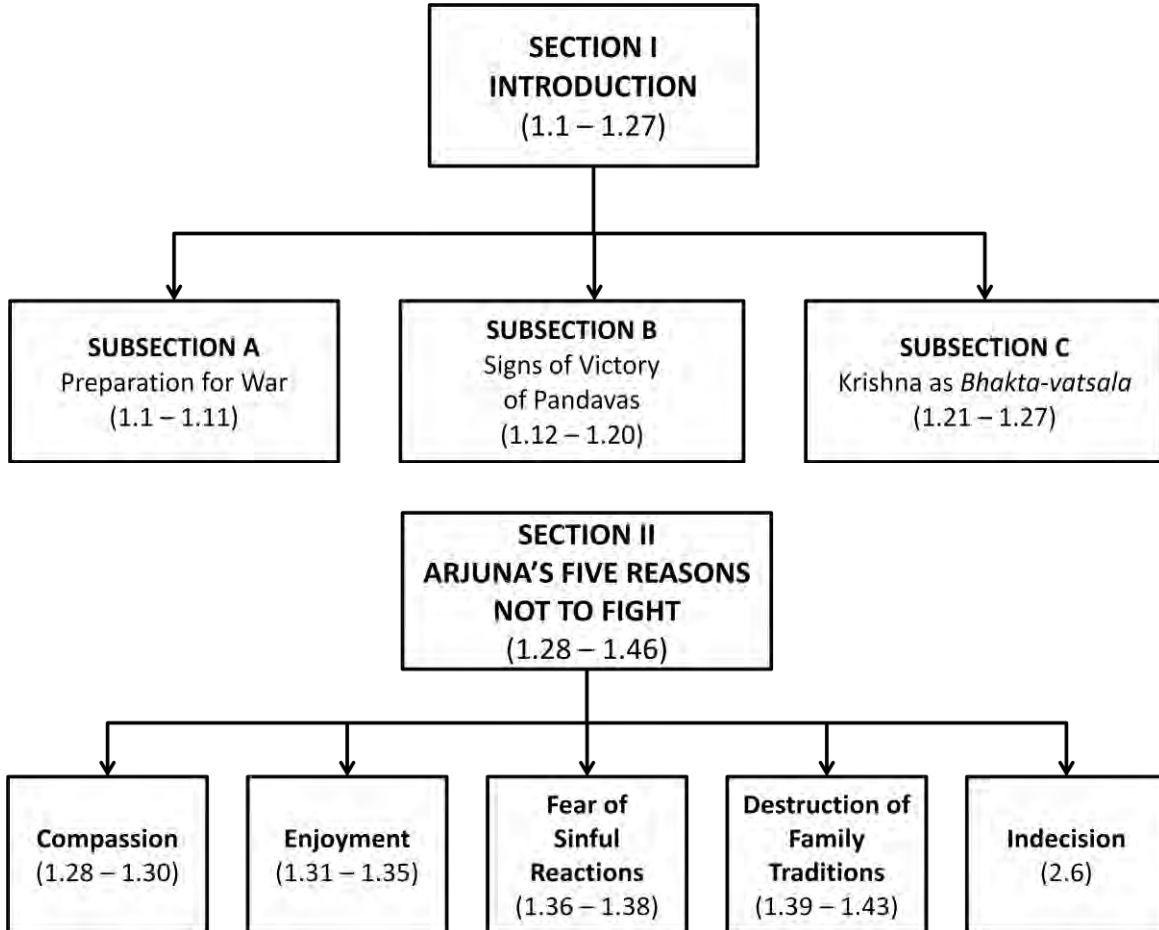


CHAPTER 1

OBSERVING THE ARMIES ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF KURUKSHETRA

COMMON THEME: The very beginning of Bhagavad-gita, the first chapter, is more or less an introduction to the rest of the book.

BREAKDOWN OF CHAPTER 1



SECTION I (1.1 – 1.27) INTRODUCTION

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION I

Chapter one repeatedly presents the following 2 themes:

1. **The Lord's protection** – Devotees who surrender to the Lord's protection are assured victory, regardless of the material odds
2. **The Lord as an intimate servant** – The *Bhagavad-gita* introduces Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as the intimate servant of His devotees. (e.g. As Arjuna's charioteer)

SUBSECTION A — PREPARATIONS FOR WAR (1.1 — 1.11)

Text 1.1

THEME: Dhrtarashtra inquires from Sanjaya

- ❖ “After my sons and the sons of Pandu assembled in the place of pilgrimage (Dharma-ksetra) at Kuruksetra, desiring to fight, what did they do?”

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 1.1

- (a) **Bhagavad-gita is the perfect theistic science** – because the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally spoke it
- (b) **How to study Bhagavad-gita** – (Srila Prabhupada quotes this based on *Gita-mahatmaya*):
- Scrutinizingly
 - With the help of devotees of Sri Krishna
 - Without personally motivated interpretations
 - In the line of disciplic succession
- (c) **Example of clear understanding of Bhagavad-gita** – It is given in the Gita itself, in the way the teaching is understood by Arjuna, who heard the Gita directly from the Lord
- (d) **Benefits of such study** – one surpasses all studies of Vedic wisdom and all scriptures of the world
- (e) **Specific standard of Bhagavad-gita** – It contains all that is contained in other scriptures, but also that which is not to be found elsewhere
- (f) **Dhrtarashtra inquiry** reveals Dhrtarashtra’s doubtful and fearful mind (Shown by 2 points)
1. **Partial to his own sons** – Dhrtarashtra refers to only his sons as ‘Kurus’ which shows his specific position in relation to his nephews, the Pandavas
 2. **Uses the specific words ‘Dharma-kshetra’ and ‘Kuru-kshetra’** – Their importance is as follows:
 - *Kuru-kshetra* is a sacred place of pilgrimage from immemorial time of the Vedic age
 - *Kuru-kshetra* is a holy place and a place of worship even for heavenly denizens
 - The Supreme Personality of Godhead is personally present on the Pandavas side
 - Pandavas are virtuous – therefore the holy place may influence them
 - Dhrtarashtra is fearful about the holy influences on the fate of the battle because:
 - It may influence his own sons to compromise, or
 - He hoped that under the holy influence, the Pandavas may renounce their claim, to avoid bloodshed
 - **Analogy: Paddy field (Kshetra)** – unnecessary weeds taken out, similarly in religious ‘field’ of *Kuru-kshetra* in the presence of the ‘father of religion’ Sri Krishna, unwanted plants like Dhrtarashtra and his son Duryodhana and others would be wiped out

