

## *GITA CLASS – CHAPTER 2 –PART 1*

**W**e have already discussed the subjects of the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter. In the first chapter, from the first *śloka*, the commentator stops the commentary. Up till the part where the Lord gives instruction in the Gita, without writing any particular commentary, *Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya* explains the matters of the first chapter in the form of the *Upodghāta*, or Preface. After that, when we come to the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, Arjuna is still in his old state. There was no change.

*‘Evam uktvārjunaḥ sām̐khye rathopastha upāvishat  
Viśr̐jya saśaram̐ chāpam̐ śokasam̐vignamānasah̐.’ 1.47.*

1.47. ‘Having said so, Arjuna with a mind afflicted with sorrow sat down on the chariot in the midst of the battle, casting aside the bow along with the arrows.’

This *śloka* is where the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter ends. Arjuna was in a difficult situation. Without being able to distinguish which is *dharma*, his mind became confused. Full of delusion, he rejected the war. With Arjuna full of sadness, the first chapter ends. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, *Vyāsa* is telling us the story. To Arjuna, who again is in the same condition, having rejected the war, thinking that it was not needed, the Lord speaks. Thus, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter begins, ‘*Sanjaya Uvacha.*’ *Sanjaya* is narrating for *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*.

*Tam̐ Tathā Kṛpayāvishtamaśrupūrṇākulekṣaṇam,  
Viśīdantamidam̐ vākyaṁuvācha madhusūdana. 2.1.*

To him who had been thus filled with pity, whose eyes were filled with tears and showed distress, and who was sorrowing, Madhusūdhana uttered these words:’

Here *Saṅjaya* is speaking. ‘*Tathā,*’ In that way, ‘*Kṛpayā aviṣṭam,*’ being full of weakness, ‘*Aśru pūrṇākulekṣaṇam*’ with eyes full of tears and sorrow.. Arjuna’s mind here is full of grief. The weak expression on his face shows all of his troubles. ‘*Tam,*’ to him, *Arjuna,* ‘*Viṣīdantam,*’ being sorrowful, ‘*Madhusūdanah.*’ The Lord, ‘*idam vākyam uvācha,*’ said these words which I am going to say.

‘*Kṛpayāviṣṭam.*’ Here, *Kṛpa* is not referring to *kārunyam*, or compassion that we normally equate this word with. What is the meaning here? Here, *kṛpa* means one’s own feeling of weakness. Here Arjuna has become confused. ‘Should we kill our Gurus to obtain the kingdom? Or should I run away from the war and accept *sanyassa?*’ Without being able to make a decision in this matter, Arjuna sat, his mind clouded with sorrow and the feeling of helplessness. That is called *kṛpa*.

In that way, Arjuna was, ‘*kṛpayā aviṣṭam.*’ He became overwhelmed by this *kṛpa*. He lost control of himself. Looking with sad eyes, full of tears, Arjuna sat. In other words, Arjuna is looking at the Lord with great helplessness. It is a look that expresses all of his sorrows. When he saw *Arjuna’s* eyes full of tears, *Vyāsa* understood this. This external condition of *Arjuna’s* eyes expresses his inner mental condition. That’s why *Vyāsa* is describing this.

In other words, *Arjuna* was completely sorrowful. ‘*Viṣīdantam.*’ Thus, to *Arjuna*, who was sitting, *Madhusūdana* spoke. So, the Lord saw all of *Arjuna’s* sorrows. *Arjuna* was *Sri Krishna’s* dear friend. After seeing all of *Arjuna’s* sorrows, the Lord was not particularly sad. This is also indicated here. If the Lord were to become sorrowful after seeing the suffering of *saṁsāra*, it would mean that the Lord is also a *saṁsārī*. What *Arjuna* was experiencing is the sorrow of *saṁsāra*. However, after seeing *Arjuna’s* sorrow, the Lord was not sorrowful. Why? It is because He knows the secret. The Lord knows the secret of *saṁsāra*. There is nothing for *Bhagavān* to be sorrowful for. To indicate this, it says the word, ‘*Madhusūdana.*’

This means that the Lord is established in *sthita prajñā*, Steady Wisdom. If the Lord became sorrowful for His friend’s sadness, then He wouldn’t have been able to give *Arjuna* instruction. Therefore, He distances Himself from this

sorrow. This is what Gurus do. In *Vyāsa's* commentary of the *Yoga Sūtras*, he describes the yogi as, '*Bhumisthan iva śailasthan.*' 'Just as a person on the peak of a mountain views things on the ground.'

This is how the *Jñāni* sees the *samsara*. How? '*Prājña prāsadam arūhya.*' By ascending the palace of Wisdom. If we imagine wisdom as a huge palace, standing at its highest point is the *tattvajñāni*. That is, even when the *Tattvajñāni* performs actions for the good of the world, he never leaves his condition. He doesn't become a *saṁsārī*. Even though he may appear to be experiencing happiness and sorrow along with us, the *Tattvajñāni's* true condition is not that. It is not as we see.

This doesn't indicate the *Tattvajñāni's* external actions, but his internal state. When one stands on the peak of a mountain, how will the objects on the ground appear? They will be very small and unclear. For someone at this height, there are none of the disturbances that are experienced below. What is *saṁsāra* to the *Tattvajñāni*? It is only a shadow. This means that it is not real. For him, it is not the truth.

Because of this, the *Tattvajñāni* is not bothered by attachment, or the feeling of 'mine,' or any of the joys and sorrows of duality. He simply stands, watching all of this. That's why it's said that the state of Jñāna is like standing on the top of a huge palace. He sees all of the things below as separate from himself. However, the *Jñāni* can find the solution for all problems. The Lord gives solutions to *Arjuna* in a very explained manner. But He does this by distancing Himself from the problems. He doesn't become immersed in it. Then, it says, '*Śrī Bhagavān Uvācha.*' The Blessed Lord speaks.' We can understand this by the Lord's response to the situation.

***Kutastvā kaśmalamidaṁ viṣame samupastitam,  
Anāryajuṣṭamasvargyam akīrtikaramarjuna. 2.2.***

'O Arjuna, in this perilous place, whence has come to you this weakness that is unsuitable, that does not lead to heaven and brings infamy?'

‘Hey Arjuna! *‘Anarya juṣṭam’* - *‘Juṣṭam’* means that which can be accepted, practiced, or used. *‘Anarya Juṣṭam.’* *‘Aryas’* mean great people, respected people. or a *Jñāni*. *‘Anarya,’* means people that aren’t like that. Ordinary and indiscriminate people are *anaryas*. *Aryas* have *viveka*. *‘Anarya juṣṭam’* means the path of the indiscriminate; what is accepted by those without *viveka*.

The next word is *‘asvargyam.’* This refers to *svargam* (heaven). *Asvargyam* means that which doesn’t give *abhyudaya*, the favorable fruits of one’s actions. It is that which doesn’t give enjoyment. Then, *‘akīrtikaram’* - that which gives dishonor. In this way, *Arjuna* is affected by this *‘kashmalam.’* This word *‘kaśmalam’* is referring to *Arjuna’s* condition. This one word completely describes *Arjuna’s* state. The name given to the out of place change in *Arjuna* is *‘Kaśmalatā.’* Because it is something that cannot be accepted in any way, the Lord is using very strong language.

