

CHAPTER 1- PART 3; ARJUNA'S ATTACHMENT

*'Evamukto hr̥ṣīkeśo guḍhākeśena bhārata
Senayorubhayormadhye sthāpayitvā rathottamam. 1.24.*

*Bhīṣmadroṇapramukhataḥ sarveṣāṃ cha mahīṣitām
Uvācha pārtha paśyaitān samavetān kurūniti. 1.25.*

1.24. 'Thus addressed by Gudhakesha, O Bharata, Hrishikesha, having stationed that best of chariots, between the two armies,'

1.25. 'In front of Bhishma and Drona, and all the kings, he said, 'O Partha, behold these Kurus gathered together.'

'*Bhārata*,' *Saṅjaya* is speaking to *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*.. the word '*Bhārata*' is a name. This means, 'O one who is a descendant of the dynasty of *Bharata*!' '*Guḍhakeśena evaṃ uktaḥ Hṛṣīkeśaḥ*' – to *Guḍhakeśa*.. *guḍhaka* means 'sleep.' The '*iśa*,' one who has conquered that, is called '*Guḍhakeśa*.' This means one who has defeated laziness, dullness, etc. This word is used several times in the *Gītā* to distinguish Arjuna. This means 'one with great energy,' 'a courageous person.' That is how this word is used, '*Guḍhakeśa*,' one who has conquered sleep.'

That is a distinction given to Arjuna. Arjuna was very heroic and brave. He was free from all negative qualities like laziness. This is a very significant word used by *Vyāsa* to indicate the capacity of Arjuna. Thus, to Arjuna, '*uktaḥ Hṛṣīkeśaḥ*,' the Lord, called 'the Lord of the senses,' '*ubhayoḥ senayoḥ*,' of both armies, '*bhīṣmadroṇapramukhataḥ sarveṣāṃ mahīṣitām cha madhye*.'

'*Bhīṣmadroṇapramukhataḥ*,' *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, and the other prominent warriors, '*sarveṣāṃ mahīṣitām*,' and all of the kings there, '*madhye*,' in between them; in between the armies, '*uttamam ratham*,' in that best of chariots.. this becomes '*rathottamam*,' '*sthāpayitvā*,' having placed, '*uvācha*,' the Lord spoke.

‘*Pārtha*,’ Hey Arjuna, ‘*etān samavetān Kurūn paśya*’ *iti*.’ Hey Arjuna, ‘*etān samavetān*,’ these who are conjoined together, ‘*kurūn*,’ the Kauravas, those in the Kuru dynasty, ‘*paśya*,’ look!’ It says, ‘*paśya, etān*.’ This becomes ‘*Paśyaitān*.’

In the middle of the two armies, facing *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, and the other warriors, the Lord placed the chariot, according to Arjuna’s request. Arjuna said, ‘let me see these *Kauravas*.’ The Lord says, ‘*Kurūn paśya*.’ Here, the Lord only says a few words, ‘*etān samavetān kurūn paśya*.’ Because the Lord indicates, ‘see these *Kauravas*,’ in His words, Arjuna suddenly had a change of heart. Some commentators say, ‘Arjuna’s feeling of retreating from the war and other emotions are because of the use of this one sentence.’ This was in order to touch Arjuna’s mind. The Lord intentionally used such a word for that.’

‘By indicating the family dynasty, the ‘Kurus,’ and therefore the friends and relatives through that dynasty, this created affection in Arjuna’s mind. This was so that that Arjuna would withdraw from the war. That is why the Lord said this.’ Why did the Lord say this? That is order to instruct the *Gītā*.’

‘The Lord can only instruct the *Gītā* if Arjuna decides to withdraw from the war. Therefore, in order to use Arjuna as an instrument in instructing the *Gītā* to the entire world, the Lord artificially created this circumstance.’ There are some who commentate like this. They say that this is the reason why the Lord uses the word ‘*Kurūn*’ here. That suddenly created different feelings and emotions within Arjuna. As a result of that, Arjuna started to withdraw from the battleground.

Therefore, what does the Lord say? In the entire war, ‘*Nimitta mātram*’ – you are only an instrument. I am the one who acts.’ If that is so, then the instruction of the *Gītā*, and its circumstance, everything, are the creation of the Lord. That is said in several circumstances in the *Mahābhārata*. A war with this much destruction and violence took place in the presence of the Lord. In that war, all warriors in India were destroyed. That is this war. The Lord must’ve known the outcome of this war. So why didn’t He avoid it?

Why wasn’t he able to avoid the war?’ In the sections where this is discussed, Lord *Vyāsa* explains. He says, ‘that’s not possible to avoid. Time is never in vain and has decided each event. That Time is the embodiment of God. Everything takes place only according to that.’ The *Mahābhārata* war was unavoidable. That wasn’t possible to be prevented, by anyone.

That had to happen at that time. That is something that had to take place in that time. That could only happen. It isn't possible for anyone to avoid that. The Lord Himself went as a messenger of peace, to prevent that. Even though he went as a messenger, the Lord knew, 'this must take place. This cannot be avoided.' That message wasn't successful. Thus, in several ways, many people strived to avoid the war. Many *ṛṣis* strived, *Vyāsa* tried, *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, and *Kṛpa* all tried to prevent the war.

Even *Gandhāri* tried, but the war wasn't prevented. This is because that had to happen in that time. Therefore, all of these are the plays of the Lord. That is why the Lord used Arjuna as an instrument, in one way, to make Arjuna withdraw from the war. For that purpose, the Lord used the word 'Kurūn.' That is also commentated in that way.

