

CHAPTER 1- PART 4; ARJUNA'S COLLAPSE

Arjuna is now giving each justification as to why he should withdraw from the war. First, Arjuna spoke about the sudden shift of his condition. Arjuna, who was prepared for battle, had a sudden change in his mind and body. That is what he says to the Lord. After that, Arjuna says, 'war isn't necessary. We should retreat.' Arjuna lists the reasons for that next.

*Nimittāni cha paśyāmi viparītāni keśava
Na cha śreyo 'nupaśyāmi hatvā svajanamāhave. 1.31.*

1.31. 'I see adverse omens, O Krishna. I don't see any good in killing my kinsmen in battle.'

Here, it says, '*keśava*,' Hey Kṛṣṇa!, '*Nimittāni viparītāni cha paśyāmi.*' I see adverse omens. That is what Arjuna saw. In other words, a war cannot end in auspiciousness. There won't be any light in the end of this war. Instead, it will lead to total destruction.' The purpose of war is for destroying one's enemies and enjoying a wealthy kingdom. However, here what we see is not that experience. Instead, I see the signs of suffering to come. Afterwards, only suffering will remain. I see the signs of this now.' Arjuna is explaining this further.

'*Āhave svajanaṁ hatvā śreyaḥ na anupaśyāmi cha.*' '*āhave*,' in this war, '*svajanaṁ hatvā*' - '*svajanaṁ*' means relatives. Having killed our relatives, '*śreyaḥ na anupaśyāmi.*' I don't see any good in this. Normally, these are the thoughts that go along with war. These are expressed in Arjuna.

Ordinary wars are when one kills the enemy. However, here it isn't like that. We will have to kill our own relatives. Having killed our relatives in such a war, I don't see anything good, or any kind of gain. '*Na anupaśyāmi.*' I don't see any kind of gain to come from this. Therefore, this war is unnecessary.' This is what Arjuna thinks in his mind.

*Na kāṅkṣe vijayaṁ kṛṣṇa na cha rājyaṁ sukhāni cha
Kiṁ no rājyena govinda kiṁ bhogairjīvitena vā. 1.32.*

*Yeṣāmarthe kāṅkṣitaṁ no rājyaṁ bhogāḥ sukhāni cha
Ta eme 'vasthitā yuddhe prāṇāṁstyaktvā dhanāni cha. 1.33.*

*āchāryāḥ pitarāḥ putrās tatraiva cha pitāmahāḥ
Mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ pautrāḥ śyālāḥ sambandhinastathā. 1.34.*

1.32. 'I do not desire victory, O Krishna, nor the kingdom and its pleasures. Of what use is control of the kingdom to us, O Govinda? Of what use are pleasures, or life itself?'

1.33. 'They for whose sake we desire the kingdom, enjoyments, and pleasures stand here in battle, having renounced their life and wealth.'

1.34. 'Teachers, fathers, sons and also grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law, and other relatives,'

'O *Kṛṣṇa!*' '*Kṛṣṇa*' means 'one who attracts.' The formation of this word is '*karṣaṇā kṛṣṇa.*' 'One who attracts,' 'one who attracts the sin of devotees.' There are several kinds of meaning for this. In this way, 'O *Kṛṣṇa,*' '*vijayaṁ na kāṅkṣe,*' I don't desire victory. I don't desire to obtain victory by defeating the enemies in battle.' Like that, '*rājyaṁ cha na kāṅkṣe.*' '*Ahaṁ rājyaṁ na kāṅkṣe.*' I don't desire the kingdom. '*Sukhāni cha ahaṁ na kāṅkṣe.*' I don't desire the enjoyment of obtaining the kingdom.' '*He Govinda!*'

This word means '*Go vindati*' - 'one who protects the Vedas,' 'one who restores the Vedas,' 'one who protects the cows,' 'one who protects knowledge.' These are all meanings for this word, '*Govinda.*' 'Hey *Govinda!*' '*rājyena naḥ kiṁ,*' what is the use of the kingdom for us? Arjuna explains this in the next

śloka. This is because all of the relatives will die. Then one will live afterwards in the suffering of that memory. Then what is the use in the kingdom?’

‘*Bhogaiḥ*,’ with the enjoyments of the kingdom, ‘*naḥ kiṃ*.’ What is the use of these for us? ‘*Jīvitena vā*,’ then for life itself, after this terrible war is finished, and all relatives are dead, what is the use of living along with the sorrow of that memory? After the war, I don’t see any purpose to live. That is what Arjuna says.

Why is that? ‘*yeṣāṃ arthe*,’ for whom, ‘*naḥ*,’ us, ‘*rājyaṃ, bhogāḥ, sukhāni cha*,’ the kingdom, the enjoyments of the kingdom, and its pleasures, ‘*kāṅkṣitaṃ*,’ are desired – for whose sake the kingdom, enjoyments, and pleasures are desired, ‘*te*’ they, ‘*ime āchāryāḥ*,’ those gurus, ‘*pitarāḥ*, fathers, etc, are situated here. We said this before. There are ‘*putrāḥ*,’ sons, ‘*pitāmahāḥ*,’ grandfathers, ‘*mātulāḥ*,’ uncles, ‘*śvaśurāḥ*,’ fathers in law, ‘*pautrāḥ*,’ grandsons, ‘*śyālāḥ*,’ brothers-in-law, ‘*saṃbandhinaḥ*,’ relatives, all family relations, are all situated here.