*‘Kaśmalam.’* In the *Sanskrit* language, in truth, this is a bad word. The Lord only spoke in *Sanskrit* to *Arjuna*. If this is translated into Malayalam, it will be a bad word, so I won’t say it. Thus, this *‘kaśmalam,’* this condition, *‘idaṁ tvāṁ, (has affected) you, viṣame’* in battle. *Viṣamam* can mean war, or a sorrowful condition. This is the general meaning of this word in Malayalam. Here, both meanings are combined. The war is approaching, and *Arjuna* is in sorrow.

In this war, causing much sorrow, *‘kutaḥ tvāṁ samupasthitam.’* *Tvāṁ Kutaḥ Samupasthitam.’* ‘How did this grab you? How did this attach to you? ‘This sad condition, *kaśmalam*, which is unacceptable by respectful people, which can do no good for you, and which causes dis fame; how could it grab you in the sorrow of this war? *‘Samupasthitam.’* How did this enter you?’ This is what the Lord asks.

***Klaibyaṁ mā sma gamaḥ pārtha naitatvayyupapadyate,  
kṣudraṁ hr̥dayadaurbalyaṁ tyaktvottiṣṭha Paraṁtapa. 2.3.***

‘O Pārtha, yield not to unmanliness. This does not befit you. O scorcher of foes, arise, giving up the petty weakness of the heart.’

‘*Parantapa.*’ This can be commentated in 2 ways. The Lord is reminding *Arjuna* here. ‘*Arjuna* is ‘*parantapa*’ – he scorches all of his enemies in war. *Arjuna* had defeated *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, and all the *Kauravas* before this, and fought with *Paramaśiva*. In this way, *Arjuna* is ‘*Parantapa.*’

This can also mean one whose *tapas* is great. *Sri Krishna* is saying, ‘All of your *tapas* was a waste.’ The *Purāṇas* say that *Arjuna* had performed very severe austerities for pleasing Lord *Śiva*, and in other occasions. ‘You have performed such severe *tapas*, but where is the fruit of that?’ Isn’t your mind faltering? That’s not possible for someone who performs *tapas*. You cannot have this weakness of heart. How can someone with *tapas* have this mental weakness?’

Here, the Lord calls *Arjuna* ‘*Parantapa,*’ as well as, ‘*Pārtha.*’ *Pārtha* means the son of *Pr̥thā* (*Kuntī*). That is also significant. ‘Even though you performed so much *tapas*, how has this weakness come within you?’ To signify this weakness, the word, ‘son of *Pr̥thā*’ is used. This is to show that this is weakness suitable for a woman. This doesn’t mean that women are weak by nature. This is being said in a particular circumstance.

‘Has this weakness gotten hold of you? ‘*Klaibyam̐ Mā Sma Gamaḥ.*’ ‘*Klaibyam mā agamaḥ.*’ *Klaibyam* means being neither man nor woman. *Sri Krishna* says, ‘Don’t go there! Don’t become an eunuch! You came to the battlefield. During a time when you should fight with manliness, you are becoming a coward!’

Before the year of hiding for the *Pāṇḍavas*, *Arjuna* was cursed by *Urvaśī* to become an eunuch for one year. This is indicated here. *Sri Krishna* says, ‘Again, you are accepting this situation!’ This *klibata*, this unmanliness, this lack of courage is being accepted by you.’ However, at the time of hiding, that curse was necessary. It helped *Arjuna* not to be discovered by others. The curse that *Arjuna* received from *Urvaśī* was really a blessing. But again, *Sri Krishna* reminds *Arjuna*, ‘here, in the battlefield, you are accepting this attitude of an eunuch!’

Of this attitude, *Sri Krishna* says ‘*Mā sma gamaḥ.*’ ‘Don’t go there!’ That’s the meaning. ‘*Agamaḥ*’ means to go. ‘*Mā sma Gamaḥ,*’ means ‘don’t go!’ ‘*Naitatvayupapadyate.*’ This is a part where we can make a mistake

reading. ‘*Na etat tvayi upapadyate.*’ All of these words are combined together. ‘*Na etat tvayi upapadyate.*’ ‘*Etat tvayi na upapadyate.*’ ‘*Etat,*’ This, ‘*tvayi,*’ in you, ‘*na upapadyate,*’ is not acceptable. In you, who are a brave warrior and conqueror, this he-sheness doesn’t fit. This is not suitable for you.’ To come to the battlefield and then flee is never suitable for you, a *Kṣatriya.*’ Then what is this? ‘*Kṣudram Hṛdaya Daurbalyam*’- ‘*Kṣudram*’ means insignificant. *Arjuna* was struck by this meaningless weakness of heart. This means a lack of mental strength. *Hṛdayam* indicates the mind. *Sri Krishna* says *Arjuna*’s mind is weak.

*Arjuna* said before ‘*na yotsya,*’ ‘I won’t fight in this war!’ ‘Someone with discrimination would not make such a decision. This comes from your weakness of mind.’ The Lord indicates this here. When the mind is cloudy, when it is weak, a person cannot make a decision. *Sri Krishna* is reminding *Arjuna* of this. Only a stable mind can make clear and firm decisions. What did *Arjuna* do? He took a firm decision when his mind was cloudy. *Arjuna* said, ‘I will not fight!’ That is something that will cause harm in the future. The war that is taking place is a war between *dharma* and *adharma*. This is a decision that will cause the destruction of *dharma*.

*Krishna* says, ‘You made this decision from the weakness of your mind.’ In this way, *Sri Krishna* says that this is mental weakness. ‘By deciding not to fight, you are showing your lack of mental strength.’

*Krishna* says next, ‘*tat tyaktvā*’ – Having discarded this mental weakness, ‘*uttiṣṭha,*’ become prepared!’ ‘Get ready to fight!’ The literal meaning is ‘Stand up!’ However, the actual meaning here is ‘get ready for battle!’

This is a powerful inspiration to prompt *Arjuna* to his *karma*. *Arjuna* was not interested in fighting the battle. However, we said before that *Arjuna* is only an instrument for the Lord’s *upadeśa*. Here, the Lord is giving a powerful inspiration for all people towards *karma*. No one can reject *karma* because of their mental weakness, or mental instability. That’s not the kind of *tyāga* that the Lord advises *Arjuna*.

The Gita speaks about *Karma Yoga* and *Karma Tyāga*. The *Karma Tyāga* of *Arjuna* was due to a lack of mental strength. One can never renounce *karma* through mental weakness. Why is that? The Lord Himself says, in the Gita, ‘*Prakṛti Tvām Niyokṣyasi.*’ Nature will make you perform *karma.*’ You may be

able to momentarily withdraw from *karma* out of mental weakness, but that will never help to attain *Karma Tyāga*. That will last for just a moment. Then you will again go back to *karma*.