Srī Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, 'look at these Kurus, your relatives.' Here, there is a question. 'Did *Bhīṣma* and the other *Dharmic Kauravas* fight on *Duryodhana's* side out of mere gratitude? Or else, was it as their *svadharma*?'

The answer to this is said in the *Mahābhārata* itself. Why did they fight? This isn't something that we need to imagine or calculate about. It is said clearly. In many circumstances, this is said. From the beginning of the war, after the instruction of the *Gītā*, Arjuna had become ready to fight, and again, what did he do? '*Dhanurudyamya Pāṇḍavaḥ.*' He took his weapon and became ready to fight. Then, *Dharmaputra* steps down from his chariot, rejects all his weapons, and walks to the middle of the *Kaurava* army.

When everyone sees this, they became afraid. This is because they thought, 'did *Dharmaputra* renounce the war?' Because of his fear of *adharma*, did he renounce the war?' Everyone doubted this, the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Srī Kṛṣṇa*. Then *Dharmaputra* walked into the army of the *Kauravas*, and came before *Bhīṣma*. He was in the presence of *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, *Kṛpa*, *Karṇa*, and the others. He came to ask permission to fight, and to bow to them.

In that time, there is a matter that *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, and *Kṛpa* all say. 'We are speaking to you like eunuchs.' All three say this. In other words, 'We are fighting this war for the *Kauravas*.' Why is that? '*Arthasya dasosmi.*' I am a servant of wealth.' They say this directly. There is no need for us to imagine why they fought. They are servants of wealth.

‘All of us have been supported by *Duryodhana*. Therefore, when *Duryodhana* says, ‘we have to fight, we have no choice but to obey.’ Then why did *Dharmaputra* go there? It was to ask the means to defeat them. He asks *Bhīṣma*, ‘how can we defeat you?’ He says, ‘it’s not possible to defeat me. Neither the *devas* nor men can defeat me. Now it isn’t time to defeat me. When it is time, I will tell you a *vidyā*.’

‘However, we don’t have any interest in fighting.’ This is because *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa* had advised *Duryodhana* several times to retreat from the war. They said, ‘it is never possible to defeat the *Pāṇḍavas*. As long as *Srī Kṛṣṇa* stands on the side of the *Pāṇḍavas*, it isn’t possible to defeat them.’ Despite this, *Duryodhana* didn’t pay any mind.

However, their favor was always with the *Pāṇḍavas*. In the sections before the war, they say that they wish for the *Pāṇḍavas* to win. Before each day of battle, *Droṇa* and *Bhīṣma* would pray. ‘May success be with the *Pāṇḍavas*!’ Then why did they fight? They say, ‘we are slaves to wealth.’ We have a debt. When we live in the kingdom with all comforts provided by *Duryodhana*, if *Duryodhana* says to fight, we can only fight.’ However, all of these three would pray mentally for the *Pāṇḍavas*.

Then *Droṇa* said a means to defeat him. He says, ‘if a truthful person says something I can’t bear to hear, then at that time, I will collapse.’ Then you can kill me.’ *Kṛpa* says, ‘I am undefeatable. I cannot die, so it isn’t possible to kill me. However, you can still win in the war. This is because my prayers and mind are always with you.’

Thus, all of them say why they are fighting. They are ‘*arthadāsas*’ – servants of wealth. They knew *Dharma* and *Nīti*, but they could only do that. That was their debt. That is why they fight for *Duryodhana*.

Then the questioner asks, ‘was this as their *svadharmā*? Can one’s *svadharmā* be against the good of society?’

The *Gītā* discusses about what *svadharmā* is. ‘What is *svadharmā*? That is something we will discuss in the *Gītā*. Then there is the question, ‘*Srī Kṛṣṇa* entrusted his *Nārāyaṇa sena*, his own army to the *Kauravas*. How is that justified?’

The answers to all of these questions are all in the *Mahābhārata*. It says that *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* entrusted his *Yādava* army to the *Kauravas*. How can we understand that? That is in the *Mahābhārata* itself. Look in that section, and read. The suitable justification is given there.

For *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, both the *Pāṇḍavas* and the *Kauravas* were relatives. As relatives, both people came to the Lord to request help. However, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* was always partial to the *Pāṇḍavas*. Lord *Vyāsa* says that *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* played a large part in this war. This is because that war was unavoidable. It must take place. Therefore, the Lord acts in a way that makes that happen. Till right before the war, *Dharmaputra* asks, ‘what should I do now? Please tell me Your decision; is war necessary or not? This is after all of the preparations for war were made. Then what does *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* say? ‘There is nothing left to consider. You must fight.’

Because the war was unavoidable, nobody could prevent that. Why does *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* stand in that way? *Vyāsa* says that the Lord stands on the side of *Dharma*. ‘*Yatho dharmas tatho jayah.*’ This is something that *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa* say repeatedly here and there. ‘Wherever there is dharma, there is victory.’

When *Duryodhana* went to receive his mother blessing, he said, ‘bless me to win the war.’ *Gandhāri* said, ‘*yatho dharmas tatho jayah.*’ ‘Wherever there is *dharma*, there will be victory.’ She didn’t say, ‘may you win.’ Therefore, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* stood on the side of *Dharma*.