Texts 1.2 — 1.11

COMMON THEME: Duryodhana's actions are described – They reveal his diplomacy and inner fear by the following indications:

1. **Duryodhana although mentioned as king, goes to the commander** on account of seriousness of situation – quite fit to be a politician (1.2)
2. **Points out Drona's mistake** (of imparting military secrets to son of Drupada, Dhrtadyumna who was born to kill Dronacharya) to make him alert and uncompromising and warns that leniency would lead to defeat (1.3*)
3. **Mentions great heroes equal to Bhima and Arjuna** (1.4*)
 - Why he compares them to Bhima and Arjuna –
 - Because he knew the strength of Bhima and Arjuna
 - Why he mentions other heroes –
 - Because they were great stumbling blocks on the path of victory as each and every one of them was as formidable as Bhima and Arjuna
4. **Mentions heroes who are ready to lay down their lives for "me"** (like Jayadratha, Krtavarma, Salya) (1.9)
5. **Praises Bhishma** – He was confident of full support of Bhismadeva and Dronacharya because:
 - They did not protect Draupadi when she was insulted
 - Although Bhishma and Drona have affection for Pandavas and might become lenient, he hoped that they will give up all affection now (1.11)
6. **Asks for everyone's support for Bhishma** (1.11) – because
 - Bhismadeva was undoubtedly the great hero, but he was an old man and the enemy might take advantage of his full engagement on one side
 - He wanted everyone to feel important

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.2 — 1.11

PLEASE NOTE: Some points of these purports are covered under the main theme above

- (a) **Why Sanjaya described Duryodhana's actions first** –
 - Because Dhrtarashtra was blind from birth and also bereft of spiritual vision and he knew that his sons were equally blind in the matter of religion
 - And Dhrtarashtra was afraid that under the influence of the place of pilgrimage, his sons may make some compromise
- (b) **Study names of warriors on both sides** (1.4 – 1.9)
- (c) **Duryodhana compared Bhishma (more experienced general) to Bhima (less experienced general)** (1.10*)
 - Because Duryodhana knew if he should die at all he would be killed by Bhima and was therefore always envious of Bhima
 - Bhima is like a fig in the presence of Bhishma
- (d) **What made Duryodhana confident of victory** (1.7 – 1.11)
 - Above mentioned strength of his friends (1.7 – 1.9)
 - Presence of Bhishma, a far superior General than Bhima – He clearly felt that victory of Kurus dependent on the presence of Bhismadeva (1.11)
 - Confident of full support of Bhishma and Drona as they had shown during Draupadi's insulting episode (1.11 purport)

SUBSECTION B — SIGNS OF VICTORY OF PANDAVAS (1.12* — 1.20)

COMMON THEME: Sanjaya tactfully informed Dhrtarashtra about “his hopeless plans to win” by giving the following indications and signs:

❖ SIGNS OF VICTORY OF PANDAVAS (9 points)

1. **Krishna’s personal presence confirms victory**
 - Supreme Personality of Godhead is the charioteer (1.14) – “*jayas tu pandu-putranam yesam...*”
 - Krishna as Hrsikesha directly controls the senses of a pure devotee
2. **Goddess of fortune**
 - Whenever and wherever the Lord is present, the goddess of fortune is also there
 - She never lives without her husband; therefore all fortune is guaranteed (1.14)
3. **Venue**
 - *Kurukshetra* is a **holy place** (1.1)
4. **Hanumanji on Arjuna’s flag**
 - Hanumanji also helped Lord Rama in gaining victory (1.20)
5. **Symbol of Vishnu**
 - Conchshell is a symbol of Vishnu (1.12* & 1.14)
 - This is indirectly indicated by Bhishma and Pandavas conchshells
6. **Transcendental conchshells**
 - Krishna and Arjuna’s conchshell mentioned as *divya* (transcendental) (1.14)
7. **Bhishma’s conchshell to pacify Duryodhana (1.12*)**
8. **Agnideva’s Chariot given to Arjuna**
 - It was capable of conquering all directions (1.14)
9. **Shattering of hearts**
 - Conchshells of Pandavas shattered Kauravas hearts (1.19)
 - Pandavas hearts not shattered – because of confidence in Krishna

Text 1.12*

THEME: Bhishma’s conchshell blown

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 1.12*

(a) **Bhishma indicates the following things to Duryodhana by his conchshell:**


- Blown out of natural compassion for grandson, Duryodhana
- To cheer the fearful heart of Duryodhana
- Befitting his position as lion
- To assure that no pains would be spared in his duty to fight
- Indirectly by the symbolism of conchshell, he informed his depressed grandson that he has no chance of victory, because the Supreme Lord Krishna was on the other side.

Texts 1.13 — 1.18

COMMON THEME: All Pandavas blew conchshells and all other instruments that made a tumultuous sound

❖ **NAMES OF DIFFERENT CONCHSHELLS:**

S. No	Warriors	Conchshell
1.	Krishna	Panchajanya
2.	Arjuna	Devadatta
3.	Yudhishtara	Anantavijaya
4.	Bhima	Paundra
5.	Nakula	Sughosa
6.	Sahadeva	Manipushpaka

 **PLEASE NOTE:** Text 1.13 has no purport. Text 1.14 purport is covered under the main theme 'Signs of Victory of Pandavas' above. Purports for Texts 1.15 to 1.18 are presented in the 'Focus of Learning' sections below

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 1.15*

- (a) **Message announced by conchshells** – Blowing of conchshells announced the message that Kauravas were predestined to lose the battle
- (b) **Importance of names**
- **Hrsiksha**
 - Owner of all senses / senses of living entities are part and parcels of His senses
 - Impersonalists cannot account for the senses of the living entities and they are always anxious to describe the living entities as sense-less or impersonal
 - Lord as Paramatma directs the senses according to the surrender of the living entity
 - Directly controls transcendental senses of a pure devotee like Arjuna
 - **Govinda** – Pleasure-giver to cows and senses
 - **Dhananjaya** – Arjuna helped elder brother to fetch wealth for different sacrifices
 - **Vrkodara** – Eat as voraciously as he could do herculean tasks (Bhima)
 - Few other names explained – Madhusudana / Vasudeva / Devaki-nandana / Yasoda-nandana / Partha-sarthy (*Read 1.15 purport*)

