The only reason why Arjuna does not want to fight this battle and wants to escape from his Kshatriya duties is that he considers fighting this battle and winning is motivated by ‘greed’ to win kingdom and enjoy materialistic pleasures.

While he was having all these doubts as above, it is to be noted here that he had really not taken any decision yet, but relying on Lord Krishna to satisfy his anxiety as a faithful devotee of the Lord. If he would had taken a final decision not to fight, he would have ordered his charioteer Lord Krishna to take away his chariot from this battle ground.

‘yadi mām apratīkāram aśhastram śhastra-pāṇayaḥ, dhārtarāṣṭrā raṇe hanyus tan me kṣhemataram bhavet’ Arjuna continued, ‘O Krishna, if we will not fight, obviously Kauravas may also give up their weapons. Having said that, I know these are wicked people and may still kill me thinking that forever their enemy may be annihilated. Still, I do not want to commit grave sin to fight this war with them to kill my own grandfather

Bhishma Pitamah and Gurus such as Dronacharya and Kripacharya. I believe to avoid this war is the only way to escape from the sins which will annihilate my clan.’

It is interesting to note here that Lord Krishna has not spoken a single word yet. This shows a good psychology of a great and saintly person. If someone is full of sorrow for any reason and comes to you for advice, do not just start giving your discourse (Pravachan) straight. First listen to him so that his sorrow comes out of his mind. When the person will not have any hidden sorrow inside, he will be blank and then words of wisdom will be effective. We notice this in everyday life too. When we go to our seniors in the family or a Sadhu (Saint) or Gurudev with a plaintive heart, they always give ears to our grievances before giving any suggestions.

Shlok 47

सञ्जय उवाच ।

एवमुक्त्वार्जुनः सङ्ख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।

विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्रमानसः ॥

Sañjaya Uvācha |

evamuktvarjunaḥ saṅkhye rathopastha upāviśhat |

visṛijya saśharaṁ chāpaṁ śhokasaṁvigna-mānasah ||

Sanjay said, ‘Speaking thus, Arjun cast aside his bow and arrows, and sank into the seat of his chariot, his mind in distress and overwhelmed with grief.’

(evam uktvarjunaḥ saṅkhye rathopastha upāviśhat, visṛijya saśharaṁ chāpaṁ śhoka-saṁvigna-mānasah) Concluding that fighting this inauspicious war may lead us to grave disaster by

killing our own kinsmen, teachers, friends and other elders of the family etc and destroying our after-death (Parlok) life by moving towards hell, Arjuna with a very heavy and perturbed heart sat down in the middle of the chariot by putting down his weapons (including his Gandiva bow) and with a thought of not fighting the war.

If we look at the main reason of Arjuna for this condition of his mind, it was a request by him to Lord Krishna to take his chariot to the middle of both the armies, and then affliction by affection (Moh) to Bhishma Pitamah, Dronacharya, Kripacharya and other elders of his family including Kauravas. Swami ji said that look at the brilliance of affection (Moh). How much power it may have to change the mindset of even a strong personality like Arjuna and lead him to think in an unrighteous way? Arjun's reluctance to fight the war reached its climax. He had now surrendered to his grief and slumped into deep dejection. His condition was the creation of his own material attachments and caused his dereliction of duty. This was a completely unexpected behaviour from someone who was considered the epitome of devotion and self-surrender to God. In fact, before the battle, when both parties were mobilizing their armies, given a choice between the entire armed Yadav army and the unarmed Lord Shri Krishna, Arjuna chose the Lord, as he had complete faith in Him.

At this point let us consider who Arjun really was? He was definitely not a novice and bereft of spiritual knowledge. His celestial father was Indra, the king of heaven. Arjun had been to his abode and received several boons from him and other celestial Gods. In his past life, Arjun was Nar, part of the twin descensions the Nar-Narayan; where Nar was the perfected soul situated in transcendental knowledge and Narayan the Supreme Lord. Then why in the battlefield of Kurukshetra, a

grand warrior of such stature was dropping his weapons? What was the cause of his misery?