However, doesn’t He have to help the *Kauravas*? To help the *Kauravas*, the Lord gave His army. This was because they were relatives. Both sides are relatives. When the war started, when all preparations were finished, *Bālarāma* came to the camp of the *Pāṇḍavas*. There everyone was there, the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Kṛṣṇa*. *Bālarāma* says, ‘In truth, *Kṛṣṇa* should have acted impartially in the war, but He didn’t. The reason for Him siding with the *Pāṇḍavas* was due to His love for them. I don’t feel that this is correct. Because of this, the *Pāṇḍavas* will be victorious in this war. The *Kauravas* will be defeated.’

‘For me, both the *Kauravas* and the *Pāṇḍavas* are relatives. When the *Kauravas* are being defeated, I will naturally move there. If that happens, that will again become a problem, because I will have to face *Kṛṣṇa*’s side. Therefore, I’m

going on a pilgrimage.’ Saying this, *Bālarama* went on pilgrimage at this time. In that circumstance, he says that *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* was partial to the side of the *Pāṇḍavas*.

What is the reason for that? *Vyāsa* says that it is because that is the side of *dharma*. That is why *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* stayed there. That is why the *Pāṇḍavas* won. Then, when this person asks about the justification for *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* giving his army to the *Kauravas*, the *Mahābhārata* speaks about all of the reasoning and justification for this. That isn’t something that we must discuss from our own level without looking in the *Mahābhārata*. *Vyāsa* explains this in that situation.

Vyāsa describes each aspect; what is fair, what is unfair, with complete impartiality. When we discuss, we always have to grab one side. We will grab onto the side of the *Pāṇḍavas*. However, *Vyāsa* isn’t like that. *Vyāsa* presents matters exactly as they are. He has no particular partiality. If there is any kind of mistake anywhere, he will say that it is a mistake.

If you want, you can say that *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* had partiality. That is said in several parts. This is called a ‘*Dharma Yuddham*.’ What is this ‘*Dharma yuddham*?’ This means that both sides accept common rules. If both follow those rules and fight, that is a ‘*dharmic* war.’ If those rules aren’t followed, then it isn’t a *dharmic* war. In that way, the war began with the promise, ‘the rules must be followed.’

However, after the war began, as both sides had the desire to win, those rules were forgotten. That is exactly what happened in the *Mahābhārata* war. In the end, the war was without any rules. That is how it ends.

These are all the specialties of a specific time period. We can understand this. We can understand from the *Mahābhārata* itself, and its conditions and rules. Then, what about the question of fighting? In those days, fighting a war wasn’t a wrong. This is because war was a part of the *kṣatriya’s dharma*. In those days, war was considered one’s *svadharma*.

The *dharma* of a *kṣatriya* was to fight. It was said that no matter what *kṣatriya* it is, if they died in battle, they would attain heaven. This is true for the *Pāṇḍavas* as well as the *Kauravas*. Whoever dies in battle attains heaven. This is said in the *Dharma Shāstras*. To determine which side is *Dharmic* and which is *Adharmic*, one has to look at the reasons for fighting.

Duryodhana cheated the *Pāṇḍavas* in dice. He made them live in the forest for 12 years. He did all of this. He made them go through so much trouble. He

promised them half of the kingdom. *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* himself advised *Duryodhana*, and says, ‘in truth, you don’t have the right to the kingdom. In truth, the *Pāṇḍavas* have the right to the kingdom. They should have received the kingdom through the lineage. Therefore, do one thing. Give half of the kingdom. Otherwise, give them five houses, for five people.’

However, *Duryodhana* wasn’t even ready to do that. That is why it is said that his side is that of *Adharma*. That is what all of *Duryodhana*’s advisers said. His gurus advised him. However, he didn’t hear. Instead, *Duryodhana* heard the advice of three people; *Karṇa*, *Shakuni*, and *Duśāsana*. These three always encouraged the war and not giving the kingdom to the *Pāṇḍavas*. They gave the necessary advice for this and constantly encouraged *Duryodhana*.

That is why the war became unavoidable. The *Pāṇḍavas* had the just claim to what was theirs, and *Duryodhana* refused that to them. Because *Dharma* was on the side of the *Pāṇḍavas*, the Lord acted in the war. On the side of the *Kauravas* were 18 brigades of soldiers. All of those were destroyed. They came to fight the *Pāṇḍavas*, but were destroyed. That is said even before the war began. *Vyāsa* says, ‘these 18 brigades of warriors will be destroyed. There will only be enough people left to count with one’s fingers.’

There, if you ask, ‘what is *dharma*?,’ according to the justice of those times, *dharma* was on the side of the *Pāṇḍavas*. That is why the Lord stood on their side, and fought, making the *Pāṇḍavas* victorious.

Therefore, it doesn’t say here, ‘any kind of war for any reason is fine.’ If you read the description of war in the *Mahābhārata*, no one will get ready for war. The *Mahābhārata* doesn’t encourage war in any way. However, the war took place. *Vyāsa* simply describes the causes, the path, and the end of that exactly as it happened. Otherwise, *Vyāsa* doesn’t show any kind of partiality as regards war in the *Mahābhārata*.

However, there is one thing said. ‘No one can describe Time. In Time, some unavoidable things will happen. If a war comes, that must simply happen. That is not possible for anyone to prevent.’ Thus, everything is under Time. It is said, ‘*kālādhiṇaṃ jagat sarvaṃ.*’ *Vyāsa* says that this entire world is under the control of Time.