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.16 — 1.18

- (a) **Sanjaya very tactfully informed King Dhrtarashtra of the following points through all the above mentioned verses:**
- His unwise policy of deceiving the sons of Pandu and endeavoring to enthrone his own sons was not very laudable
 - All the signs indicate that the whole Kuru dynasty would be killed
 - From the grandsire Bhisma to the grandson Abhimanyu, and all the kings of all states were doomed
 - And Dhrtarashtra was the cause of the whole catastrophe because he encouraged the policy followed by his sons

Text 1.19

THEME: Shattering of the hearts – Conchshells of Pandavas shattered the heart of the sons of Dhrtarashtara

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 1.19

- (a) **There is no heartbreaking on the side of the Pandavas**
- Because of ‘**Pandavas**’ and their ‘**confidence in Lord Krishna**’
 - **PRACTICAL APPLICATION** – This shows that one who takes shelter of the Supreme Lord has nothing to fear even in the midst of the greatest calamity (1.19 purport)

Text 1.20*

THEME: Arjuna prepared to shoot arrows and after looking at the sons of Dhrtarashtara, spoke to Krishna

- ❖ The purport of this verse describes all the auspicious conditions that were arranged by the Lord for His eternal devotee, which gives complete assurance of victory



PLEASE NOTE: Points of this purport (1.20) are covered above under Subsection B - Main theme ‘Signs of Victory of Pandavas’

SUBSECTION C — KRISHNA AS BHAKTA-VATSALA (1.21 — 1.27)

Texts 1.21* — 1.23

COMMON THEME: Arjuna requests the infallible Lord to draw his chariot in the middle:

- ❖ To see who were the leading men present with a desire to fight, to please evil-minded son of Dhrtarashtra

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.21 — 1.23

- (a) **Meaning of ‘Achyuta’** – infallible, addressed so because:
- The Lord never fails in affection for His devotees – thus engaged in the service of His friend, out of His causeless mercy
 - Did not hesitate to carry out the order of Arjuna as his charioteer
 - Still His supreme position as Hrsikesa, the Lord of senses was unchallenged
- (b) **Relationship between Lord and devotee is sweet and transcendental** – A devotee is always eager to serve the Lord and Lord obtains transcendental pleasure in receiving the orders of His pure devotees, although He is always the infallible, Supreme master
- (c) **Why Arjuna asked to move the chariot amidst the armies** – because:
- Arjuna was forced to fight against his wish (Because of obstinacy of Duryodhana)
 - Anxious - To see who were the leading men present with a desire to fight, to please Duryodhana (They all must be birds of the same feather)
 - To see how much they were bent upon fighting
 - To estimate the strength which he had to face, although confident of victory – because of Krishna sitting on his side
 - But he had no intention of peace-making at this moment

Text 1.24

THEME: Krishna draws the chariot – Krishna (Hrsikesa) draws the chariot on request of Arjuna (Gudakesh) in the midst of the armies of both parties

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 1.24

- (a) **Arjuna as Gudakesh** – one who conquers sleep
- Gudaka means sleep; sleep also means ignorance
 - Arjuna conquered sleep & ignorance because of friendship with Krishna
 - **Nature of the devotee**
 - Cannot forget Krishna even for a moment (*Samadhi*); even while walking or asleep condition
 - **Devotee conquers sleep and ignorance**; because of constant Krishna consciousness. (This is called Samadhi)
- (b) **Krishna as Hrsikesa** – As director of mind and senses, He could understand **Arjuna’s purpose** in placing the chariot in the midst of the armies – **“hesitation to fight”**

Text 1.25*

THEME: Lord places the chariot in front of Bhisma, Drona etc.

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 1.25

- (a) **Lord as Hrsikesa** – Lord knows Arjuna’s mind and thus knows everything being the Supersoul of all living entities
- (b) **Arjuna referred to as ‘Partha’** – Indicates son of aunt ‘Prtha’. Thus Krishna wants to point out:
- He became charioteer because Arjuna is son of aunt (Queen Kunti)
 - Krishna said to Arjuna: “Behold the Kurus” – This phrase indicates Arjuna’s mind “Do you want to stop and not fight?”
 - Krishna does not expect such cowardly action from the son of his aunt
 - Mood of friendly joking expressed here.

Texts 1.26 – 1.27

COMMON THEME: Arjuna sees all the relatives assembled on both the sides and thus overwhelmed with compassion, he starts speaking

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.26 – 1.27

- (a) **Different grades of relatives mentioned**
- Grandfathers Bhisma and Somadatta; Father’s contemporaries like Bhurisrava
 - Teachers like Dronacharya and Krpacharya; Maternal uncles like Salva and Sakuni
 - Brothers like Duryodhana; Sons like Laksma
 - Friends like Asvatthama; Well-wishers like Krtavarma etc.
 - The armies containing many of his friends

SECTION II (1.28 – 1.46) ARJUNA'S FIVE ARGUMENTS NOT TO FIGHT

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SECTION II

- Identification with, and attachment to the body disables one from executing his religious duties, which is ultimately to execute Krishna's will
- It is interesting to analyze the cause and effect of Arjuna's bewilderment
 - It is brought on by seeing in terms of one's own self-interest
 - The result of such vision is fear, loss of composure, indecision, and confusion of moral codes

ARJUNA'S FIVE ARGUMENTS

S.No.	Arjuna's Arguments	Verse(s)	Lord Krishna's refutation in verse(s)
1.	Compassion	1.28 – 1.30	2.11 – 2.30
2.	Loss of enjoyment	1.31 – 1.35	2.31 – 2.32
3.	Fear of sinful reactions	1.36 – 1.38	2.33 – 2.37
4.	Destruction of family traditions	1.37 – 1.43	2.45 – 2.46 & 3.24
5.	<i>Indecision</i>	2.6	–

ARJUNA'S FIRST ARGUMENT — COMPASSION (1.28 – 1.30)

REFUTATION:

Lord Krishna refutes this argument in Texts 2.11 – 2.30

Texts 1.28 – 1.30

COMMON THEME: Signs of compassion (9 points)