What is needed for *Karma Tyāga*? Strength of mind is needed. Only one with extraordinary strength and courage can attain *Karma Tyāga*, or *Karma Sanyassa*. *Arjuna* had already renounced, in a condition without that strength of mind. This is like thinking, 'Oh, life in the world is too tough. I think I'll go live in an *āśram*.' *Arjuna* became like that. Therefore, the Lord forbids that. The Lord doesn't accept an ounce of such renunciation. That is just weakness of mind.

This is a great lesson that the Lord is saying. In other words, one must never step into *sanyassa* due to one's mental weakness. That *sanyassa* is wrong for that person. That must not happen, so, reject that. That's the meaning. One pitfall of *sanyassa* is that no one gets the opportunity to understand what *sanyassa* is before taking *sanyassa*. Only after renouncing do they understand the mistake. Then, all one can do is to suffer and experience it. Then, there's no other choice.

This is a mistake everyone makes. The same thing happens to *Arjuna*. First, he renounced, and then the Lord told him what *Sanyassa* is. First, a person renounces, and then approaches a Guru. Then, the Guru gives him the awareness of his mistake; that he wasn't prepared for *sanyassa*. However, the time is too late. Time has already passed, and he has taken up vows. Then, it becomes a double problem; one is neither a *sanyassi* nor a *gṛhastha*. This might have happened to *Arjuna*. Fortunately, *Lord Sri Krishna* saved him from that. The Lord saved all those who were going to take *sanyassa* like this.

*Sri Krishna* is saying, 'Don't simply jump into danger! This your weakness of mind, so reject this!' '*Parantapa!*' You have done great austerities, and gained great strength of mind.' The fruit of *tapas* is strength of mind. 'You, who have gained strength of mind, should never accept this weakness!' The Lord says this in a way that touches *Arjuna's* heart.

The Lord only said this much; only a little. 'What you are deciding on is not dispassion. This is not a decision based in discrimination.' This is all the Lord said. He replies to *Arjuna*, by saying that he has a lack of mental strength.

*Arjuna uvācha -*  
*Katham bhīṣmamsham sām̐khye droṇam cha madhusūdana,*  
*iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi pujārḥāvarisūdana. 2.4.*

2.4. O Madhusūdhana, O destroyer of enemies, how can I fight with arrows in battle against Bhīṣma and Droṇa, who are worthy of adoration?’

*Arjuna* calls here, ‘*Madhusūdana!* Oh *Krishna!*’ *Arjuna* has understood a lot about *Krishna*. Even though his knowledge wasn’t complete, in some situations, he understood who *Krishna* was. Even though he understood, he would forget. That was *Arjuna*’s problem. Because he understood who the Lord is, he calls out, ‘*Madhusūdana!*’ At that time, *Arjuna*’s mind is very unsteady. So, again *Arjuna* calls, ‘*Arisūdana!*’ ‘*Madhusūdana!*’

If we have any problem, we will keep repeating, ‘*Amme, Amme, Amme!*’ Like this, *Arjuna* is repeating, ‘*Madhusūdana! Arisūdana! Bhagavāne! Krishna!*’ That shows his unsteadiness of mind, through all of these names. *Arjuna*’s sorrow is being expressed unknowingly. So he calls to *Krishna*, ‘O *Madhusūdana! Arisūdana!*’

Then it says, ‘*Pujarḥau*’ – those who are fit to be worshipped.’ Who are these? ‘*Bhīṣmam Droṇam cha*’ – These two Gurus, *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa*, are worthy of worship. *Arjuna* had studied the *Vedas* and *śāstras* from both of them. *Arjuna* didn’t just study fighting, but *Dharma Śāstra*, *Nīti Śāstra*, and all *śāstras* from these 2 Gurus. *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa*, ‘*sām̐khye,*’ in this war, ‘*iṣubhiḥ,*’ with arrows, ‘*katham,*’ how, ‘*aham̐ pratiyotsyāmi,*’ will I oppose?’

‘These are people I should worship and respect. How can I face them in this war with arrows, intending to kill? How can I fight against them?’ That’s the meaning. *Arjuna* felt, ‘I cannot fight with them.’

Actually, *Arjuna* had fought against them before, in the year of hiding. But now it is a different condition. *Arjuna* understands here; ‘this war will destroy everything.’ The war during the year of hiding for *Arjuna* was like a



joke. It was a sudden battle. In that circumstance, Arjuna opposed *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa*, and defeated them with the Lord's assistance. But that is not what is happening here. This is a decisive war. Now it is life or death.

All preparations were made for battle, and there are two possibilities; destruction or victory. This war is to decide both of these. Arjuna knows that he will have to kill *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, and all the other Kauravas, for the *Pāṇḍavas* to obtain the kingdom. Arjuna says this next. 'How can I fight these Gurus for the sake of the kingdom? I can't do this.' However, the Lord says that this grieving of Arjuna's is mental weakness.

Actually, the words are '*Pujarhau Arisūdana.*' Because of the *sandhi*, the connection of the two words, it becomes '*Pujarhāv Arisūdana.*' '*Pujarhau Bhīṣmaṁ Droṇaṁ Cha.*' There are two people spoken of in particular. 'These two divine people are worthy of my worship.' Then again, Arjuna states his problem.

***'Gurūnahatvā hi mahānubhāvāñ  
śreyo bhoktuṁ bhaikṣyamapīha loke,  
Hatvārthakāmāṁstu gurūnihaiva  
bhuñjīya bhogānrudhirapradighdān. 2.5.***

2.5. 'Rather than killing the noble-minded elders, it is better in this world to live even on alms. But by killing the elders we shall only be enjoying here the pleasures of wealth and desirable things drenched in blood.'

*'Mahānubhāvān Gurūn.'* *'Mahā Anubhāvān.'* *'Anubhāvam,* means *Prabhāvam*, power. This refers to those with splendor, power, and lordliness. Those with all these are possessors of great power, and are my Gurus.

'My Gurus, *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, are not insignificant people. They can fight and win, even a war against the *Devas*. That's not all; they are expert in all *sāstras*. They are *Tattvajñānis*. They are *yogis*. These Gurus, who are possessors of great power, are not insignificant.'

*'Ahatvā'* - 'I do not intend to kill them.' Instead of killing them, *'Ahatvā.'* *'Hatvā,'* means 'having killed.' *'Gurūn Ahatvā,'* having not killed my

Gurus here, 'iha,' on this earth, '*Bhāikṣyam api bhoktum śreyaḥ*' - This *Bhāikṣyam* is something a *Kṣatriya* should never ever speak about. A *Sanyassi* can say this, to accept alms, *bhikṣa*. '*Bhāikṣyam*,' refers to the vow of a *Sanyassi*. This is never ordained for a *Kṣatriya*. Arjuna is an *adhikāri* for *Karma Yoga*.

This accepting of alms, which is meant for a *Karma Tyāgi*, is something never ordained for a *Karma Yogi*. But Arjuna mentions this here. '*Bhāikṣyam Bhoktum Śreyaḥ*.' 'Eating alms is better than this. That's what I see as best. Better than fighting in this war is to leave the battlefield, accept *sanyassa*, and live accepting alms.' Here Arjuna is indicating the life of a *sanyassi*.