Therefore, all one can do is to let that follow its path. This is for everyone, including the Lord.’ This is the decision of *Vyāsa*, said in the *Mahābhārata*. So, it isn’t necessary for us to think what is just and unjust in the *Mahābhārata*, separate from the words of *Vyāsa*. This is because *Vyāsa* has given justifications and refutations for everything. ‘What can be justified? What can be refuted? All of this we can understand from *Vyāsa*’s words.

These kinds of questions, ‘whose side is right? Whose side is wrong?’ If we must end these doubts, we have to take and read the *Mahābhārata*. Only then will those doubts end. There is no other answer. *Vyāsa* has given the answer to all problems. Therefore, it isn’t just people who raise doubts about the *Mahābhārata* that don’t read it. It is also researchers on the *Mahābhārata* that don’t read it. This is because a lot of time is needed to read the *Mahābhārata*. There are 125,000 *ślokas*. If it takes that much time, no one will try to do research. They will then look for some other work.

I have looked at some books that discuss about the *Mahābhārata*. However, if you read the cover page of the book, it is as if you have read the explanation of the book. Many people explain about the *Mahābhārata* and do research. This is because they will read some other book that extracts from the *Mahābhārata*. They won’t ever read the *Mahābhārata*. This is because they don’t have the patience to read it.

In the normal way, it is difficult to fully read it. I have tried once or twice to read each *śloka* from beginning to end. However, it never happened. It hasn’t happened till now, nor do I feel that it will happen. This is because we won’t get that much time to fully read it. Perhaps someone may read it. There have been people who have read and translated it. However, for these researchers, it will be very certain that they have never read the *Mahābhārata*.

However, for me, these are very small learning books. A person can fully read these in one or two hours. For example, there is Kutikṛṣṇa Mara’s summary called, ‘*Bhārata Paryatanam*.’ I have seen so many people who have only read this small book, yet give speeches on the whole *Mahābhārata* as if they know everything. If you ask them, ‘have you read the *Mahābhārata*?’, they will say, ‘yes, I’ve read.’ Then, if you ask any specifics about a circumstance in the story, they won’t say it.

That's not all. There's another matter. The reason why I withdrew from the attempt to fully read the *Mahābhārata* is because after reading one or two *Parvas*, when one thinks back, the mind isn't there. This is because our brain doesn't have the capacity to remember that much. Then what is the point of reading? There are hundreds of events and stories within this. Even if we read all of these, they won't stay in the mind.

It will be difficult to remember them. What is the point of going through the difficulty of reading something we can't remember? Thinking this, I withdrew. Then, there are important sections. Like this, the sections that commentators explain, for knowing the matters inside in certain circumstances, I have looked and read. This is because these are important subjects of discussion.

Then when these kinds of questions come in classes, or if anyone asks, through that prompting, I have read those sections. Otherwise, when I read a book about the *Mahābhārata*, I can understand, 'this person has never read the *Mahābhārata*.' If there is someone who has read it, another person will write from that. Then another will write from that book. In this way, it continues.

Even if we read, it won't remain in our memory. If someone must remember all of that, they must be *Vyāsa*. Nobody else can remember that. However, in these particular circumstances, if we read in those parts, we can see that Lord *Vyāsa* has given the answer to all of these questions. Lord *Vyāsa* doesn't have any partiality, even towards *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*.

One *maharṣi* stopped *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* after the war. In this situation, the *ṛṣi* curses *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*. *Vyāsa* presents this exactly as it is. The *maharṣi* says, 'your job itself is to make things bad. Your job is telling lies. You created this *Mahābhārata* war. It was you who killed everyone. Therefore, may you never have anything good happen to you.' This is a scene where this *ṛṣi* is about to curse *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*.

This is a *ṛṣi*. If he wanted to, Lord *Vyāsa* could have hidden these things. 'How can someone say this to the Lord?' 'What will people think?' However, Lord *Vyāsa* describes this as it is, with very harsh words from the *ṛṣi*. This is a situation in the *Mahābhārata*.

Therefore, *Vyāsa* explains things without any kind of partiality. To say truly, the *Mahābhārata* is complete picture of man's mind. How does the mind of

man act? What are its goods, its bads, its rights and wrongs? What are its unique expressions?

The *Mahābhārata* is a great canvas in which everything is placed and displayed. What is being shown everywhere is the mind of man. How can that mind act? In what way can it go?' Even in a very basic person, there are so many good qualities. Even in a person considered so great, what base emotions may happen? Everything has been depicted.

Thus, this is a work that presents man's mind in such an impartial way. When we read this, if we leave the names and forms of the characters, and just see the minds, we will understand. What Lord *Vyāsa* truly aimed at was to present man's mind. That is why it's not necessary for us to think outside of the *Mahābhārata* about the fairs and unfairs, the rights and wrongs. *Vyāsa* himself says the answer to each and every question. It's only enough if we read with *śraddha*.

In that way, many questions will come. This is an ordinary question that people ask. People ask, 'is this historical?' We will have to feel, 'this is definitely related to history.' The *Kurukṣetra* is a place that exists even today. Therefore, the *Mahābhārata* war is something that must have taken place. If we avoid some imaginative descriptions, this is definitely a part of history. It wouldn't be possible for any poet to compose this without any bond with history.

In our literature and *Purāṇas*, there is a touch of history. However, in those, there is much imagination. There are also things depicted that aren't possible. However, there is a piece of history. That is why you can still go to the place of *Kurukṣetra* today. If you go to the vast *Kurukṣetra*, our mind will say, 'a war must've taken place here.'