‘*Tathā saṃbandhinaḥ*,’ who are all of these people? ‘*Te ime*,’ all of them, ‘*prāṇān*,’ their very lives, ‘*dhanāni*,’ their wealth, ‘*cha tyaktvā*,’ they have renounced both of these, life and wealth. Then, ‘*yuddhe avasthitāḥ*,’ they are standing, ready for battle.

That is why I don’t see any use in the kingdom, in its pleasures, or in life itself. After this all-destructive war, none of these will give happiness. They won’t give any contentment. We have desired all of these from the people here, and because of this, all these relatives will be destroyed.’ What happened later was as Arjuna expected. This is because after the war, the Kurukṣetra had become a huge cremation ground.

The *Pāṇḍavas* had to live with the separation from all of those relatives and the sorrowful remembrance of the war. That is said later. ‘This is useless. War is unnecessary.’ That is what Arjuna says.

Here, what Arjuna says are words that are very discriminative. Normally, these are the things an opponent to war who is intelligent and thinks logically says. Arjuna says, ‘the war will destroy everything. That must be avoided. Everyone desires peace.’ When Arjuna thinks like this, there is an answer to each of these matters said in the *Gītā*.

That is why we took the first chapter of the Gītā, in order to understand the instructions of the Lord. Here, the Lord only says one sentence of instruction. This is, '*Pārtha paśyaitān samavetān kurun*' – 'Arjuna, see the *Kurus* arranged here!' That is all the Lord has said. Still, the first chapter is considered a part of the Bhagavad Gītā, even though there is no instruction of the Lord. This is all a part of the *Bhagavad Gītā Parva* in the *Mahābhārata*. There are three chapters within that *Parva*.

However, in the instruction of the Gītā, this chapter has been combined, even though it doesn't contain the instructions of the Lord. This is because the Lord starts by giving answers to the questions raised by Arjuna here. These are discussed in the other 17 chapters. Arjuna says that this war won't give any happiness. Here, we must keep this question in mind, when the Lord says, 'what is happiness?' 'What is suffering?'

How does a person gain happiness? What is the nature of happiness and sorrow? These are *dvandvas*, mutually opposing pairs. What is the level beyond those?' This isn't an ordinary war. This war will cause complete destruction. However, when the Lord continues to discuss, he doesn't just take this war, but takes life itself as a war. The Lord discusses about the happiness and sorrow there. Life itself is a war. The Lord expresses that in the form of a war.

Here, Arjuna is in despair, sorrow. Why is Arjuna suffering? It is from thinking about the sorrows of war. How does the Lord respond? He doesn't talk about any particular kind of sorrow. He talks about the suffering of life. All sufferings are the same. The intensity of them may differ, but still, all suffering is the same. Thus, this isn't just about the suffering of war.

How can a person deal with all suffering? That is what the Lord instructs. Thus, it isn't just the war. If we just take the war, what does Arjuna say? He says, 'war isn't necessary, because I don't want its fruits.' So, the question is, 'is war necessary or not?' We should keep this question in mind when we discuss the answer.

This war is just taken as an example. In truth, the primary subject of the Gītā isn't war. Even where it speaks about war, what does the Lord say? '*Svadharmā*' – your inherent duty. 'Should one reject one's *svadharmā*, or follow it?' That is the subject of discussion in the Gita.

If war comes as one's *svadharma*, should that be rejected or performed? That is it. Anything can come as *svadharma*. For a *kṣatriya*, war comes as his *svadharma*. This doesn't mean that everyone has the right to fight a war. Only a worthy person can perform war. Then what is this war for? It is for the protection of righteousness.

This is a war that is impossible to avoid. It is a dharmic war. When such a war comes as a person's duty, can that be rejected? Here, Arjuna desired to renounce the war in the name of attachment. Here, it says, one must not renounce one's inherent duty in the name of anything.

Keeping this question in mind, what does the Lord say in the end? '*Svadharme nidhane śreyaḥ.*' Even if you die while performing your *svadharma*, that is great.' That need not be any particular *dharma*. That can also be war. This isn't instructed just for a *kṣatriya*, but for all human beings. Thus, each person has his or her own *svadharma*. Here, Arjuna is getting ready to withdraw from his *svadharma*, the war. It says, 'one must not retreat like that!'

The reason for that is attachment, or likes and dislikes. *Śaṅkara* will say that the cause of those are the thoughts of 'I' and 'mine.' The cause of those is *Ajñāna*, spiritual ignorance. The thought of 'I' and 'mine' are produced from *Ajñāna*, and from these, a *Jīva* desires to withdraw from his *svadharma*. The Lord repeats again and again in the *Gītā*, 'you must perform your *svadharma*.' However, the Lord doesn't just say to perform actions as one's *dharma*.