S.No	Body part	Sign
1.	Limbs	Quivering
2.	Mouth	Drying up
3.	Whole body	Trembling
4.	Hair	Standing on end
5.	Hands	Gandiva bow slipping
6.	Skin	Burning
7.	Legs	Unable to stand any longer due to impatience
8.	"Forgetting myself and mind reeling" – Due to weakness of the heart	
9.	Sees only causes of misfortune	

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.28 — 1.30

- (a) **Causes of compassion** – different viewpoints
- **Compassion due to soft heartedness of a pure devotee** (1.28) – Ref. SB 5.18.12
 - By unflinching devotion unto Supreme Lord – all good qualities manifest
 - Non-devotee in contrast – He may be advanced by education & culture, but lacks godly qualities; hovering on mental plane, he is certain to be attracted by glaring energy
 - What indicates his soft-heartedness – Arjuna is sympathetic for “both the parties”
 - **False compassion due to material fear, namely loss of life** – Indicates material conception of life (1.29 – 1.30)
 - Impatience – Due to this impatience Arjuna was unable to stay on the battlefield
 - Weakness of mind – Thus he was forgetting himself
 - Excessive attachment to material things – This puts a man in such a bewildered condition
- (b) **Two kinds of trembling / Standing of hairs** (1.29)
- Great spiritual ecstasy
 - Great fear under material condition
 - Trembling mentioned in 1.29 is due to material fear – as evident from the symptoms from 1.29, slipping of Gandiva and burning skin
- (c) **Cause of fearfulness** – Ref. SB 11.2.37 “*bhayam dvitiyabhinivesatahsyat...*”
- Such fearfulness and loss of equilibrium takes place in a person too affected by material conditions
 - **Practical application** – Do not be disturbed by material temporary changes because that is the nature of the material world
- (d) **Importance of *Nimittani-viparitani*** – To see only causes of misfortune
- **Only pain and frustration**
 - To see only painful reverses
 - Sees only frustration in expectations
 - **No happiness** – Not to be happy even by victory, it would only give lamentation
- (e) **Causes of such frustrations in life**
- Misdirected interest – Only interested in one’s own welfare
 - Ignorance of real self-interest – Real self-interest is Vishnu’s satisfaction
 - Conditional nature is to forget this real self interest – this is the cause of material pain
 - Is Arjuna a conditioned soul – Arjuna is showing ignorance of his real self-interest by Krishna’s will

ARJUNA’S SECOND ARGUMENT — LOSS OF ENJOYMENT (1.31 — 1.35)

REFUTATION:

Lord Krishna refutes this argument in Texts 2.31 – 2.32

Text 1.31

THEME: Arjuna in a “blind conception of life” cannot see the right way to achieve even the material happiness. He argues that fighting will not offer him any enjoyment, even by victory

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORT 1.31

- (a) **Theme of this purport** – Blind conception of life exhibited
- Without knowing one’s self interest as Vishnu, conditioned souls are attracted by bodily relationships, hoping to be happy in such conditions
 - One even forgets the causes of material happiness
- (b) **How Arjuna exhibits “blind conception of life”**
- **Refuses to fight** – He appears to have even forgotten the moral codes of a *ksatriya*
 - Moral code of a *ksatriya* – For Arjuna kingdom is a must for his subsistence because *ksatriyas* cannot engage themselves in any other occupation
 - Two kinds of men enter the sun globe:
 - *Ksatriya* who dies directly in front of the battlefield under Krishna’s personal order
 - The person in the renounced order of life who is absolutely devoted to spiritual culture
 - **Arjuna’s proposal**
 - He is reluctant to kill his enemies, what to speak of his relatives – He thinks that by killing them there would be no happiness in his lives
 - *Analogy*: Just like a person who does not feel hunger is not inclined to cook
 - He considers himself fit to go to the forest to live a secluded life of frustration
 - He wants to escape because his sole opportunity in gaining a kingdom lies in fighting with his cousins and brothers which he does not like to do

Texts 1.32 — 1.35

COMMON THEME: Arjuna exhibits “typical calculation of material life”. He feels that fighting will not give him any enjoyment even if he is victorious because:

- ❖ He wants to show off his opulence and share with the society after victory
- ❖ Also if there is any need to kill his relatives, let Krishna kill them

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.32 — 1.35

- (a) **Arjuna misuses the name ‘Govinda’**
- Meaning of ‘Govinda’ – Krishna is the object of all pleasures for the cows and the senses
 - What Arjuna indicates by addressing Krishna as ‘Govinda’
 - He indicates that Krishna should understand what will satisfy Arjuna’s senses
 - Material understanding of God – Materially everyone wants to satisfy his senses and wants God to be his order supplier for such satisfaction
 - **What is the right conception of the name ‘Govinda’**
 - Lord will satisfy the senses of the living entities as much as they deserve, but not to the extent they may covet
 - Because ‘Govinda’ is not meant for satisfying our senses
 - Right conception – When one tries to satisfy the senses of ‘Govinda’ without desiring to satisfy one’s own senses, then by the grace of ‘Govinda’ all the desires of the living entities are satisfied

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.32 — 1.35 continued...

Srila Prabhupada now compares typical calculation of material life and transcendental life:

(b) Typical calculation of material life

- **Show off tendency** – Everyone wants to show off his opulence to friends and relatives, but Arjuna fears that all of them will be killed on the battlefield
- **To be so-called ‘good man’** – Arjuna did not want to kill his relatives, and even if there was any need to kill them, he desires that Krishna kill them and he should not be involved

(c) Transcendental life

- **Transcendental life** – Devotee wants to satisfy the Lord’s desire
- He can, Lord willing, accept all kinds of opulences for the service of the Lord
 - What is the Lord’s desire here – He wants Arjuna to fight
 - Why Lord is so determined to fight – He can excuse a person on His own account, but he excuses no-one who has done harm to his devotees
 - By the Lord’s plan they were already killed; He just wants Arjuna to be an instrument
- If the Lord is not willing, he should not accept a farthing (One should give up all selfish likes and dislikes)
 - Similarly Arjuna is told to execute the Lord’s desire and not to exhibit his own desires
 - Of course Arjuna’s own desires do reflect the following qualities:
 - Arjuna’s deep affection for community and family is exhibited here partially due to his natural compassion for them
 - As a natural devotee Arjuna did not like to retaliate against his miscreant cousins and brothers

ARJUNA’S THIRD ARGUMENT — FEAR OF SINFUL REACTIONS (1.36 — 1.38)**REFUTATION:**

Lord Krishna refutes this argument in Texts 2.33 – 2.37

Texts 1.36* — 1.38

COMMON THEME: Arjuna argues that fighting will incur sinful reactions because of the unique position of the aggressors as seniors and relatives

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.36 – 1.38**(a) Six kinds of aggressors to be killed (based on grounds of politics and sociology – Artha-sastra)**

Killing them does not incur any sin.