Any other proof of history books isn't necessary. This is because if we go that place even today, our mind will tell us this. 'This itself is where the *Gītā* was instructed.' Any man who was born and raised in India, if he goes to the *Kurukṣetra*, in his mind, the Lord and the *Gītā* will come of themselves. That is why it is said that those matters must have happened.

Then another ordinary question is, 'is it possible to instruct the *Gītā* in the middle of such a huge war?' The *Gītā* is 700 *ślokas*. Would it be possible to instruct that?' Here, we should understand that the Lord didn't instruct 700

ślokas. It was a conversation. This is a conversation between Arjuna and the Lord. It is Lord *Vyāsa* who composed the *Gītā* into *ślokas*. The Lord didn't speak in the form of *ślokas*.

Both people weren't singing. They were having a conversation. It is Lord *Vyāsa* who composed that into the form of *ślokas*. Some people have thought that both people sang in the *anuṣṭup* meter. Thus, how could this vast instruction take place in such a huge war? Many people ask this.

For that also, if we look in the *Mahābhārata*, we can know. For facing this *Kaurava* army with 18 brigades, it took months to prepare. That is what we can understand when we read the *Mahābhārata*. It's not just this conversation. There are many others in between. This *Parva*, *Bhīṣma Parva*, is mainly soliloquies on the war. These are all matters related to *Bhīṣma* falling on the battleground. Thus there is the instruction of the *Gītā*, the instruction of *Vidūra*, and others. These are all important instructions.

There, in between depictions of preparing the armies, etc., there aren't just these conversations. There are thousand's of *ślokas*. In these, there are mostly conversations. *Bhīṣma* tells his own history. Thus, there are many matters in the form of conversation. According to the rules of warfare in that time, there is time. Thus, after the instruction of the *Gītā*, even after the war begins again, there also numerous matters taking place.

After that, *Dharmaputra* rejects his weapons and comes to the *Kaurava* army. Still, that battle is continuing. If someone rejects his weapons and enters the enemy army, he won't be able to return. However, in that time, that could happen. He went there, received permission from *Bhīṣma* and the others to fight, and returned. Then *Dharmaputra* again asks, 'is there anyone who will come to our side?'

Thus, there are many matters that take place while the armies are fighting. There are several kinds of conversations that take place. In that way, messages are sent through messengers. They will go and have a conversation with the person. Thus, there are numerous conversations taking place. Of all of that, the instruction of the *Gītā* is only a small part.

That's not all. There's something else. Even though there are countless scriptures, the reason why the *Gītā* has been spread so widely is because its

instruction takes place in the battlefield. Because *Vyāsa* created such a situation and presents the *Gītā*, the Gita has been spread so widely. When we think that about the background of the instruction of the Gita, if we read more of the *Mahābhārata*, we can understand how this is possible. Therefore, those kinds of doubts and refutations of the *Mahābhārata* are due to not reading it.

Therefore, here what is it? *Saṅjaya* is speaking. According to Arjuna's request, the Lord placed the chariot in between both armies, and said, 'look at these *Kurus*!'

*Tatrāpaśyat sthitān pārthaḥ pitṛnatha pitāmahān
āchāryān mātulān brāṭṛn putrān pauṭrān sakhīmstathā. 1.26.*

*Shaśurān suhṛdaśchaiva senayorubhayorapi
Tān samikṣya sa kaunteyaḥ sarvān bandhūnavasthitān. 1.27.*

*Kṛpayā parayā 'viṣṭo viṣīdannidamabravīt
Drṣṭvemam svajānam kṛṣṇa yuyutsum samupasthitam. 1.28.*

*Sīdanti mama gāṭrāṇi mukhaṁ cha pariśuśyati
Vepathaścha śarire me romaharṣaścha jāyate. 1.29.*

*Gāṇdhīvaṁ sraṁsate hastāt tvakchaiva paridahyate
Na cha śakṇomyavasthātum bhramatīva cha me manaḥ. 1.30.*

1.26. 'Then Partha saw stationed there in both the armies fathers, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, and friends as well.'

1.27. 'He saw fathers-in-law and friends in both armies. Then the son of Kunti, seeing all of these kinsmen stading arrayed, spoke thus sorrowfully, filled with deep pity.'

1.28. 'Arjuna said; seeing my kinsmen, O Krishna, arrayed eager to fight,'

1.29. 'My limbs fail and my mouth is parched, my body quivers and my hair stands on end.

1.30. 'My bow Gandiva slips from my hand, and my skin burns all over; I am also unable to stand and my mind is as if whirling round.'

'*Pārthaḥ tatra sthitān apaśyan.*' *Pārtha*, Arjuna, '*tatra sthitān,*' those situated on the battlefield, '*apaśyat,*' saw. Who did he see? It says this next. '*Pitṛn,*' fathers, '*pitāmahān,*' grandfathers, '*āchāryān,*' gurus, '*mātulān.*' Here we can connect each word. '*Pārthaḥ mātulān apaśyāt.*' '*Pārthaḥ pitṛn apaśyat.*' The words can be connected in this way.

'*Putrān,*' he saw sons, '*pautrān,*' he saw grandsons. '*Sakhīn,*' he saw friends. '*Śvaśūrān,*' he saw fathers-in-law. '*Suhṛdaḥ,*' he also saw comrades. Arjuna is saying all of these people in the plural case. Normally, when the plural form is used in Sanskrit, it is used to show three or more people. However, that can also be used to indicate a single person, as a sign of honor. Thus, when we speak about someone who is respectful, the plural form can be used.