The Lord instructs to perform that as means for attaining God. When this happens, everything in life, no matter what level, no matter what practice, everything can be performed as a means for attaining God. That is what is said in the *Gītā*. That can even be war. That is why the *Gītā* is called a '*mokṣa śāstra*,' a scripture of Liberation.

Arjuna doesn't ask about a means to Liberation in a single part here. He doesn't ask, 'how can I obtain *Mokṣa*? What is the way to that?' However, the entire instruction of the Lord is to accept life as a path to Liberation. Here, Arjuna desires to renounce the war. Arjuna requests to renounce to the Lord. 'I desire to renounce this.'

However, the Lord doesn't accept this kind of renunciation. He doesn't accept the renunciation of *svadharma*. Once a person has decided that a *karma* is

svadharma, he must not renounce that for any reason. Here, the Lord isn't discussing about the material results of the war. Arjuna is concerned, 'Will there be gain or loss from the war?' However, that isn't the subject of the Lord's instructions.

If a war comes to us as a subject, we will naturally discuss about its material gains. What destruction will there be? What gain will there be? That is how we think. However, what the Gītā discusses is not primarily about the material fruits of war. In the second chapter, the Lord says a small bit of this in parts. He says, 'if you fight, you will attain heaven.' This is said to change Arjuna's disinterestedness in the war. However, that isn't the primary goal of the Gītā's discussion.

Here, what does Arjuna say? He says that the kingdom and its pleasures are of no use. Thus, the war began for attainment of the kingdom and pleasure. It says here that that beginning isn't right. The goal of every action must not be due to attachment to such results. Instead, karma must be only accepted as a means to the purification of one's own mind, no matter what karma it is.' This is what the Gītā says.

Thus, the war started with the desire for pleasure. When Arjuna understood that the war would cause suffering, Arjuna desired to renounce the war. This is the thought of an ordinary person. However, what does the Lord say? No matter what *karma* it is, whether a war or not, one must not perform it due to considering the fruits of the action. A person should not perform karma according to the material gains. 'How can that karma aid in purifying one's mind?' That is what must be looked at.

This is because the relationship between karma and its fruit is natural. Each *karma* must produce a result. That's not something we have to think about. Good actions give good results, and bad actions give bad results. That's not something man must think about. What must man think of? 'How can this *karma* aid me in the path to Liberation? How can this karma aid in attaining purity of mind?' The Gita says, 'Perform karma in that way!'

This instruction is given as an answer to these questions. Thus, the Gītā is not a scripture that prompts man to wage wars in the normal sense. In truth, the war of the Gītā isn't the normal war we are thinking of. There is war. However,

this isn't the kind of fighting we think. Here, Arjuna learns to face his karma. This means for a person to be established in their *svadharma*.

Here, there is not any importance given to the action of war. That is just like any other *karma*. The Gītā can be related to any kind of *karma*. This is true for war, or in peace. There is no difference for these two. There is no difference in the nature of karma. Here it discusses about svadharma, according to the qualities of the individual.

Therefore, if we think in a material view, the arguments and justifications said here are all meaningful. These are things a normal person thinks. Some commentators on the Gītā ask, 'would the Lord have destroyed all of Arjuna's justifications and forced him back into battle?' In truth, what does the Lord do?

When the Lord replies to these arguments and justifications that we feel are very logical, He doesn't discuss any of them in particular. At the same time, the Lord gives the answer to all of the questions. This is because all of Arjuna's questions were solely on the material level. The reply of the Lord is completely on the spiritual level.

Thus, the answer to material problems is given on a purely spiritual level. This is the relation and difference between these questions and the answers the Lord gives later. For a person who thinks in the material level, he won't grasp the Lord's answer.

When Arjuna raises these questions, he doesn't reach the level of spirituality. These aren't questions from the level of spirituality. We cannot see a single sentence here, that says, 'Lord, how can I attain Liberation?' Arjuna doesn't ask this. 'What is spiritual practice? What is eternal and non-eternal?' He doesn't ask these questions.

And what about the reply of the Lord? The Lord is only on the spiritual level. It doesn't speak at all about material victory or defeat in war. Even in the places where that is discussed, what does He say? He says, 'go beyond that.' This is what the Lord says from the very start of His instruction. '*Tvam anvaśochaḥ,*' you are grieving, '*prajñāvādāmś cha bhāṣase,*' at the same time, you're speaking the words of wise people.

What is said here indicates this. Arjuna is speaking here in the way that those with discrimination speak. At the same time, he is grieving. It isn't possible

for both of these to exist in one place. Grief isn't possible for a *Viveki*. 'You are speaking like a person with *viveka*, and you are grieving.'

This speaking like a *viveki* while grieving at the same time is what is called materialism, materialistic thinking. Arjuna presents his problems here completely from a material level. However, the Lord replies in a spiritual level beyond that, which Arjuna is unable to grasp. That is why the Gita is a '*mokṣa śāstra*.' The Lord instructs about *Mokṣa* to a person who doesn't ask about *Mokṣa*.

That is a rarity of the Gita. In the end, Arjuna asks in a single sentence. What is that? '*śiṣyaste' haṁ sādhi mām.*' 'I am your disciple. Instruct me.' This means 'show me a way out of this difficulty through Your instruction.' However, even then, the Lord spoke in a level unexpected to Arjuna in answering those questions. This is the relationship between the two. That must be understood for us to enter into the Gita.