Some people turn to *sanyassa* out of mental weakness, seeing no other way in life. They don't see any other help. Here, Arjuna is put in this condition very suddenly. Up until the day before, Arjuna had promised to *Dharmaputra*, 'With myself alone and nobody else, I will destroy their whole army.' Arjuna is the one who said this. In one moment, everything changed. This mental weakness grabbed Arjuna. The Lord said this. Now Arjuna says, 'I am ready to renounce everything. I desire to accept a life of alms, *sanyassa*.'

Why is this? 'This is because my gurus are full of greatness. They are people who know all of the *Dharma* and *Nīti Śāstras*.' How are they described here? It says the word, '*tu*.' Arjuna is asking the Lord a question. '*Arthakāmān gurān hatvā ihaiva rudhira pradigdhān bhogān bhuñjīya*.' This is a question. It says, 'Even though these gurus are desires of wealth, how can we kill them?'

In other words, these two have a big part in the happening of this war. Arjuna wasn't the only one responsible for the war. These Gurus also have a big part in this. Why? They are *Arthakāmīs*, desirers of wealth. That is something which is agreed by them, also.

'*Arthasya puruṣo dasaḥ*' Man is the servant of wealth.' *Bhīṣma* says this to *Dharmaputra* in the *Mahābhārata*. *Yudhīsthira* asked *Bhīṣma* for his grace in winning the war. He said, 'you should stand on our side.' *Bhīṣma* replied, '*arthasya puruṣo dasaḥ*.' Man is the servant of wealth.' Because he is a servant of wealth, he is controlled. '*Arthasya Puruṣo Dasaḥ, Dasastvārtho na kasya chit*.'

Wealth is not controlled by anyone. Everyone is controlled by wealth. ‘All of us, myself, *Droṇa*, etc., are controlled by wealth and possessions.’ This is true, even though they were very devoted to *Dharma*. ‘Yet, no one can control wealth.’ A person asks, ‘why are people controlled by wealth?’ To give a reply,

*‘arthasya puruṣo dasaḥ, dasastvārtho na kasya chit  
Arthaḥ kasyachit na dasaḥ iti satyaṁ mahārājan.’*

‘Oh King, this is a great truth.’ This is a truth that I desire to tell openly.’ Understand this. ‘*Arthena Baddhosmi Kauraveḥ.*’ I am bound to the *Kauravas* due to wealth. ‘This is the bondage of wealth. The *Kauravas* are the ones ruling the country, and *Duryodhāna* is the king. That king has given me all comforts of life. If there comes a war that challenges him, I cannot stand on the side of *Dharma*. This is because I have lived experiencing these comforts because of the king. So, I have a duty towards him, and am forced to stand on the side of *Adharma*.’

‘I know that yours is the side of *Dharma*, but I cannot stand along with *Dharma*.’ That is ‘*Arthakāma*.’ Even though knowing something is right, one cannot stand alongside what is right. Thus these great men, *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa*, had to stand on the side of *Adharma* and evil, and fight against the side of *Dharma*. This is true of *Bhīṣma*, *Droṇa*, and all the others in the *Mahābhārata*.

Arjuna would have to confront these people in battle. It is actually accepted to oppose such people. There is scriptural authority, or *pramāṇa*, for this, but here Arjuna is asking whether he should fight them. In that situation, another question comes. ‘*Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa* are considered as *Tattvajñānis*, knowers of the Truth. How can these bad things be part of them?’ Can this bondage happen even to *Mahātmas* and *Jñānis*? You may ask ‘is this right?’ The answer for this is also said. There is a *pramāṇa*, an authority, for everything.

*‘Dharmam vyatikramo dṛṣṭah, īśvarānām cha sāhasam,  
Tejīyasām na doṣāya agne sarvabhūjo yathā.’*

This is also in the *Mahābhārata*. ‘*Dharmam vyatikramo dṛṣṭah.*’ Transgressing the *dharma* of the *Nīti* and *Dharma Śāstras* is even seen among great people. ‘*Īśvarānām dṛṣṭah.*’ Transgressing *dharma* is seen even among great souls. Here, also, this transgressing *dharma* is seen. Even if *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa*, servants of wealth, are standing on the side of *Adharma*, it explains here. They have left *dharma*. ‘*īśvarānām cha sāhasam.*’ This means that indecent actions are sometimes seen.

What is the answer? Here, what is happening is the breaking of the laws of *Dharma*. They didn’t act according to what they knew and learned. ‘*Tejyasām na doṣāya.*’ However, for those with Tejas (spiritual illumination), no harm comes of this.’ Why? ‘*Agni sarva bhujō yathā.*’ Here an example is given. ‘Like fire, which consumes everything.’ How is man? He must only eat pure food, and should not eat impure food. The *Vedas* have declared that if one eats impure food, certain remedial *karmas* must be performed. Impure food doesn’t just make man impure, but also causes demerit. Here it says, ‘*tejyasām*’ – for those with Tejas, splendor..’ What are such *Mahātmās* like? They are like fire. Fire can consume anything. It has no rules. It doesn’t only consume what is pure. Whether it consumes pure food or impure food, fire simply remains as fire.

The power and splendor of fire aren’t affected by that. The power of fire to consume is not destroyed in that way. Because of this, this *Arthakāma* doesn’t affect *Mahātmās*. That is the answer given in the *Mahābhārata*. So, we should keep this mind in this *śloka* where Arjuna calls *Bhīṣma* and *Droṇa* *Arthakāmis*, those who desire wealth. They may be *mahātmās*; actually, they are *mahātmās*. Even though they are desirers of wealth, they are *mahātmās*. Even though they are *mahātmās*, they are desirers of wealth.

They are also gurus. So, after killing them, ‘*rudhira pradigdhān*’ – stained with blood..’ Our enjoyments would be like food stained with blood. ‘*ihaiva Bhuñjīya*’ – this means right here and now. ‘Should we experience this?’ It is a question. ‘After killing, should I experience these blood-stained pleasures?’ This phrase, ‘food stained with blood,’ means that the killing of these gurus will cause sin. The rest of life will be spent carrying the burden of that sin. The

Paṇḍavas were demanding the kingdom, with all of its comforts. ‘Do we need that kind of life?’ Is it necessary?’

This is because after killing our Gurus, it will become a cause for sin. So, Arjuna says, ‘I can never kill them.’ ‘Stained with blood’ indicates the sin of killing these Gurus. Then there is another rule. This is that one must kill an attacker. There is a rule related to this.

*‘Gurūn va Bālavṛddhau Vā Brāhmaṇaṁ Va Bahuśrutaṁ,  
Atatāyinaṁ āyantaṁ Anyad evāvicharayan.’*

‘Whether it is a guru..’ This doesn’t mean a Guru of *Ātma Vidyā*. It can mean a guru of any kind of *sāstra*, A guru of the *Vedas*, etc. Whether a guru, or child, or old person, or a *brāhmaṇa*, well-versed in the *Vedas* and *Vedanta*, and all *sāstras*.. ‘*Atatāyinaṁ āyantaṁ*’ – if they are transgressors.. For example, one who gives poison, one who commits arson, who kidnaps a woman, who steals land, who steals wealth.. All of these are *atatāyinas*, transgressors. These people, approaching with weapons, ready for battle, are transgressors. ‘*Avicharayan.*’ This means that one need not think a moment about this. One need not go and look in the *Dharma Śāstras*. At once, they must be killed. This is said in *Niti Śāstram*.