One can say, '*asmad gurūn,*' my Guru.' Instead of using the single case, '*asmad gurūṁ,*' it is said, '*asmad gurūn.*' This is in the plural form of the word. The Guru is only one person, yet the word '*Gurūn*' is used. This is called a plural word used to indicate someone worshipful. In the same way, in Sanskrit, one may say, 'my mothers,' 'my fathers.'

This can be said about one's Guru, mother, father, or anyone who is worthy of adoration. In all those places, the rule is that one must use the plural case. This is normally speaking. It is true that poets may use single case words also. However, in this circumstance, the plural case is used to indicate respect. That is why it says, '*pitṛn,*' fathers.'

Are there many fathers? Some people will ask this. Even if someone has only one father, they will use the plural form of the word. That is why it says here, '*pitṛn.*' Then, '*Pitāmahān āchāryān matulān, brāṭṛn, putrān, sakhīn, śvaśūrān.*' This is a style of language.

Isn't it enough to say, 'he saw all of his relatives?' However, this is a specialty of *Vyāsa*. He will depict matters full of illustration. That is *Vyāsa's* style.

If he gets an opportunity, in a place where a single word can be used, he will use a thousand. In this way, the meaning is that Arjuna saw everything.

These are emotional relationships of an individual. Father, grandfather.. guru, uncle.. This is to show the individual's relationship. How many kinds of emotional relationships does a single person have? All of these are seen, 'ubhayor senayor api,' among the two armies, standing face-to-face, ready to fight. All of these are relatives.

'*Avasthitān sarvān bandhūn tān samikṣya, sa Kaunteyaḥ.*' It says, '*avasthitān sarvān tān bandhūn,*' all of the people are relatives. There is nobody unfamiliar. All of these people, '*samikṣya,*' having seen..' having gotten a good look at all of them, '*sa kaunteyaḥ,*' the son of *Kuntī*, Arjuna, '*parayā kṛpayā āviṣṭaḥ*' – he became overcome with affection. Here, the word '*kṛpa*' means 'affection.' With great affection, and attachment, Arjuna became overwhelmed.

Śaṅkara will indicate all of this in a single sentence, when the commentary begins. What is that? It is because of the feeling of 'I' and 'mine,' the individual falls prey to attachment. The instruction of the *Gītā* is for removing that attachment.' That is said in the beginning of the *bhāṣyā*. When we reach there, we will discuss that.

That is also what Lord *Vyāsa* indicates here. This great affection, this severe attachment, came suddenly. Love came towards all of them. Arjuna became overcome by that, '*viśīdan,*' in sorrow, '*idaṁ abravīt*' Arjuna said these matters that I will say.

Here, one thing *Vyāsa* indicates is that a person must not become controlled by this attachment and affection. This kind of attachment and affection must not make one retreat from one's duty. It is affection, *kṛpa*, which makes Arjuna withdraw from the war. That must not happen.'

A short time before, Arjuna was ready for battle, holding high his bow. All preparations were made for the war. We said before, that once the war takes place, there would be great destruction. Thus, the ones participating would've known this even better than us, because they have fought in war several times. They have directly seen such destruction.

Thus, they have true awareness about the way of war. However, this war came as unavoidable, and now it isn't possible to retreat. In such a circumstance,

when war came as a duty to be performed, to retreat due to attachment' – it says here that that isn't right.

No matter what *karma* it is, it is called *svadharma* when it is one's duty. *Svadharma* means one's duty. The meaning of 'duty' in Sanskrit is '*kartavyam*.' The meaning of this is '*kartum arhaḥ*,' *kartum 'yogyaṃ*.' This means an action that is suitable to be performed. That is how the word '*kartavyam*' is formed.

This means that a person must perform what is suitable to be performed. One must not retreat for that for an unsuitable reason. For whatever reason, through attachment to relatives, one must not retreat.' This is indicated here.

If that happens, then one fails in the performance of their duty. Then, one doesn't follow their *svadharma*. If man rejects *svadharma*, and accepts *paradharma*, an unsuitable *dharma*, what happens? This is discussed later. The *Gītā* discusses about the *svadharma* of Arjuna. The Lord says that retreating is a great sin. For whatever reason, a person must not renounce *svadharma* and accept *paradharma*.

What does Arjuna do? He rejects his *svadharma*, and gets ready to accept the *paradharma* of *sanyassa*. He says, 'I don't need the war. Better than that is to live off of alms.' We discussed this the previous day. These are matters that *Saṅjaya* had told the *Pāṇḍavas* before. He says, 'better than you fighting is going and accepting alms. Here, there are so many villages and cities. Better than fighting and destroying each other is living off alms.' *Saṅjaya* had said this previously to the *Pāṇḍavas*.

Arjuna heard this. Therefore, what does Arjuna say? He says, 'better than this is to live from alms.' However, what prompted Arjuna to say that was attachment. This attachment must not stand as an obstacle to the performance of one's duty.' That is what happens here. For removing that, the Lord instructs Arjuna the *Gītā*.

What is attachment? That creates sorrow for Arjuna, '*viśīdan*.' The fruit of attachment is suffering and sorrow. For an individual, how can one remove whatever stands as an obstacle on the path towards *Mokṣa*? That is what is given in the *Gītā*. 'How can those be removed?' The *Gītā* gives instruction for that purpose.