Thus, the solution to all our problems is only on the spiritual level. That is what the Gita teaches us. Here, Arjuna desires to renounce the war. What does Arjuna say here? '*Na cha śreyo 'nupaśyāmi.*' I don't see any good in this war. I want to withdraw from this war.' Arjuna does withdraw. It says at the end of this chapter, '*Viṣṭya saśaram chāpaṁ.*' Arjuna rejects his bow and arrow. '*Rathopastha upāviṣat.*' Thus, Arjuna sits in the chariot.' Here, Arjuna completely renounces *karma*.

However, the Lord doesn't accept that kind of *tyāga*. This is the external renunciation of one's *svadharma*. At the same time, what does the Gita teach? It teaches the supreme renunciation. The Lord refutes the *tyāga* that Arjuna accepted. He doesn't accept that. Without accepting that, the Lord indicates to Arjuna to highest form of renunciation.

Thus, Arjuna is raising all of these doubts here, weighing the material gains and losses that will result. If we don't understand these parts, we won't grasp the Lord's reply to Arjuna. We should keep each word in mind, when we hear the Lord's reply to Arjuna.

The Lord gives an answer to each of Arjuna's problems. The Lord requests Arjuna to see all of the problems he is facing as a means to attaining Liberation. This isn't just this matter; it is everything. Make life itself into a means to Liberation!'

Here, external forms of renunciation don't have much importance. If the action is one's svadharma, one must not renounce it. That is another rarity of the Gita. This is because when the Guru instructs the disciple normally, it will be in solitude, in a very tranquil atmosphere. The Guru and disciple will sit with great concentration, the Guru instructing and the disciple listening. This is what we normally see in other spiritual works.

However, here it isn't like that. This is in the midst of a war. Normally, this background created by *Vyāsa* is never a background for instructing *Ātma Vidyā*. People go to the forests to learn *Ātma Vidyā*. People go to *āśrams*, or forests. Why is that? It is because there is peace there. The atmosphere is peaceful. That is where *Ātma Vidyā* should be taught and heard.

But *Vyāsa* turns aside from our ordinary ideas and presents another background. This is the scene of war. This is a war full of violence. In that scene, the Lord instructs this *Ātma Vidyā*. There we cannot see this kind of instruction anywhere else. Thus, the construction of this background by *Vyāsa* is another rarity of the Gita.

What does this indicate? 'A person can accept spirituality in any circumstance, whatsoever. No matter what path or level one is in, you can think that that is the path to Liberation.' This is in order for people to clearly understand.

There are so many other *Gitas* in the *Mahābhārata*, full of instructions. In any other Gita, we cannot see this kind of background. There are numerous *Gitas* instructed in *Shānti Parvam*. However, this kind of background cannot be seen anywhere else.

Thus, this rarity of the Gita is indicated. What is that? 'Wherever man is situated in material life, he must have a spiritual support. This can happen.' This is the message. 'If something is one's svadharma, one should not reject it.' That is also a rarity of the Gita.

The Lord says, '*prajñāvādān*,' Arjuna is saying the words of *Vivekis*. However, he is grieving at the same time. For an ordinary person, this level of *viveka*, the level of discriminative thinking, is the same as the level of sorrow. This is like sunlight existing in darkness. Wherever discrimination is situated,

there will be indiscrimination as well. That is also indicated in this section. That will be made clear later.

In other words, there are two levels in man. One is the level of duality, the pairs of opposites. The Gita presents these levels of life. The opposing questions raised by Arjuna here are the level of duality. This is in the form of the *dvandas*, the pairs of opposites. These are good and bad, knowledge and ignorance, happiness and sorrow, etc. All of these compose this level. This is the level of ordinary people. This is where Arjuna is.

We will say, 'he is very knowledgable.' Then we should also understand, 'he is also devoid of knowledge.' Wherever there is knowledge, there is also lack of knowledge. What is the level of the Lord's instructions in the Gita? It isn't that. '*Dvandvatito vimatsarah.*' The Lord instructs the level beyond the *dvandvas*, beyond dualities. It says that while being in the level of dualities in our life, there is also a level beyond dualities.

Arjuna presents all of his questions in the level of dualities. The answer and instruction of the Lord are all in the level beyond dualities, '*dvandvatitah.*' This is the difference between the two. This shows, 'there is such a level.' What we normally consider as discrimination is on this level of dualities. We accept all kinds discrimination.

When *Abhinavaguptan* speaks about the essence of the Gita's first chapter, he says, '*vidyāvidye dvayam tyaktvā, nirviveko bhavet muniḥ.*' This is a very noteworthy instruction. Here, this is said, taking into consideration Arjuna questions and the reply by the Lord. '*Vidyāvidye dvayam tyaktvā.*' Arjuna here is a knowledgable person, a *Vidvān.*' The Lord indicates this. He says, 'all that you are saying is very logical and reasonable. These are all logical things.' This is the level of *Vidyā*. However, where he is saying like that itself, Arjuna shows a level of *Avidyā*. What is that? That is grief.