It says here to kill. According to this, all of the *Kauravas* should be killed. This is because they committed all of these transgressions. They kidnapped a woman, disgraced a woman, gave poison, tried to kill, and so on. They also stole wealth, they stole the kingdom, etc. Also, they have taken up weapons and are standing ready to attack. The *Kauravas* committed all of the transgressions listed. They tried to kill through poison, and so on. So, those who stand on the side of the *Kauravas* are equal to attackers, who committed all of these transgression. The *Dharma Śāstra* and *Niti Śāstra* accepts killing them. Still, these Gurus are possessors of great power. Here is a different rule given.

*‘Guruṁ hunḁṛtya tumḁṛtya vipraṁ nirjitya vādataḁ,  
Smaśane jāyate mṛtvā, kaṅka gṛdhropasevate.’*

This is a different pramāṇa. Here, ‘guru’ means an ordinary teacher. ‘Humkṛtya,’ – this means if he disobeys, then, ‘tumkṛtya,’ and argues with the Guru..’

‘If one argues with a guru, any kind of guru, and defeats the guru, what happens? This means that the Guru says, ‘no, you are wrong. What you’re thinking is wrong. What you are saying is indiscrimination.’ Then, the disciple says, ‘I’m not the one that’s wrong; it is you.’ Having thus refuted the Guru, what happens to the disciple? ‘*Hunkṛtya Tunkṛtya vipraṁ nirjitya vādataḥ.*’ Though he may be saved in this life, in the next life how is he born? He will be born as a useless tree in a cremation ground. That will be his next birth. ‘*kaṅka gṛḍhropasevate.*’ The vultures will sit on this tree while eating corpses. That is a low birth of fools, the *tamasic*. They won’t even get a human birth.

‘*Kaṅka gṛḍhropasevate.*’ Their next life will be as a useless tree used by vultures in a cremation ground. This means that he is waiting for the greatest hell. This means that to argue with, to curse any guru, someone who teaches any subject, is not possible. This means that this must not be done. And what about if a person feels like this towards the Guru? If he doesn’t feel like the Guru is teaching correctly, then, ‘*parityāgo vidhīyate.*’ Then he should leave the Guru. However, he doesn’t have the right to curse the Guru.

No matter how it is seen, Arjuna says that killing one’s Gurus is not right. Because of that, better than killing these great people, being stained with this sin, is to accept a life of alms. This is what Arjuna says.

## *II. Arjuna's Delusion*

*Na chaitavidmaḥ kataranno garīyo  
yadvā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ  
Yāneva hatvā na jijīviśāmas  
Te 'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtarāshtrāḥ 2.6.*

2.6. 'We do not know which is the better for us, whether we should win, or whether they should conquer us. Those very sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, by killing whom we would not wish to live, stand in confrontation.'

'*Katarat na garīyaḥ, Etat na vidmaḥ. Yadvā jeyema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ.*' 'Yadvā vayanī jayema' - will we win?' Arjuna is asking the Lord, 'will we be victorious?' 'Yadi Vā,' otherwise, 'te jayeyuḥ naḥ,' will they defeat us? 'Asmākaṁ naḥ jayeyuḥ.' Will we defeat them? Or will they defeat us?' This isn't something that is certain. That's the meaning of this part.

'So, because of that uncertainty, I am unable to come to any kind of decision regarding this war.' '*Katarat naḥ Garīyaḥ*' - which decision will be

good for me? Which will be better for me? ‘*Etat cha na vidmaḥ*’ – I am unable to know this. Should I fight in the war, or should I accept *sanyassa*, living from alms?

If *Sanyassa* is accepted, then *hiṁsa* is avoided. One harm that Arjuna sees in this war is *hiṁsa*, violence. This war is full of the defect of *hiṁsa*. Then is this action, which is full of violence, *dharmic*? Should I leave this battle? Or, should I fight? I can’t decide which is better.’

‘*Yān hatvā na jijīviṣāmaḥ eva*’ – for those, whom after us killing them, ‘*na jijīviṣāmaḥ*’ – we wouldn’t even desire to live. ‘*Te Dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ*’ – those brothers, sons of *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, *Duryodhāna* and all the others, ‘*pramukhe avasthitāḥ*’ – are standing face to face with us. After killing them, we wouldn’t even have the desire to live.

Even though they have committed many cruel deeds, after killing them and obtaining the kingdom, we wouldn’t have any desire to live. Why? This is because they are relatives. They are now standing directly in front of us. So, what can happen in this war? They may kill us, or we may kill them.’

As we said before, all of these things that Arjuna says are because of the weakness of his mind, *hṛdaya daurbalyam*. This is a situation where someone whose mind is clouded with indiscrimination is speaking about *dharma*. These are things being said about *dharma* by a mind with no stability. Arjuna says, ‘after killing them, we wouldn’t even want the kingdom.’ Because of this, Arjuna could not come to a decision as to which is the correct action, whether to fight or not fight.

***Kāraṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ***  
***Pr̥cchāmi tvām dharmasamūddhachetāḥ***  
***Yacchreyaḥ syānniśchitaṁ brūhi tanme***  
***Śiṣyaste ‘haṁ śādhi mām tvām prapannam. 2.7.***

- 2.7. ‘With my nature overpowered by helplessness, with a mind bewildered about duty, I supplicate You. Tell me for certain that which is better; I am Your disciple. Instruct me who have taken refuge in You.’



What does the next śloka say? ‘*Kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ.*’ ‘*Kārpaṇya*’ means weakness. This is the feeling of helplessness Arjuna is experiencing. This can also mean ignorance. This is said in the *Vedas*. ‘*Śruti Yo Vai Etat Akṣaram Aviditvā Asmālokād Preyas Prāiti Sa Kṛpanaḥ.*’ ‘Whoever doesn’t know the imperishable *Paramātmān* and leaves the world, he is a miser.’ The attitude of a *kṛpana*, or miser, is *Kārpaṇya*, and can also mean ignorance. It can be interpreted this way, also.

However, here Arjuna is speaking, saying, ‘*kārpaṇya doṣam.*’ Because of this weakness, ‘*upahata svabhāvaḥ.*’ My nature, my mind is overwhelmed, and lost. In this part, Arjuna has become aware of his condition. Because he became aware, he will next request the Lord to give instruction. Normally, in this kind of condition, no one will become aware of them self. They won’t be aware of their own destruction; that they themselves are being destroyed.

Usually, a person won’t become aware, even if he is destroyed. This shows a specialty of Arjuna. How was he able to do this? In the Gita, it says that Arjuna is *Guḍākeṣa*, conqueror of sleep, *Jitendriyaḥ*, conqueror of the senses, a *Viveki*, endowed with discrimination, and *Parantapa*, scorcher of foes. Thus, there are several names for Arjuna like these. Because of the *Dharma Bodha* gained from his tapas, Arjuna understood that he was in trouble. He describes this himself as, ‘*Kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ.*’ He says that he is, ‘*dharmasamūdḍha chetāḥ.*’ ‘My mind is unable to discriminate between *dharma* and *adharma*. I have lost my ability to remember *Dharma*.’ His remembrance of *Dharma* was destroyed.