The greatest obstacle in that is this viṣādam, despair. This despair is a big subject of discussion, in psychology. That is the same as what *Vyāsa* depicts. We said before that *Vyāsa* presents the *Mahābhārata* as man's mind. In that mind of man, one thing that always enters is despair. The primary cause of this sorrow is attachment. Therefore, remove sorrow.'

Some people say that is a disease. Arjuna had contracted the disease of despair. For removing that, we should know, 'how does that enter?' For showing that, this line is said, '*kṛpayā parayā,*' through severe attachment, sorrow comes. Through that sorrow, Arjuna says the matters that come next, '*idaṁ abravīt.*' What is that?

'*Kṛṣṇa,*' hey Kṛṣṇa, '*yuyutsum samupasthitāṁ imāṁ svajānaṁ dṛṣtvā.*' '*Yuyutsum samupasthitum,*' those who are ready to fight, who have joined together, '*imāṁ svajānaṁ,*' these, my own relatives, '*dṛṣtvā,*' having seen, '*mama gātrāṇi sīdanti,*' my body is faltering. '*Mukhaṁ cha pariśuṣyati,*' my mouth dries up.' Then, there is the plural word '*gātrāṇi.*' We may ask, 'does Arjuna have many bodies?' No. This means, 'my entire body is faltering.' That is why the word '*gātrāṇi*' is used in plural case.

We said before, that the use of plural case for a single object can be for showing worship. Then, it can also be used if an object has several sections, but is only one. For example, take a tree. A tree is one, but it has numerous branches. So, we say, 'the tree shakes.' When we say this, it is '*vṛkṣaḥ kaṁpate.*' However, if all of the branches move together in the breeze on one tree, we can say, '*vṛkṣāḥ chalanti.*'

That is a style of language. That is also used like that in several sections. The phrase '*vṛkṣāḥ chalanti,*' doesn't mean, 'many trees are moving.' Instead, it means 'all of the branches of a tree are moving in the wind.' Like that, it says here, 'my arms, legs, everything is faltering. For saying this, it says, '*gātrāṇi sīdanti.*'

This is a normal technique used in Sanskrit. This is something that those with general knowledge about Sanskrit all know. Still, when some commentators see this, they say this means, 'the gross body, the subtle body, and the casual body.' This is an ordinary usage. There is no need to enter such explanations.

We say, 'my whole body is faltering.' This is also a usage in Sanskrit, in the phrase, '*gātrāṇi*.'

Instead of saying, 'my arms, legs, everything,' it is enough to say, '*gātrāṇi sīdanti*.' That is what Arjuna says. 'All of my limbs, from top to bottom are faltering.' 'My mouth dries up.' These are describing the physical changes that take place due to despair. Arjuna is saying through his own experience. '*Mukham cha pariśuśyati*.'

'*Me śarīre vepathuḥ romahaṛṣaścha jāyate*.' 'Me śarīre,' in my body, 'vepathuḥ,' there is trembling, and 'romahaṛṣaḥ,' my hairs stand on end. When one has emotions such as fear, the hairs on the body will stand up. That is 'romahaṛṣam.' This can happen through fear, or through happiness.

Here, what is it? Here, this happen to Arjuna through sorrow. That sorrow causes his hairs to stand on end. Normally, this indicates happiness. However, this isn't caused by happiness here. Other things, such as fear, or despair, can cause this. In that way, the body reflects the changes in the mind. That is the faltering of the body, etc.

We can know this. If we have to face any kind of crises suddenly in life, all of these things happen to us. If there is some kind of accident going to happen, or if we witness any kind of accident, these things happen. When any of these happen in life, once there is this sudden change of mind, the reflection of that will be immediately experienced in the body.

We have experienced these matters several times. That is also what is happening to Arjuna. However, it says that the reason for Arjuna experiencing this is attachment. This word 'kṛpa' usually means compassion towards others. We talk about the *kṛpa* of *Mahātmās*. However, this isn't that kind of *kṛpa* here. Many people have commented here with that meaning of *kṛpa*. This means 'compassion towards living beings.'

Arjuna is a person with not even an ounce of such *kṛpa*. This is because that isn't the circumstance for that. Instead, for Arjuna, a warrior going to fight, it is only because the people surrounding him are relatives that he has such an emotion. Otherwise, if Arjuna had seen some other enemy, he wouldn't have thought like this.

Why is that? This is because Arjuna had fought with them before this. However, there wasn't this kind of preparation at that time. After the period of hiding, Arjuna fought single-handedly against Bhīṣma and the Kauravas and defeated them. He made them run away. In that time, Arjuna didn't have this kind of emotion.

The reason is because there wasn't this much preparation for battle. Arjuna didn't that there would be that much of a consequence from that war. Here, it isn't like that. There have been long preparations for war. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* and *Sañjaya* have told the *Pāṇḍavas* several times about the future results of this war. *Vyāsa* had talked to the *Pāṇḍavas* on several occasions about this. 'War is terrible. The *Kurukṣetra* will become full of the flesh and blood of *kṣatriyas*. No one will be saved. *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa*, everyone will die.'

The *Pāṇḍavas* would've known these matters before. This is because the *Pāṇḍavas* knew that victory was certain with *Kṛṣṇa* on their side. Thus, this is a war where the death of relatives is for certain. That will happen. This is something that was said by many people in many circumstances. This was discussed many times. This had become impressed in Arjuna's mind, the picture of this total destruction.