Arjuna says here, '*sīdanti mama gātrāṇi mukham cha parīśuṣyati.*' This is the level of sorrow, of *Avidyā*. At the same time, Arjuna shows the level of *Vidyā*. How is that? This is in all that Arjuna says next. Arjuna says, '*Etān na hantum icchāmi.*' 'I don't desire to kill them.' I don't desire the war. I desire peace. I don't want the kingdom, or pleasure.' This is a level of *tyāga*, of discrimination.

However, when a person says, 'I don't want the kingdom, pleasures, or anything,' this shows his supreme dispassion. This is the level of *Vidyā*. At the same time, Arjuna directly expresses the level of *Avidyā*. That is where Arjuna says, 'my limbs are as if burning, and my mouth has dried up.' These are two levels.

Here, *Vyāsa* shows that both *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* are in the hands of the ordinary person. These are within each Jiva. In other words, whenever some kind of crisis comes, another person will have all capacity to give advice to the suffering person. Anyone can give advice. If someone else experiences any kind of difficulty or hardship, anybody is able to give advice. This is because that person has knowledge, *Vidyā*. Nobody has to teach such a person. He will advise all of the ways to overcome the pain. That is *Vidyā*.

This is in all people. That's not necessary to learn. However, when that same problem comes to oneself, that advice won't be fruitful on oneself. That is *Avidyā*. When a person who gives advice experiences the same hardship as the other person, he will collapse. Many people say this. 'I give advice to so many people, but when it comes to me, I'm unable to imbibe that.' That is the level of *Avidyā*. Thus, there is also a level of *Avidyā*.

If another person collapsed on the battlefield like this, Arjuna would definitely be able to advise him just like the Lord. 'That's not how it is. You should fight!' Arjuna would've said many things. However, when that came to Arjuna himself, he couldn't deal with it. This is the *Vidyā* of an *Ajñāni*, one who is ignorant. This is the level of both *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*.

This may be lesser or greater in different people. However, we said before, this is the level of dualities. '*Dvayam tyaktvā*,' having renounced both of these, '*muniḥ nirviveko bhavet*.' There is another level, beyond dualities, above this discrimination of *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*. Reach that!' That is what the Lord says again and again.

'*Sukhaduḥkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayājayau*.' This is in all of the Lord's instructions. '*Nirdvandvo nirmamobhūtvā*.' All of these instructions point out another level. *Abhinavaguptan* is saying, 'the *Muni* must become like that.' That is the essence of what Lord *Vyāsa* presents in the first chapter. This is the state beyond discrimination.

To make that clear, Lord *Vyāsa* continuously shows the mental condition of Arjuna here. The Lord describes this is a single phrase. What is that? ‘*Aśochyān anvaśochas tvam, prajñāvādāmścha bhāṣase.*’ After Arjuna said this much, this is the Lord’s reply to Arjuna’s arguments. ‘You are speaking like someone with discrimination, and you are grieving.’ That shows the level of duality.

Ordinary intelligent people, and those who give advice, are situated on this level. This is referring to ordinary people who give advice. They advise, but they grieve as well. Arjuna is similar. Here, when Arjuna says many things, these can be seen in the Lord’s instructions.

Here it says, ‘*kiṁ no rājyena govinda.*’ This should be picked apart, ‘*kiṁ naḥ rājyena.*’ Then, the next part should be split, ‘*bhogaiḥ jivitenā.*’ One should learn how to read the ślokas by separating the words. Then, ‘*ta ime.*’ This is separated as ‘*te, ime.*’ This is because of the *sandhi*. If the words are separated, the line reads, ‘*te ime avasthitāḥ.*’

Then, ‘*prāṇān tyaktvā.*’ Here, the ‘*n*’ drops, and ‘*ms*’ replaces it. That becomes ‘*prāṇāmstyaktvā.*’ This is because of the *sandhi*. ‘*āchāryāḥ pitaraḥ putrāḥ, tathā eva.*’ This becomes ‘*tathaiva.*’ Then, ‘*mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ pautrāḥ śyālāḥ tathā.*’ Then the next *śloka*.

***Etānna hantumicchāmi ghnato ‘pi madhusūdana,
Api trailokyarājyasya hetoḥ kiṁ nu mahīkṛte. 1.35.***

1.36. ‘I do not wish to kill them, even if they kill me. O Madhusudana, I don’t wish that even for control over the three worlds, much less this earth.’

‘*Madhusūdana.*’ *Sri Kṛṣṇa* gained this name by killing an *asura* called ‘*Madhu.*’ Then, ‘*madhu*’ can also mean ‘bliss.’ ‘One who produces that, through instructing *Ātma Vidyā*, giving bliss to *Jivas*,’ – this is also commented on. Hey *Madhusūdana*, ‘*ghnatopi.*’ This is ‘*ghnataḥ api.*’ Even if I am killed, ‘*trailokyarājyasya hetoḥ*’ the lordship of the three worlds, even for that, ‘*etān*’ these *Kauravas*, our relatives, ‘*hantum na icchāmi,*’ I don’t desire to kill them. I don’t want to kill them.’