1. A Poison-giver; 2. One who sets fire to the house; 3. One who attacks with deadly weapons
4. One who plunders riches; 5. One who occupies another’s land; 6. One who kidnaps a wife

(b) Why Arjuna favors forgiveness (based on the grounds of religion and saintly behavior – Dharma-sastra)

- Because of the unique position of these aggressors as seniors and relatives
- Forgiveness on account of saintliness
- Arjuna considers why to risk life and eternal salvation for temporary pleasures and kingdom

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.36 – 1.38 continued...

- (c) **Correct understanding about forgiveness / saintliness**
- Saintliness is not justified for a *ksatriya*
 - Compared to “*Rama-rajya*” – Lord Rama gave sufficient lessons to Ravana who was an aggressor because he kidnapped Rama’s wife, Mother Sita
- (d) **‘Madhava’** – Arjuna addresses Krishna as ‘Madhava’ to indicate:
- Krishna is the husband of the Goddess of ‘fortune’
 - Krishna should not cause an action which brings ‘misfortune’
- (e) **Saintliness of Arjuna** – Arjuna’s thorough consideration of evil consequences reveals saintliness (1.37 – 1.38)
- Obligation (To not refuse when challenged to battle or gamble) is binding when the effect is good, not otherwise
 - Therefore Arjuna considered that he is not obliged to fight

ARJUNA’S FOURTH ARGUMENT — DESTRUCTION OF FAMILY TRADITIONS (1.39 — 1.43)

REFUTATION:

Lord Krishna refutes this argument in Texts 2.45, 2.46 & 3.24

Texts 1.39 — 1.43

COMMON THEME: Fighting will cause family destruction in the following 6-step sequence:

1. **Death of Elderly** (1.39)
 - Fighting destroys the whole dynasty
2. **Family Traditions Stop: Irreligion increases** (1.39)
 - With the destruction of dynasty, the entire family tradition is vanquished, and thus the rest of the family becomes involved in irreligion
3. **Women polluted** (1.40)
 - When irreligion is prominent, the women in the family become polluted
 - Chanakya Pandit says “Women need protection”
 - Why women need special protection – Because they are
 - Less intelligent
 - Not trustworthy
 - Prone to degradation
 - How they are protected – By engaging in religious principles, either under father, husband or son
 - If they are not protected, it leads to adultery and varna-sankara
4. **Varna-sankara (unwanted progeny)** (1.40*)
 - From degradation of woman comes unwanted progeny
 - Varna-sankara has three effects
 - Risk of war and pestilence
 - Hellish life
 - For the whole family – Ancestors falldown because *pinda-dana* stops
 - For those who destroy family
 - All community projects and family welfare acts stop
5. **Hellish life for ‘family’ and ‘destroyers of family’** (1.41*)
6. **Culture is destroyed** – Community projects and family welfare acts stop (1.42)

FOCUS OF LEARNING: PURPORTS 1.39 — 1.43

PLEASE NOTE: Some points of the purport are covered in the '6-step sequence of family destruction' theme above

- (a) **Varnashrama Institution** (1.39 purport) – Principles of religious traditions to help members of family grow and attain spiritual values
- (b) **Role of elders** (1.39 purport)
 - Responsible for maintaining purificatory samskaras (birth to death)
 - Helping younger generation on the path of salvation
- (c) **Importance of good population** (1.40 purport) – It is the basic principle for peace, prosperity and spiritual progress in life
- (d) **What good population depends on** (1.40 purport) – Chastity and faithfulness of womanhood
- (e) **Philosophy of Pinda-Dan** (1.41 purport)
 - **Based on** rules and regulations of fruitive acts
 - **What it is** – To offer periodical food and water to forefathers
 - **Right process** – worship of Vishnu done / remnants offered to forefathers
 - **Principle:** To release them from many sinful reactions / ghostly existence etc.
 - **Who is not obliged for this** – One in devotional life
 - **Why devotees are not obliged** – Because devotional service relieves hundreds and thousands of forefathers from all misery (*Ref. SB. 11.5.41 "devarsi bhutapta..."*)
- (f) **Community projects and family welfare acts – Importance** (1.42 purport)
 - They are set forth by *Varnashrama / Sanatana-dharma*
 - Sets duties for four orders of society
 - Purpose – To help attain ultimate salvation
 - 'Result of breaking' such projects
 - Chaos in society
 - People forget ultimate aim of life – Vishnu
- (g) **Ways of receiving real knowledge** (1.43 purport) – Disciplic succession
 - Arjuna based his arguments not on personal experience, but on what he has heard from authorities
- (h) **Principle of 'Prayascitta'** (1.43 purport) – A system in the *varnashrama* system by which before death one has to undergo the process of atonement for his sinful activities
 - Without doing so, one surely will be transferred to the hellish planets to undergo miserable lives

ARJUNA'S FIFTH ARGUMENT — "INDECISION"

 **FIFTH ARGUMENT COVERED IN CHAPTER 2:**
Please refer to Text 2.6 for Arjuna's fifth argument

Texts 1.44 — 1.46*

COMMON THEME: Conclusion – Arjuna decides not to fight and casts aside his bow and arrows



PLEASE NOTE: Purports for these verses are covered in the 'Summarised Theme 1A: Arjuna's Saintliness revealed' section below.