For the benefit of future generations, Lord Krishna wanted to bring forth the knowledge of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. By intentionally confusing Arjun, the Lord had created this opportunity. In this chapter, as one may observe, Arjuna put forth to the Lord several arguments and justifications why he should not fight this war, and in the subsequent chapters Lord Krishna has elaborated upon why Arjun's arguments were inappropriate, and the way forward.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादेऽर्जुनविषादयोगो नाम प्रथमोऽध्यायः।

**om tatsaditi srimadbhagavadgeetaasuupanishatsu
brahmavidyaayaam yogashaastre srikrishnaarjuna
samvaadearjunavishaadayogo naama prathamod'yaayah |**

With the prayers to the holy name of the Lord, 'Om Tat Sat', this completes the first chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita of the dialogues between Lord Shri Krishna and Shri Arjuna. This chapter is named as 'Arjuna Vishaada Yoga' (Yoga of the Despondency of Arjuna). Shrimad Bhagwad Gita is a holy book describing divine knowledge of Yoga treatise.

Bhagwan Maharishi Ved Vyas Ji has concluded each chapter by the above decorum which reflects the effect and glory of this holy book.

'Om Tat Sat' is the holy name of the Trinity - Lord Vishnu, Lord Brahma and Lord Mahesh. Its pronunciation purifies the heart and by awakening the consciousness (Vivek) among the

persons who recite or listen, instigates them to perform their righteous duties according to the Scriptures. This also seeks forgiveness of any of our mistakes, not only in pronouncing difficult Sanskrit Shloks of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita, but also any sins we knowingly or unknowingly might have committed in this life or previous life. This is Moksh Dayinee (Giving liberation) Mantra.

We always use the word ‘Shrimad’ before writing the name of any holy book. Here, we refer to the Gita as ‘Shrimad Bhagwad Gita’. ‘Shrimad’ is a Sanskrit word which means ‘Grace of the Lord’. This denotes all the six virtues of the Lord – divine (Eishvarya), righteousness (Satyata), fame (Yash), prosperity (Shri), self-knowledge (Brahm-Gyan) and detachment (Vairagya).

‘Bhagwad’ means from the mouth of Lord Himself. Since this holy book Gita is narrated by the Lord Himself, it is ‘Bhagwad’.

Even when an ordinary person is in a pleasure mood, his feelings are expressed in the form of a song. Lord was also in a very pleasant and happy mood when he narrated these teachings to Arjuna, so this is referred as song (Gita).

Our Scripture has referred this holy book as ‘Upanishad’ too. Shrimad Bhagwad Gita is an essence of all our Scriptures and narrated by Lord himself, so it is logical to call this as an ‘Upanishad’ meaning ‘embodying the mystical and esoteric doctrines of the Lord’.

The knowledge of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita awakens self-knowledge (Brahm-Vidya), hence our Maharishies have also

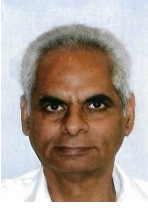
called this holy book as 'Brahm-Vidya'. By providing divine knowledge, this holy book teaches us basic principles of all the Yogas – Karma Yoga, Gyana Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and also teaches us the methods of attaining these Yogas, hence this is also referred as 'Yog Shastra'.

This holy book is in principle a record of the dialogues between Lord Krishna and his devotee Arjuna; hence this is also referred as 'Shri Krishna Arjun Samwaad'.

This first chapter of Shrimad Bhagwad Gita defines the grief (Vishad) of Arjuna in fighting the war, hence referred as 'Arjun Vishad Yoga'.

At the end of each chapter, Bhagwan Ved Vyas Ji has concluded with a statement which also includes the word 'pushpi'. Though the literary meaning of this word is 'like a flower' but in spiritual sense, this word is referred to a holy book if read or listened with devotion, will lead for realising oneness with the Lord.

May Lord bless all of you. Om Tat Sat.



Dr. Yatendra Sharma, the compiler of this book, was born in a Garg Vanshee Brahmin family. Following his family traditions, he developed an interest in reading, listening, and narrating religious scriptures since his childhood. He learnt Sanskrit in his childhood from his grandfather Shri Bhagwan Das Ji and Shri Saligram Sharma Agnihotri Ji, the great scholar of Sanskrit and retired Principal of Naravar Sanskrit Mahavidyalay. He completed his Doctorate in Chemical Technology from the Technical University of Graz, Austria, and serving the mining and mineral industry of Western Australia for more than three decades.

In 2016, with the help of some like-minded friends, he founded a religious organisation ‘Shri Ram Katha Sansthan Perth’. ‘Shri Ram Katha Sansthan Perth’ is continually publishing books and booklets on the life stories of the great Sanatan Dharm Saints, Mothers, Kings, etc, to create awareness about the Sanatan Dharm culture to the followers of Sanatan Dharm.