We said before that the Lord taught two kinds of Dharma, the Dharma of Action and of Renunciation. Arjuna was unable to remember any kind of *Dharma*. What is right action? It is *dharma*. He couldn’t remember this, so he began to withdraw from the war. What is true renunciation? He couldn’t remember this either, so he prepared to take *sanyassa*.

This is called *Dharma Vismṛti*, the forgetfulness of *Dharma*. This happened to Arjuna. What is the most important result of the *Gita* instruction? It is Arjuna’s regaining his remembrance of *Dharma*. This is said in the end of the Gita.

‘*Naṣṭo Moha Smṛtir Labdhvā, Tvat Prasādāt mayāchyuta.*’ ‘Because of Your Grace, Lord, my delusion has been destroyed.’ The Lord’s Grace had removed this loss of discrimination. Then, it says, ‘*Smṛtir Labdhvā.*’ Arjuna gained *Dharma Smṛti*, remembrance of *Dharma*. This is the knowledge of what is correct action. Arjuna asked Krishna, ‘Is *sanyassa* the right path? Or is *karma yoga* right for me?’ In the end, Arjuna gained this knowledge, by which he could decide. Because it was lost to him in the beginning, Arjuna says that he has regained the remembrance of dharma, at the end of the Gita.

How did Arjuna regain this remembrance of Dharma? It is because he became aware of himself. He becomes aware, here in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, that he is in a state of helplessness. When the common man experiences this mental confusion, when his mind is overwhelmed, he won’t have this awareness. He won’t be aware that he is being destroyed. A person who doesn’t have this awareness is not suitable for the spiritual path. Those who have this awareness will turn to the spiritual path.

This decline of *Dharma* is experienced by all *jivas*. Those who experience this *Dharma Chyūti* will not turn to the Spiritual Path, because they won’t have this awareness. However, because Arjuna had this awareness, he asks Krishna next, ‘*Yat śreyas syāt tat me niśchitam brūhi.*’ ‘*Yat Śreyo syāt*’ - ‘Which will be better for me?’ Is it the performance of *karma*, or the renunciation of *karma*? These two options are before Arjuna, so he asks Krishna. Arjuna didn’t ask questions like, ‘Is the *Ātman* one or many? Is it eternal or perishable? What is God?’ He simply says that he cannot remember what is *dharma*.

‘*Yat Śreyas Syāt*’ - ‘What will be beneficial?’ ‘What is my *dharma*?’ What is my duty?’ ‘*Niśchitam Brūhi*’ - Tell me clearly what I must do.’ It’s not enough to give a lecture on *dharma*. You must tell me clearly what I should do.’ This is what Arjuna requests from the Lord. ‘*Yat Śreyas Syāt Me Tat Niśchitam Brūhi.*’ Tell me for certain, whether I should accept the renunciation of *karma* or the performance of *karma*. This is the most important question.

After considering Arjuna’s question, what does the Lord say to Arjuna? He says, ‘you must perform *karma* alone.’ ‘Renunciation of *karma* is not your path.’ Thus, here it is saying clearly that Arjuna became ready to accept instruction from the Lord. Now, it says, ‘*Aham Te śiṣyaḥ*’ - ‘I am Your

disciple.’ Up until now, Arjuna was the Lord’s friend. Even though Arjuna knew all about the greatness of Krishna, he would always forget. He would only think of Krishna as his greatest friend, his *sakha*. Arjuna tells Krishna in Chapter 12, ‘*Sakheti matvā prasabham yaduktam he Krishna he Yādava he Keṣava.*’

Arjuna says all of this to the Lord, after Krishna revealed His Universal Form. Arjuna says, ‘In truth, I have thought of You as a mere friend. Thinking thus, what have I done? I called to You, ‘Hey *Krishna!* Hey *Yādava!* Hey *Keshava!*’ I called you all this because I thought we were equals. But now I understand that You are great.’

Now, in this situation, as Arjuna’s mind was collapsing, what does he realize? Arjuna thinks, ‘the person standing in front of me is not an ordinary person.’ That is how he becomes a disciple. In this time, when his mind collapses, when his awareness of *Dharma* is destroyed, he takes refuge in the Guru. How is this? He accepts *Śiṣya Bhava*, the attitude of a disciple. The meaning of *śiṣya* is, ‘*sāṣitum arhaḥ.*’ The disciple is one who is fit to receive instruction. Here, Arjuna himself reveals his fitness for instruction.

Next, how is this? ‘*Śādhi Mām*’ – ‘instruct me.’ *Tvām Prapannaṁ Mām Śādhi*’ - ‘instruct me, who am surrendered to You. ‘*Tvām Prapannaṁ,*’ means ‘I am completely dependant on You.’ Arjuna is showing here complete surrender. This is *ananya śaraṇam*, having no other refuge. Arjuna is saying, ‘In this time, there is nothing else for me to depend on.’ Arjuna is someone with good awareness of the *śāstras* and of *dharma*. He had studied all the *śāstras*, such as *Dharma Śāstra*, *Nīti Śāstra*, and so on. He is someone with good awareness of *Dharma*. Even so, this sorrow overwhelmed him. Remember, Krishna said before, ‘*Viṣame Samupasthitam.*’ ‘You are situated in deep sorrow.’

However, when a difficult situation came, all of that knowledge left him. It was all forgotten. Arjuna says, ‘At this time, I have no other refuge. The *Śāstras* cannot save me. No other *āchārya* can save me.’ Arjuna realized this. That’s why he says, ‘*Tvām Prapannaṁ*’ - ‘I am surrendered to You.’ That is *Guru Upasati*, surrender to the Guru. In such situations, when a discriminative

person loses his viveka, there is nothing else to depend on. He must take refuge in the Guru. That is what is described as ‘*Guru Upasati*,’ in the Upanishads.

The disciple thus takes refuge in God, who is manifest as the Guru. ‘*Tvāṁ Prapannam*’ - ‘I take refuge in You.’ This is where one doesn’t depend on anything else.; ‘*Ananya Śaraṇagati*.’ Discarding one’s scholarship, one’s knowledge of *śāstras* and *dharma*, and everything else, one surrenders to the Guru as the Supreme Refuge. One becomes ready to accept whatever the Guru says. That’s the meaning.

There, one doesn’t give any importance to one’s own discrimination or intellect. This is because even though these were present before, they were destroyed. Arjuna is a person with some extraordinary qualities. Arjuna is spoken of in this way, but even for Arjuna, all of his ability was destroyed in this situation. Arjuna is showing Krishna complete self-surrender; ‘*Tvāṁ Prapannam*.’