‘*Mahikṛte kim nu?*’ Then what about this mere earth?’ This means, ‘do I need to say about that?’ Arjuna says, ‘I don’t desire to kill them even for the three worlds.’ This means that he doesn’t desire to kill for the sake of this earth. He doesn’t say this fully. That’s why it says, ‘*kim nu,*’ ‘then what to say about that?’ If I don’t desire to kill for the sake of the three worlds, then is it needed to say ‘for the kingdom?’ This means, ‘I will never kill for the sake of the kingdom.’

In that way, without the words expressing the full meaning, one finishes the meaning. This is called, ‘*padokti.*’ In that way, ‘I won’t kill them.’ ‘Even if I were to gain the three worlds, I would not kill them.’ That is what is said here. ‘I don’t need the kingdom.’ Normally, the sides of a war will be thinking about the gain that will come from that war. If that result doesn’t give happiness, one will say, ‘I don’t need this.’ That is the same as what Arjuna says.

Here, ‘*etān*’ and ‘*na,*’ are joined together, forming ‘*etānna.*’ Then, it is, ‘*ghnataḥ api.*’ Through the *sandhi*, this becomes, ‘*ghnatopi.*’

***Nihatya dhārtaraṣṭrānnaḥ kā prītiḥ syājjanārdana
Pāpamevāśrayedasmān hatvaitānātātāyinaḥ. 1.36.***

1.36. ‘What pleasure will we gain in killing the sons of Dhritarashtra, O Janardana? By killing these transgressors, we will only incur sin.’

‘*Pāpaṁ, eva, āśrayet, asmān, hatvā, etān, ātatāyinaḥ.*’ This must be read separated. Through the *sandhi*, it becomes, ‘*hatvaitānātātāyinaḥ.*’ ‘*Janārdana*’ – ‘*Jana,*’ people, ‘*ardan,*’ who destroys. ‘He who destroys everything in the time of *Pralaya*’ – this is the Lord, *Janārdana*. Otherwise, this can mean, ‘He who destroys the sins of people, of devotees. That is how the name ‘*Janārdana*’ is used.

‘Hey *Janārdana,* ‘*dhārtaraṣṭrān nihatya naḥ kā prītiḥ syāt?*’ ‘*Dhārtaraṣṭrān,*’ the sons of *Dhṛtaraṣṭra, Duryodhana* and all the others, ‘*nihatya,*’ having killed them, our brothers, ‘*naḥ,*’ us, the *Pāṇḍavas,* ‘*kā prītiḥ syāt,*’ what pleasure will occur from this? What contentment will we gain? What happiness will we find? This is ‘*prītiḥ.*’ What pleasure will be produced from this?’

How will killing my brothers give me any happiness? If the *Kauravas* are killed, the *Pāṇḍavas* will again gain the kingdom. However, that kingdom won't be the cause of happiness. That won't give any pleasure. That is what Arjuna is saying. Having attained the kingdom from killing relatives, that won't give any happiness. There will be the sorrow from killing these relatives. We will have to enjoy those pleasures with the memory of our dead relatives. Therefore, I don't want that pleasure.'

'*Pāpameva āśrayed asmān hatvā etān ātatāyinaḥ.*' We can re-arrange the words. '*Asmān etān ātatāyinaḥ hatvā, pāpam eva āśrayet.*' '*Etān ātatāyinaḥ,*' these attackers, great sinners..' Normally, the word '*ātatāyinaḥ*' means a person who commits arson, who tries to kill with weapons, who steals land, who steals gold, and women.' Such people are called '*ātatāyinaḥ.*' These are people who commit great sins.

These *Kauravas* have done all of these things. They set fire to a house. They tried several times to kill the *Pāṇḍavas*. They stole land. All of things refer to the sons of *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*. Because the sons of *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* committed all of these, they are great sinners. It is said, '*hanyad eva avichārayan.*' One commentary says that one must kill such transgressors, without thinking twice.

However, Arjuna says here that even though there is a *pramāṇa* for killing them, '*etān ātatāyinaḥ,*' these transgressors, '*hatvā,*' having killed, '*asmān pāpam eva āśrayet,*' - we will attain sin. This is because 'these aren't like other people. They are relatives. There are gurus in their company. There are relations, such as sons and grandsons. All of these are standing on their side. Therefore, if we kill these transgressors for the sake of the kingdom, what will be the result? It will only be sin, even if they are sinners. Therefore, I don't desire to kill them.'

This is because if someone kills an evil person, the person who kills also attains sin. Therefore, I don't desire to kill them.' '*Naḥ,*' for us, '*kā prītiḥ syāt?*' The word '*naḥ,*' means, 'us.' Without the *visarga*, the '*ḥ,*' the word '*na,*' means 'no.' We should understand the difference between these.

In the *Gāyatri* mantra, we say, '*dhīyo yonaḥ prachodayāt.*' We normally pronounce this as, '*dhīyo yo na prachodayāt*' - may wisdom not shine within me!' May my intellect be destroyed!' (laughs) That is how most people pronounce this. 'May my intellect never become good!'