**SUMMARISED THEME 1A
ARJUNA'S SAINTLINESS REVEALED (1.28 — 1.46)**

Arjuna's saintliness is revealed by the following points:

- (a) Softheartedness (1.28)
- (b) Does not want to kill even for exchange of three worlds (1.35)
- (c) Ready to forgive any aggressors (1.36)
- (d) Considers evil consequences even at the risk of refusing obligation to fight (1.37 – 1.38)
- (e) Conscious of obligations to protect family traditions and morals (1.39 – 1.44)
 - He does not think that: "I am transcendental and I have no obligations"
 - Arjuna being saintly is conscious of moral principles – How he can kill one's relatives based on selfish motives (1.44)
- (f) Ready to be killed unarmed, but not retaliate (1.45)
 - Custom according to Ksatriya fighting principles – unarmed and unwilling foe should not be attacked
 - These symptoms are due to softheartedness resulting from being a great devotee
- (g) Kept his bow down (even broke his vow of not keeping the bow once lifted) (1.46)

Conclusion: Such a kind and softhearted person is fit to receive self-knowledge (1.46 purport)

∞ END OF CHAPTER 1 ∞

CHAPTER 1 Appendix

Selected Texts extracted from "Surrender unto Me"

Text 1.3

Duryodhana was a great politician. He could have mentioned Dhṛṣṭadyumna's name directly, but instead he purposely called him the son of Drupada. Drupada and Droṇa were enemies, and therefore to incite Droṇa's anger, Duryodhana reminded Droṇa that his enemy's son, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, was arranging the armies. Because Droṇa was naturally inclined to the Pāṇḍavas, especially to Arjuna, his greatest student, Duryodhana needed to use whatever ploys he could to ensure that Droṇa would fight to the best of his ability.

Drupada and Droṇa had attended the same gurukula even though Droṇa was the son of a poor brāhmaṇa and Drupada was a prince. Despite the differences in their backgrounds, the two became intimate friends. In a moment of affection Drupada had once told his friend that when he inherited the kingdom, he would give half to him. Droṇa took his friend's words to heart.

Long after they had graduated and Droṇa had entered gṛhastha life, he found his son crying for milk. Droṇa was so poor that he could not afford to buy milk for his child. Then he remembered Drupada's promise and thought, "Let me go to my dear friend Drupada and beg a cow from him."

When Droṇa arrived at Drupada's palace, he was not properly received. Drupada said, "I am your friend? Friendship can be recognized only among equals. Get out of here immediately!" Droṇa vowed revenge. Later, he trained both the Kuru and Paṇḍava princes in the military arts and then asked for his guru-dakṣiṇā: "Capture Drupada and bring him before me."

The Kauravas offered to try first, but Drupada easily defeated them and sent them back to Droṇa in embarrassment. Droṇācārya was mortified. Arjuna then came forward. The other Pāṇḍavas lined up behind him as he attacked Pāñcāla, Drupada's kingdom. Arjuna captured and bound Drupada in ropes after a fierce battle and carried him to Droṇācārya's feet. Droṇācārya then took half of Drupada's kingdom and thus made Drupada his enemy.

Drupada then performed a sacrifice to obtain a son who would kill Droṇa. That son was Dhṛṣṭadyumna. Dhṛṣṭadyumna later approached Droṇācārya to study the military science, and although Droṇācārya knew that Dhṛṣṭadyumna was specifically empowered to kill him, he did not hesitate to train him. Such is the liberality of a brāhmaṇa. The brāhmaṇa's liberal heart is compared to the sun, which does not withhold its light from the courtyard of anyone, even a thief. Similarly, Droṇācārya did not hesitate to impart all his military secrets to Dhṛṣṭadyumna.

Text 1.4

Again Drupada was mentioned to incite Droṇa's anger. Duryodhana also mentioned Bhīma and Arjuna. Arjuna was a powerful foe. Not only had he studied under Droṇa, but he had gone to the heavenly planets, later fought with Lord Śiva and had been given many celestial weapons.

Duryodhana, however, was especially afraid of Bhīma's fiery temperament and expertise in fighting. Therefore he mentions his name first. Bhīma was furious with Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons. Before the battle, he took three vows. First, he vowed to kill each of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's one hundred sons. (During the battle Arjuna and the other Pāṇḍavas had opportunities to kill some of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons, but they refrained from doing so to allow Bhīma to fulfill his vow. During the battle Bhīma's anger was inflamed. He screamed, jumped up and down, and drank the blood of each son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra he killed. Even the warriors on the Pāṇḍavas' side feared his rage.)

Second, he vowed to break Duryodhana's thigh. When Draupadī was being insulted, Duryodhana had uncovered his thigh and motioned to Draupadī, saying, "Come and sit on my lap! You are fit for my enjoyment." Bhīma burned with anger and hatred. For thirteen years, he had been burning as he waited to destroy the Kauravas.

Third, Bhīma vowed to tear open Duḥsasana's chest, pry out his heart and drink his blood. Duḥsasana had touched and opened Draupadī's tied and sanctified hair. For that, Bhīma also vowed to rip off his arm. Draupadī had promised to keep her hair untied until she had washed it with Duḥsasana's blood. Bhīma later carried that blood upon his hands to Draupadī.

Duryodhana named all these fighters to persuade Droṇācārya to free himself from whatever sentiments he felt for the Pāṇḍavas and to kill them in battle. He then continued to describe the Pāṇḍavas' strength.

Text 1.7

Duryodhana did not want to discourage those listening to his own fears concerning the Pāṇḍavas' strength. Therefore he added, "Let me tell you about the great warriors on my side."

Text 1.8

Duryodhana was speaking to the two great warriors Bhīṣma and Droṇācārya. While the king addressed Droṇācārya, all his other fighters gathered to listen. Therefore, Duryodhana, as an expert diplomat, began to describe the Kauravas' strength with the words *bhavān bhīṣmaś ca karṇaś ca*. Yet before he spoke he was caught in another difficult situation. Facing him were two great warriors: Bhīṣma was the commander-in-chief of the army, and Droṇa was his military guru. Whom, then, should he mention first?

Duryodhana was clever. He knew that Bhīṣma was a kṣatriya and Droṇa a brāhmaṇa. If he mentioned Bhīṣma first, Droṇācārya would be insulted. As a kṣatriya, however, Bhīṣma would honor the etiquette of offering the brāhmaṇa more respect. Thus Duryodhana said, *bhavān bhīṣmaś*: "There are personalities like you, Droṇācārya, and Bhīṣma."

He next mentioned Karṇa. Bhīṣma and Karṇa were enemies. Because Karṇa thought, "What's the use? I will fight and kill everyone, and this aged general will get all the credit," he had vowed not to fight until Bhīṣma was killed.

Duryodhana next mentioned Kṛpācārya, a relative of Droṇa, then Aśvatthāmā, Droṇa's son. In these ways, he hoped to inspire Droṇa.