In this way, the disciple surrenders himself to the Guru. What is the consummation of that self-surrender? It is complete renunciation of ego, ‘*ahaṁta tyāga*.’ This happens when one completely destroys the feelings of ‘I and ‘mine,’ along with everything one has thought or done before, and offers oneself whole-heartedly to the Guru. Thus, this complete self-surrender came by itself from Arjuna. Most people never attain this kind of surrender. What does this show about Arjuna? This shows Arjuna’s greatness. This *Ātma Samārpanam*, or self-surrender, determines the suitability of the disciple.

Along with this self-surrender, Arjuna asks Krishna, ‘*Māṁ śādhi*.’ Please instruct me!’ In this situation, where the ego is completely destroyed, whatever the Guru instructs will shine forth fully within the disciple. The chief obstacle to accepting the Guru’s upadeśa is *ahaṁta*, the ego. This can be removed by self-effort, or without one’s own effort. It can happen knowingly or unknowingly. This surrender happens in the complete destruction of *ahanta*. This is what Arjuna reveals to us.

Arjuna represents the disciple; a *Jīva*, traveling along the spiritual path. He represents a *jijñāsu*, one with spiritual interest, and an *adhikāri*, a fit aspirant. How should one approach a supreme Guru? It must be with full self-surrender. In that there is no importance given to one’s intellect or abilities. So,

after this, Arjuna requests the Lord. By saying, '*Mām Śādhi*,' 'Instruct me!' Arjuna is showing that he is suitable and prepared to accept instruction. It shows that he is ready.

However, it's not necessary to put this into words by the disciple. In such a particular situation, the disciple's complete maturity will be revealed. Lord Vyāsa describes this with, '*Mām Shādi*.' Arjuna reached this state.

In the previous sections, Arjuna made decisions by himself. How did he do this? Arjuna said, 'I will not fight!' 'I have already retreated from the war.' That's why it says, '*Viśṛjya saśaram chāpam*,' 'Arjuna dropped his bow and arrow.' This means that Arjuna discarded all of his weapons. That was Arjuna's own decision.

This is when the disciple makes a decision by himself. The disciple thinks, 'I should do this.' When approaching and asking a question to Guru, there is no point in asking something that you have already decided on yourself. If you have already decided, then there's no need to ask the Guru. However, this is normally what the disciple does.

The disciple will normally decide what's best for him to do first. Then, he will approach the Guru and ask him, 'What do you advise?' Everyone does like this, normally. They demand instructions. But they give first importance to their own decision. The determination will be in the mind, 'I should do this.' Then, they ask the Guru.

After that, only if the Guru's instructions are suitable to the person's decision will he accept them. Otherwise, he will reject the Guru and the instruction. He will do whatever he had already decided on. The person will then say, 'this Guru is not right for me.' This is because he cannot accept a Guru who doesn't favor his decision.

This is what we normally do. If we have any kind of doubt, or if we need to make a decision, we approach the Guru only after making the decision for ourselves. Then we will ask.

Once, a disciple had a desire to go to the Himalayas. The desire came in his mind, and then he decided, 'I should go to the Himalayas.' After this, he went to the Guru and asked, 'should I go to the Himalayas?'

Now, the Guru understood that he had already made a decision. So, there is no point in giving him instruction. Why should he give advice to someone who has already made a decision? So, because the disciple had already decided, the Guru said, 'Go ahead. Go and enjoy.' This is because the decision is not the Guru's. It is the disciple's. Then the disciple thinks, 'oh good, I got the Guru's permission. Now I don't have to be afraid.'

This is where we go wrong. Why? This is how it normally is. The disciple first makes a decision, and then approaches the Guru for acceptance of his decision. When the disciple gets that acceptance, in truth, it may not be the acceptance of the Guru. It may be disciple's acceptance. He receives his own acceptance from the Guru.

In such a situation, the Lord is not ready to give instruction. Starting at the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, Arjuna says, 'I can't fight!' Even at this point, sitting in the chariot, the Lord doesn't begin His instruction. Why? It is because this was Arjuna's decision. It was the disciple's decision. Thus, there is no point in instructing. The Lord simply asked Arjuna to become aware of his state. He didn't give instruction. He simply made Arjuna aware of his condition. The Lord said, 'this condition is the weakness of your mind.' 'Your decision comes from your lack of strength.' He made Arjuna aware of this. The Lord doesn't give instruction there.

These words of Krishna helped Arjuna to become more aware of himself. Sri Krishna says, 'ultimately, this is not from your awareness of *Dharma*.' 'Your retreating from the war is not because of your awareness of *ahimsa* or *dharma*. This isn't from compassion either. This is none of these. This is fully your weakness of mind.' This weakness of mind is completely due to the feelings of 'I' and 'mine,' *ahamta* and *mamata*.'

With his mind in a completely clouded and confused state, the decision that Arjuna made came from his *ahamta*, the ego. 'I am not willing to fight. I am renouncing.' Even that decision to renounce came from *ahamta*. This can happen. Some disciples will go to an *āśram*. They will do *seva* for some time. Then, when the Guru doesn't give them *sanyassa*, they will immediately leave for another *āśram*. They think, 'I don't need *sanyassa* from this Guru. Now,

are there any other Gurus around? I can take *sanyassa* from them.’ There are people like this.

Now, what about Arjuna? He made his own decision to take *sanyassa*. Here the attitude is that the Guru has no right to decide if one is fit for *sanyassa*. One can decide for oneself. Like this, this disciple feels, ‘I am fit for *sanyassa*.’ But this Guru isn’t willing to give him *sanyassa*, so he will accept some other Guru. Some people act like this.

Arjuna did the same thing. He renounced first by himself. He didn’t seek the instruction of a Guru. Instead, he first took *sanyassa* out of *ahanta*, his ego. True *sanyassa* is the renunciation of ego, but Arjuna didn’t consider this. He first renounced by himself. That’s what we see at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter; Arjuna’s *sanyassa*.

However, the Lord reminds Arjuna, ‘this *sanyassa* of yours comes from your weakness of mind. *Sanyassa* is something that should never come from weakness, but your *sanyassa* comes from your lack of mental strength. This is your own decision. I have no part in it.’ The Guru has no part in the decision of the disciple. After the disciple decides, the Guru can only make him aware of his condition. Because of this, the Lord only said, ‘destroy this mental weakness!’ He didn’t say to change his decision. He also didn’t say to not renounce.

Sri Krishna says ‘*Tyaktvottiṣṭha*.’ Here the Lord is demanding Arjuna to be wakeful. He says ‘Awaken your discrimination. It is there within you. It is hidden within you, so awaken it!’ This is what is meant by the word, ‘*uttiṣṭha*.’ The Upanishads says, ‘*uttiṣṭha, jāgrata*.’ ‘Arise and awaken!’ This indicates wakefulness, to regain one’s discrimination. Arjuna understood this. This touched Arjuna within. Arjuna’s ego was destroyed. Then, Arjuna experienced *ahanta tyāga*, renunciation of the ego. He gained surrender, and with complete surrender, approached the Lord. Arjuna said, ‘instruct me.’ ‘*Mām sādhi*.’