Here, it is ‘*naḥ*.’ But, people don’t remember this. They usually chant the other way. That shouldn’t happen here. Here, the word ‘*naḥ*’ and ‘*na*’ are different. ‘*Naḥ*,’ for us, what benefit will there be?

*Tasmānnārhā vyaṁ hantum dhārtarāṣṭrān svabāndhavān
Svajanaṁ hi kathaṁ hatvā sukhinaḥ syāma mādhava. 1.37.*

1.37. ‘Therefore we are suitable to kill the sons of Dhritarashtra, our own relatives; for how can we be happy by killing our own people, O Madhava?’

‘*Mādhava*,’ Hey *Mādhava*, ‘*tasmāt*,’ therefore, ‘*svabāndhavān dhārtarāṣṭrān*,’ our own relatives, *Duyodhana* and the *Kauravas*, ‘*hantum*,’ to kill, ‘*vyaṁ na arhāḥ*’ we are not suitable for that. It isn’t the work of suitable people to kill their own relatives. Here, this indicates Arjuna’s attachment. Because of attachment, Arjuna desired to withdraw from his duty. This is because of the feeling of ‘mine’ towards all of the relations. He says, ‘That’s not right.’

‘*Svajanaṁ hatvā*.’ ‘*Svajanaṁ*,’ one’s relations, ‘*hatvā*,’ having killed them, ‘*kathaṁ sukhinaḥ syāma?*’ How can we be happy? ‘*Kathaṁ sukhinaḥ syāma*.’ ‘How can we become happy? The word ‘*syāma*’ means ‘to become.’ How can we become happy? We won’t gain any kind of happiness from this. This is in the form of a refutation. This means, ‘after killing our relatives, we won’t find happiness.’ Killing the relatives is for obtaining the kingdom. Obtaining the kingdom is for living happily.

However, if kill our relatives and obtain the kingdom, that won’t give any happiness. There will only be painful memories.’ Seeing this in his mind, Arjuna says this. ‘Therefore, we are never suitable to kill them.’

*Yadyapyete na paśyanti lobhopahatachetasaḥ
Kulakṣayakṛtaṁ doṣaṁ mitradrohe cha pātakam. 1.38.*

1.38. ‘Though these Kauravas do not see the evil in the destruction of the family, or in cruelty to allies, do their intellects clouded with greed,’

‘*Ete lobhaḥ upahataḥ chetasah,*’ those, whose minds are overcome with greed, whose discrimination is overcome with greed.. That is ‘*lobhopahatachetasaḥ.*’ Through negative desires, their discrimination is destroyed. ‘*Ete,*’ these *Kauravas*, ‘*kulakṣayakṛtaṁ doṣaṁ,*’ the harm caused by the destruction of the family, ‘*mitradrohe pātakaṁ cha,*’ and the sin of killing allies, ‘*yadi api na paśyanti,*’ even if they don’t see this, still..’ this doesn’t end here. It ends in the next *śloka*.

These enemies are low-minded. They have no thought about dharma. Therefore, they don’t think about the destruction of the family that will happen through this war. In truth, brothers should be allies. However, this sin against allies was committed by the *Kauravas*, by refusing the kingdom to the *Pāṇḍavas*. They don’t think about the result of sin from this. Still, shouldn’t we think about this?’

Once the war begins, the family will be destroyed. This dynasty will be destroyed. Even though the *Kauravas* started this, the destruction will happen to both sides. Then, ‘*mitradrohe pātakaṁ*’ – both sides will have to destroy each other. Both sides are ready for battle. All kings in India are siding with their allies, on the *Kaurava* side and the *Pāṇḍava* side. Each side is along with their allies. All of these allies will be destroyed in the war. That is ‘*mitradroham.*’ One thing in the war is the killing of allies, and the other is the destruction of the family. All of these dynasties will be destroyed.

Therefore, we must withdraw from the war. War must not happen.’ This is what Arjuna is saying. Then, the first part should be separated, ‘*yadi, api, etc.*’ That is ‘*Yadyapyete.*’

***Katham na jñeyamasmābhiḥ pāpādashmānnivartitum
Kulakṣayakṛtaṁ doṣaṁ prapaśyadbhirjanārdana. 1.39.***

1.39. ‘Why should we not know to turn away from this sin, we who clearly see the evil in the destruction of the family, O Janardana?’

‘Hey *Janārdana!*’ There are different names in each *śloka*; ‘*Janārdana, Mādhava, Keśava,* etc.’ What are all of these different names? This is to show the fluctuation in Arjuna’s mind. If a person constantly says a person’s name while

speaking to him, it means that his mind is unsettled. This is in order to gain consolation from the other person. That is why it says here in every place, ‘*Janārdana, Madhusūdana, Achyuta.*’ Arjuna is constantly calling *Kṛṣṇa* through these names.

‘*Kulakṣayakṛtaṁ doṣaṁ prapaśyadbhiḥ.*’ The defect that causes the destruction of the family, ‘*prapaśyabhiḥ asmabhiḥ,*’ by us, who can see this..’ this means a person who clearly understands. This is someone who understands with discrimination, ‘*asmabhiḥ,*’ by us, the side of the *Pāṇḍavas*, ‘*asmāt pāpāt nivartitum kathaṁ na jñeyam.*’ Why can’t we know to move away from this sin? Shouldn’t we know better, to withdraw from this sin?’