When he sees this directly, the omen of this, when the war begins, that previous samskāra suddenly awakens, and Arjuna falters. This is something that can happen to any individual in this kind of circumstance spontaneously. However, the battles Arjuna had fought before weren't like this. The battle in the year of hiding was all of a sudden. In that war, the aim of both sides wasn't to kill each other, but to each other scare away.

At that time, Arjuna didn't fight against Bhīṣma with the intention to kill. Because they were relatives, his aim was to drive them away. Here it isn't like that. If the war must be ended, they must be killed. The *Pāṇḍavas* decided that they must die, and then considered together and with *Kṛṣṇa* several times as to how they could kill them. Therefore, in this war, where the death of all the relatives is for certain, when Arjuna sees those whom he will have to kill, he spontaneously feels affection towards those relatives. This created such despair in Arjuna, and this condition. Arjuna is saying this openly to his closest friend, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*.

'Hastāt gāṇḍhivam sraṁsate.' 'From my hands, the bow *Gāṇḍīva* slips away.' Once, Arjuna fought against the *devas* and *asuras* joined together. He defeated all of them. However, who are the ones opposing here? They are relatives. Only because Arjuna had to fight against relatives does all of this happen. *'Hastāt gāṇḍīvam sraṁsate.'* '*Sraṁsate*' means 'it falls.' My bow, *Gāṇḍīva*, falls from my hands.

'Tvak paridahyate cha.' 'My skin is like on fire.' These are things that are experienced by all people. It is just that Lord *Vyāsa* is depicting these in Arjuna. When that much of a huge mental conflict comes, it will feel like the whole body is burning. *'Na cha śakṇomi avasthātum.'* '*Avasthātum*,' to stand, '*na śakṇomi*,' I am unable to.

'Me manaḥ bhramatīva.' We normally say, 'my head is spinning.' That is what is said here. When we say, 'my head,' this means the mind. We say, 'my head is spinning.' '*Me manaḥ bhramatīva.*' I feel like my mind is spinning.' Our heads never spin. That is why it says, '*īva*,' 'it is as if my head is spinning.' This means that Arjuna is confused.

This is the internal experience of Arjuna. When an ordinary person falls prey to despair through attachment, all of these things happen. When this happens, a person collapses.

Suppose a mother's child has some kind of illness. Then we can understand this. Or if there is an operation needed right away, and the child is taken in the operation room, when a mother sees this, this is her mental attitude. This attitude comes because of her affection for the child, and attachment. All of these things will happen to that individual.

Otherwise, if a person's best friend becomes ill, or if he is in some accident.. If this person sees this directly, all of these things will happen. In all of these, in a subtle level, why does this happen? It is because of this attachment. The proof of this is that if there is no attachment, these things won't happen. There are so many deaths that take place in the world. If the person isn't most dear to us, these won't happen.

However, if it is, 'my dearest,' my mother, or father, or brother, if they die, then in that circumstance, that individual will have to face all of these things unexpectedly. There, what happens? It is the same as here. 'Affection, and

attachment.' It is attachment towards that person. No matter how many other mothers or fathers die, these won't happen, but when it is 'my father,' 'my mother,' 'my wife,' 'my husband,' then this despair happens due to attachment.

This is a very clear matter. Arjuna was experiencing attachment. All of these matters happened because of that attachment. Suddenly, the mind becomes weak. Some people ask, 'how could this happen so suddenly? For someone who took so much preparation for the war, how could this happen all of a sudden?'

The reason is because if we hear about the death of someone dear to us, in moments, all of these things will happen in the person's body and mind. No kind of delay is necessary for that. That happens in seconds. So whenever attachment arises in the heart, we aren't able to recognize it. One isn't able to consider or understand that this takes place from attachment at that time. However, these kinds of things can happen in a person in moments.

Therefore, after so much preparation for the war, when we say that this can still happen to Arjuna, this can definitely happen. If we look at the circumstances in our life, we can understand. Then Arjuna speaks.

Here, when all of these things happen spontaneously in Arjuna, this continues. Continuing that affection, Arjuna is thinking and speaking about each matter. Here, Arjuna spoke about the condition of his own body. In the condition of mental despair, Arjuna thinks and tells the things that come suddenly to his mind. Arjuna hadn't thought about this considerably. He is simply saying what enters his mind.

These are the thoughts that suddenly come in the mind of a person in this circumstance. Those will never be acceptable or based on logic and reasoning. However, the Lord says afterwards to Arjuna, 'you are in sorrow, but saying the words of the wise.' '*Prajñāvādāṁścha bhāṣase.*' You are saying the words of knowledgeable people. At the same time, you are grieving.' If we hear the words of someone in deep despair, they may be very logical words.

If we hear what Arjuna says, we will feel, 'that is correct.' Then, when we enter into the Gītā, what do we feel? Then we feel like the opposition to Arjuna's views are more suitable. That is natural. Why is that? This is because all of these matters Arjuna says are things he has heard of and thought of many times before. Therefore, there will be some truths in what is said.

A person who doesn't think about this will feel that it is correct. That is why after hearing all of this, the Lord gives a reply with a smile on His face. This is because this is exactly what he expected. This is exactly what can be expected from a person in that condition. In this bhāva, the Lord replies. Even after seeing this much despair and fluctuation in Arjuna, the Lord gives the answer with a smile.

What is Arjuna saying? That is said next, in the next *śloka*. Here, Lord Vyāsa is depicting the internal condition of Arjuna.