Surprisingly, Duryodhana next mentioned his own brother Vikarṇa. Vikarṇa was not of the same caliber as Bhīṣma or Droṇa, but because he was the only brother who objected to the Kauravas' insult to Draupadī, Duryodhana assumed that he was sympathetic to the Pāṇḍavas and that he might defect from the Kaurava army. Therefore Duryodhana flattered Vikarṇa by including his name among the more powerful fighters he was relying on.

Defection was always an important concern for military leaders. Although kṣatriyas love to fight, they are not always concerned whose side they fight on. Therefore Yudhiṣṭhira announced at the beginning of the war that religious principles allow defection before the battle starts, but once it has begun, warriors must stay on their chosen sides.

Both Kṛṣṇa and Duryodhana were active in recruiting defectors. Kṛṣṇa and Kuntī-devī approached her son Karṇa and invited him to join the Pāṇḍavas' side. Kṛṣṇa told Karṇa that he was actually the

eldest Paṇḍava, and He encouraged him to fight alongside his brothers, especially because he wouldn't be joining the battle until after Bhīṣma's death. Karṇa, however, would not abandon his loyalty to Duryodhana.

On his side, Duryodhana both tried to keep Vikarṇa and to win over the Pāṇḍavas' uncle Śalya. Karṇa needed a fit charioteer, and Śalya was both an acclaimed charioteer and a mahāratha warrior. As Śalya and his army traveled the long distance to join the Pāṇḍavas' side in the battle, they found pleasant accommodations—that Duryodhana had arranged for them—along the way. Duryodhana's clever ministers encouraged the tired Śalya to make full use of the facilities. They took such good care of him that Śalya said, "Yudhiṣṭhira must have arranged these accommodations. Whoever has arranged this for me—I'll do whatever he wants." Duryodhana then appeared and said, "It was I who made these arrangements, and I want you to fight on my side." Śalya kept his word, fought for Duryodhana and eventually became the final Kaurava commander-in-chief.

Text 1.10

Śrīla Prabhupāda has translated the first Sanskrit word in text 10, aparyāptam, as "immeasurable," and his purport explains the verse accordingly. Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has also taken the meaning of aparyāptam in that way. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, however, has given aparyāptam an opposite meaning. Thus, depending upon which way the word is taken, the first line of the verse can mean either "Our strength is immeasurable" or "Our strength is insufficient". When the first meaning is used (as it was by Śrīla Prabhupāda), then the sentence continues: ". . . and we are perfectly protected by Grandfather Bhīṣma." Bhīṣma became encouraged when he heard this meaning.

The second meaning, however, was intended to encourage Droṇācārya: "Our strength is insufficient because we are protected by Bhīṣma." Bhīṣma was a formidable warrior, but because he favored the Pāṇḍavas, Duryodhana felt that he would not fight to his full capacity. Droṇācārya took the second meaning, and he understood Duryodhana's message to be: "Our strength is insufficient because of Bhīṣma's split loyalties. Therefore, Droṇa, you must fight even harder to make up for Bhīṣma's weakness." Thus the expert diplomat Duryodhana encouraged both Bhīṣma and Droṇa with this one word.

Text 1.12

Bhīṣma did not answer Duryodhana's words. Instead he replied by blowing his conchshell, which meant: "Despite your heroic words, victory or defeat lies in the Lord's hands. I will do my duty and lay down my life for your sake, but that will not guarantee your victory."

Text 1.15

Citraratha, the chief of the Gandharvas, had given him his beautiful white horses. Indra, his father, had given him his conchshell and quiver.

Text 1.20

The atmosphere was surcharged. The world's most powerful kṣatriyas had gathered to fight and were filled with the spirit of battle. This war differed from the situation Śrīla Prabhupāda criticized in the 1960s, when the United States drafted students, not kṣatriyas, and forced them into battle. These men were fighting men. Fighting was in their blood. Just as devotees come to Vṛndāvana or Māyāpur from all around the world, these kṣatriyas came from all over the world to fight. They had faith that dying on the battlefield would gain them entrance into the heavenly planets.

The two armies were in formation. Conchshells blew. The hair of warriors stood on end in anticipation. Kṛṣṇa was with Arjuna on his chariot.

Hanumān, decorating the chariot's flag, was ready to shout his war cries to help Bhīma terrify the enemy. Earlier, the Mahābhārata had described a meeting between Hanumān and Bhīma. Once, while Arjuna was seeking celestial weapons, the remaining Pāṇḍavas wandered to Badarikāśrama, high in the Himālayas. Suddenly, the Ālakananda River carried to Draupadī a beautiful and fragrant thousand-petaled lotus flower. Draupadī was captivated by its beauty and scent. "Bhīma, this lotus flower is so beautiful. I should offer it to Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja. Could you get me a few more? We could take some back to our hermitage in Kāmyaka."

Bhīma grabbed his club and charged up the hill where no mortals were permitted. As he ran, he bellowed and frightened elephants and lions. He uprooted trees as he pushed them aside. Not caring for the ferocious beasts of the jungle, he climbed a steep mountain until his progress was blocked by a huge monkey lying across the path.

"Why are you making so much noise and scaring all the animals?" the monkey said. "Just sit down and eat some fruit."

"Move aside," ordered Bhīma, for etiquette forbade him to step over the monkey. The monkey's reply?

"I am too old to move. Jump over me."

Bhīma, becoming angry, repeated his order, but the monkey, again pleading the weakness of old age, requested Bhīma to simply move his tail aside. Unlimitedly powerful Bhīma grabbed the tail and tried, but failed. Amazed, he respectfully inquired as to the monkey's identity and was overjoyed to learn that he had met his brother Hanumān, for both Bhīma and Hanumān were sons of Vāyu. Hanumān first embraced Bhīma and showed him the huge form in which he had leaped to Laṅkā. He then offered Bhīma the following blessings.

"I shall remain present on the flag of your brother Arjuna. When you roar like a lion on the battle-field, my voice will join with yours to strike terror into the hearts of your enemies. You will be victorious and regain your kingdom."

Now Arjuna, his chariot driven by Kṛṣṇa and marked with the flag of Hanumān, picked up his bow. The horses and elephants moved excitedly. The opening arrows of the long-awaited battle were now to be released. Arjuna, just on the brink of battle, spoke the following words.