The *Kauravas* aren’t aware of this harm that will destroy the family, so they aren’t withdrawing. However, we know; this will destroy the family. Whole dynasties will be destroyed. That is what will happen. The sons of *Pañchāla*, the sons of the *Kauravas*, and grandsons, all of them will be destroyed in this war. Seeing this destruction ahead, why can’t we retreat from this sin?’

This complete destruction will definitely take place. That’s not possible to be avoided.’ Everyone knows this before fighting. While being ready to fight, everyone knows, ‘this will cause total destruction.’ The Lord says, ‘go into that destruction.’ However, in a situation where that cannot be avoided, one must perform war.’ In that situation, that destruction is not something that must be thought about.’ That is the answer the Lord says.

Thus, this isn’t about the destruction of a war. This refers to every loss in life. This isn’t any particular kind of loss. There is no point in man worrying about any kind of loss or destruction. Later on, when *Sri Kṛṣṇa* reveals his Universal Form, he directly shows this destruction to Arjuna. This happens before Arjuna fights. Still, what does the Lord say? ‘*Nimitta mātram.*’ You are just an instrument. You aren’t destroying anyone.’

Vyāsa says in particular; that is the unavailability of Time. That is the unmovable law of Time. That is a law that nobody can prevent. If such a complete destruction must take place, then it must simply happen. Those who live as witnesses to that destruction will have to live in this world. How should they see that destruction? They should see that destruction as equal to gain. That is the answer the Lord says.

If destruction cannot be avoided, in order to avoid the pain and suffering from that, see that destruction with detachment. Otherwise, there is nothing the *Jiva* can do. If destruction happens under unavoidable divine laws, then what is the use of lamenting over that loss? There is no point. There is no way to avoid that. Everyone tried to avoid this, but was unable to.

When that happens, ‘see it with detachment.’ Then, going from the level of loss and gain, and going to a level beyond dualities, see all of these losses and gains!’ That is all, the easy path for the *Jiva*. That is what the Lord says as an answer.

*Kulakṣaye praṇaśyanti kuladharmāḥ sanātanāḥ
Dharme naṣṭe kulam kṛtsnamadharmo ‘bhibhavatyuta. 1.40.*

1.40. ‘In the destruction of the family, the eternal dharmas of the family are destroyed; on the destruction of these dharmas, the entire family becomes overcome by adharma.’

‘*Kulakṣaye,*’ once the family is destroyed, when all of the prominent leaders of the family are destroyed in war.. Then all of the brave warriors here will be destroyed. That is how the family is destroyed. After that, several other kinds of destruction will happen. When that happens, what is it? ‘*Sanātanāḥ kuladharmāḥ,*’ the eternal dharmas of the family..’ Each family is a lineage. In that family, the practices performed by the members are called the family ‘*dharmas.*’ All of that, ‘*praṇaśyanti,*’ will be completely destroyed.

Here, ‘*kuladharmā*’ refers to the good actions performed by the family. All of those good actions will be destroyed. If that happens, ‘*dharme naṣṭe,*’ if those good actions are lost, ‘*kṛtsnam kulam adharmāḥ abhibhavati.*’ ‘*Kṛtsnam kulam,*’ that entire family, ‘*adharmāḥ abhibhavati,*’ will be undermined by unrighteousness. That is what will happen.

There is either dharma or adharma. If there is no place for dharma, it means that is *Adharma* is happening. That is the normal manner. All the things that Arjuna says are considered as being discriminative on the worldly level. The

course of this war, the result will be like this. This is what will happen to the families.

That is very logical and full of reasoning. The Lord doesn't refute this. The Lord says to look from another level. The Lord doesn't say that these things won't happen. Those may all happen, that is unavoidable. In other words, man always desires to avoid suffering, destruction, and loss. If it isn't in war, it will be in some other matters. It can be in any way. But that desire will continuously be there.

Whatever the mind desires to avoid, that will happen. This happens in an unexpected way, continuously to the Jiva. There is one thing to understand from that. In one sense, these things are unavoidable. In this world of dualities, there must be losses, destruction, defeat, etc. It's not possible to avoid that. If you avoid something, another will come. Then, what is the means?

How can one face these? That is what we can understand. How can we confront these losses and destruction? The Lord doesn't request to avoid these. This is because 'to avoid' isn't under the control of the Jiva. Therefore, it isn't possible to avoid that. Then, how can one face these? In life, how can one face and accept these losses and destruction? That is what the Lord instructs to Arjuna.

What Arjuna shows here is a material view. However, the Lord shows a different level of viewing things. This is the difference between materialism and spirituality. The level of Arjuna is the material plane. This is a life that calculates all of the gains and losses. The other is a plane that is beyond. That is how the Lord gives solutions to all of these problems, very calmly. Otherwise, the Lord doesn't instruct to avoid these losses, through some means.

Here, the words should be separated, '*adharmah, abhibhavati, uta.*'