Texts 1.21 – 1.22

This is Kṛṣṇa's first appearance in Bhagavad-gītā. What is He doing? He is driving Arjuna's chariot and accepting his orders. This is glorious: Kṛṣṇa, the supreme controller, is taking orders from His devotee as if He were a menial servant.

Text 1.25

Hundreds of millions of warriors were in the Kuru armies, yet Kṛṣṇa drove Arjuna's chariot directly before Bhīṣma and Droṇa (bhīṣma-droṇa-pramukhataḥ). In that way Kṛṣṇa forced Arjuna to see that both his grandfather and his guru were determined to oppose him in battle. Kṛṣṇa thus drew out Arjuna's familial attachment so that He could speak Bhagavad-gītā. Kṛṣṇa was teasing Arjuna: "It is only Kuru—on both sides—who are assembled."

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa adds this explanation of Kṛṣṇa 's words: "Because you are the son of My father's sister, I am going to serve as your chariot driver. But now you are about to abandon your desire to fight.' Thus Kṛṣṇa jokingly implied, 'What's the use of looking at the enemy's army?'"

In this way Kṛṣṇa affirmed the thoughts in Arjuna's mind. Sañjaya describes this scene to Dhṛtarāṣṭra and then goes on to name the other family members Arjuna sees before him.

Text 1.36

The Pāṇḍavas suffered each of these forms of aggression at the hands of the Kauravas, who were now poised to attack. Duryodhana fed Bhīma a poisoned cake. He arranged for a house of lac to be built for the Pāṇḍavas and conspired to have it set ablaze while they slept. Śakuni cheated in a dice game and plundered all their wealth. The Kauravas then occupied the Pāṇḍavas' land. Finally, they stole Draupadī by foul means, once during the dice game and once when Jayadratha attempted to kidnap her. Artha-śāstra allows that such aggressors be killed. Why then does Arjuna say sin will overcome him by killing them"? According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Arjuna is speaking from the level of dharma-śāstra, not artha-śāstra. Dharma-śāstra, which is more authoritative, propounds that killing one's friends and relatives is never permitted.

Text 1.40

Kṛṣṇa called Arjuna "Pārtha" to remind him of his kṣatriya heritage. In this verse, Arjuna calls Kṛṣṇa "Vārṣṇeya," descendant of Vṛṣṇi, because he wants Kṛṣṇa to think how He would feel if the Vṛṣṇi dynasty were on the verge of destruction.

Text 1.41

We can further support Arjuna's argument by saying, "Even Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu traveled to Gāyā to offer the śrāddha ceremony for His departed father. Are such sacrifices unimportant? Ancestors depend on those ceremonies to attain freedom from suffering. If the offerings to the forefathers are stopped, generations of family members will remain in hell." Again, Arjuna was primarily considering his own sinful reaction by becoming a party to stopping those offerings.

Text 1.45

If Arjuna does not fight, he will become bereft of his occupation and left to beg for his sustenance. Begging, however, is unthinkable for a kṣatriya. The following incident illustrates this element of the kṣatriya spirit.

After Bhīma met Hanumān, he continued seeking fragrant thousand-petal lotuses to present to Daupadī. Finally, he arrived at a lake filled with those lotuses and entered the water. This was Kuvera's lake, and Bhīma did not have permission to enter. Hundreds of Yakṣas and Rakṣasas appeared and challenged Bhīma, saying, "What are you doing here! You are forbidden to enter this lake. Go and ask Kuvera for his permission. If he allows you, you may pick as many flowers as you like. If you try to pick flowers without his permission, you will be destroyed by Kuvera's army."

Bhīma jumped from the water, yelling, "I am a kṣatriya! Kṣatriyas don't beg favors from anyone!" The Yakṣas and Rākṣasas then attacked Bhīma, and Bhīma destroyed them all.

For a kṣatriya, begging is unthinkable. Neither his culture nor his psychology allows it. Therefore Arjuna says that it is better for him to be killed unarmed and unresisting on the battlefield than to incur unlimited sins by fighting or to be forced to live a beggar's life.

Text 1.46

Arjuna had vowed to kill anyone who even suggested that he put down his bow. An incident later tested that vow.

During the battle, Karṇa defeated and severely injured Yudhiṣṭhira. Karṇa then taunted Yudhiṣṭhira, saying, “You are not even a kṣatriya! You should learn how to fight. See how easily I have defeated you! I’m not even going to bother to kill you.”

When Arjuna heard of Yudhiṣṭhira’s injury, he immediately left the battlefield and went to Yudhiṣṭhira’s tent. Upon hearing that Arjuna had left the battlefield, Yudhiṣṭhira concluded that Arjuna, avenging his honor, had already killed Karṇa and had now come to inform him.

But it wasn’t true. Arjuna had left the battlefield only out of concern for Yudhiṣṭhira’s injury.

As soon as Yudhiṣṭhira saw Arjuna, he asked, “Have you killed Karṇa and avenged me?”

Arjuna replied, “No, I did not kill Karṇa. I only came to see how badly you were hurt.”

Yudhiṣṭhira was furious. He said, “You have left the battlefield without even killing Karṇa? You coward! How could you have done this? It is better that you give up your Gāṇḍīva bow!”

Upon hearing his words, Arjuna became enraged and thought, “How dare Yudhiṣṭhira suggest that I give up my Gāṇḍīva bow, which is more dear to me than my life! I have vowed to kill anyone . . .”

Arjuna drew his sword to slay his brother. Kṛṣṇa, who was watching, immediately caught Arjuna’s arm and said, “All right, you have to kill Yudhiṣṭhira. It is your vow, but kill him by insulting him. For a kṣatriya, an insult is worse than death.”

As Yudhiṣṭhira sat there regretting his words to Arjuna,

Arjuna angrily approached him and said, “You say I am a coward because I left the battlefield without killing Karṇa, but look what you have done. You looked on as our wife Draupadī was insulted. I would have alone killed the entire Kaurava army, but you would not allow me. You are not a man. You are not a king!”

Arjuna finished hurling his insults at Yudhiṣṭhira, but then quickly touched Yudhiṣṭhira’s feet and begged forgiveness for his words.

Arjuna had not lightly made his “Gāṇḍīva vow.” Therefore it is significant that Arjuna—the great son of Pāṇḍu and Indra—himself cast aside his bow and sat down on the chariot, his mind overwhelmed with grief. We can only imagine how disturbed Arjuna must have been about the disaster awaiting him and the entire world