This is the most divine moment in the spiritual life of a *sādhak*. This is surrender to the Guru. This is very rarely experienced for most people. Most of us will go to see the Guru, gain his permission to stay in the *āśram*, and then live in the *āśram*. We do the things the Guru tells us. But this doesn’t mean that we have gained surrender. That is something that is within one’s heart. It

is the surrender of the disciple's heart. This surrender never changes in any situation and is immovable. This doesn't happen just by accepting the Guru externally. It is only when the Guru is accepted within that this kind of self-surrender is experienced in the disciple.

After this surrender, there are no more obstacles in one's spiritual life. That is the characteristic of this surrender. Once the disciple has gained this self-surrender, then his spiritual path becomes free of obstacles and effort. Why? This is because then he is completely under the protection of the Guru. Then the Guru becomes aware, 'this person is fully suitable.' The Guru becomes aware of this internally.

To make the Guru aware of our fitness, we try external methods. We bow again and again. We lie flat on the ground like a pole. We do 100 prostrations in a row. These are to make the Guru aware, 'I am completely an instrument in Your hands.' However, the Guru isn't made aware of this by external actions. If you are doing this, I am not discouraging you. Go ahead and continue. You can think of it as an 'exercise.' (laughs) You don't have to stop.

But, that isn't it. The Guru becomes aware of the disciple's fitness when this inner attitude of surrender is gained. Then, the Guru truly accepts the disciple. In a different commentary, this is called, '*Guru Śiṣya Paraspāryam.*' That is the relationship between the Guru and disciple. Truly, that is where one's spiritual life begins. *Veda Vyāsa* uses Sri Krishna and Arjuna as symbols, and conveys this principle for all *jijñāsus*. This is a very important section. '*Śiṣyas te 'ham śādhi mām tvām prapannam.*' This is a section that we should pay very close attention to. What inspires this self-surrender? Arjuna again explains his condition in the next śloka.

*Na hi prapashyāmi mamāpanudyād  
yacchokamucchoṣaṇamindriyāṇām  
Avāpya bhūmāvasapatnamṛddham  
rājyaṁ surāṇāmapī chā 'dhipatyam. 2.8.*



2.8. 'I do not see that which can remove my sorrow, which is scorching the senses, even after acquiring on this earth a prosperous kingdom free from enemies or sovereignty over the gods.

Here, Arjuna is speaking. '*Bhumau,*' in this world, '*asapatnyamṛddham rājyam*' - a wealthy and unrivalled kingdom..' '*Sapatnyam,*' means an enemy. '*Asapatnyam*' means, 'without enemies,' '*ṛddham,*' a wealthy, '*rājyam,*' kingdom, '*avāpya,*' having obtained this..' Arjuna is speaking here about *preyas*, enjoyment. What a *kṣatriya* desires to obtain on Earth is a wealthy kingdom free from rivals. A kingdom that is wealthy, without enemies, and full of prosperity can be gained here, on Earth.

Now, for all of the good actions performed as his *svadharma*, what can the *kṣatriya* also gain? '*surānām adīpatyam cha*' - the lordship over all the *devas*, the status of *Indra*. That can also be obtained. This is the peak of enjoyment. This is the peak of the desirous fruits of karma. Arjuna says, 'After attaining all of this, nothing is sufficient to remove my grief.'

'*Indriyāṇām Ucchoṣaṇām*' - Arjuna says, 'all of my senses are burning.' This means that they are in pain. 'This grief that pains my mind and makes my senses collapse,' '*mama śokam,*' this grief, '*yat apanūdyāt*' - what can destroy this?' This means that no matter how much enjoyment one experiences, it can never fully extinguish the grief of the *jīva*.

'*Na hi prapaśyāmi*' - 'I cannot see anything that can remove this grief. Here, Arjuna is showing his complete detachment from enjoyment and the fruits of *karma*. Arjuna shows his suitability here.

In connection with this *śloka*, Arjuna's request for instruction is also for the instruction of *Ātma Vidyā*. That is where Arjuna has reached. Unknowingly, Arjuna reaches this state. Because of this, Arjuna's request also includes spiritual knowledge. What did Arjuna request before this? Arjuna asked for *Dharma Bodha*, awareness of *Dharma*. 'What should I do? What is my duty?' That is what Arjuna requested.

Arjuna didn't ask, 'what is the Self? What is not the Self?' Now, Arjuna has stepped to a higher level, and requests for a means for the cessation of sorrow, *dukha nivṛtti*. He requests a means for total cessation of suffering.

That's what Arjuna is asking here. Unknowingly, this question comes from within Arjuna.

Arjuna is showing here total dispassion from *saṁsāra*. He had the conviction, 'none of this is sufficient for removing my sorrow.' '*Mama Śokam Yat Apanūdyāt Na Hi Prapaśyāmi*' - 'I don't see anything that will end my sorrow.' Arjuna desired for the complete cessation of grief. This can only happen through *Ātma Vidyā*. *Jijñāsa* is what is called the desire for this *Vidyā*.

This is a different circumstance of the Gita. First is Arjuna's *jijñāsa* in attaining *Dharma Bodha*, awareness of *Dharma*. The second is the *jijñāsa* for the completely pure *Ātma Vidyā*. Here we are seeing two different kinds of *jijñāsa* in one individual. One person desires to know about his *dharma*, his duty. The other desires for a means for the cessation of suffering. That's why *Śaṅkara* says, '*Arjuna Nimittī Kṛtya*,' 'using Arjuna as an instrument.' Here, we can see Arjuna as a mere instrument. This is because there are different instructions for different types of aspirants in the Gita.

Here it is made clear that there are several types of *adhikāris*. Arjuna is not just an individual. Through the first chapter, *Viśāda Yoga*, and this section of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, *Sāṁkhya Yoga*, *Veda Vyāsa* is revealing several different *adhikāris*.

Before, Arjuna was shown as a suitable aspirant of *Karma Yoga*. Then, another kind of *jijñāsu* is shown for *Jñāna Yoga*. This is shown here. In *Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's* commentary in this section, he says that the *adhikāri* of one who is established in *sādhana chatuṣṭaya* is shown here by *Vyāsa*. This is an *ādikāri* who is suitable for grasping *Ātma Vidyā*. This is revealed here.'

Because this kind of *adhikāri* enters into the Gita, later, Sri Krishna will not just instruct *Karma Niṣṭhā*, but *Jñāna Niṣṭhā* as well. Here, a true *adhikāri* for *Jñāna Niṣṭhā* is shown. All of these *adhikāris* are called, '*Arjuna*,' but they are all different.

'*Jñānayogena Sāṁkhyānām Karmayogena Yoginām*.' 'There is *Jñāna Yoga* for the followers of *Sāṁkhya*, and *Karma Yoga* for the *Yogis*.' *Śaṅkara* will say that the Lord Himself divided these two *Niṣṭhās*. Several types of *adhikāris* are revealed here. Thus, *Vyāsa* depicts these different *ādikāris* through different situations.

Here, what is shown is a completely fit *adhikāri* for *Ātma Vidyā*, who has attained supreme dispassion (*para vairāgya*). For that aspirant, the Lord will instruct *Ātma Vidyā*. However, it's not possible for a person to grasp and practice fully both of these at the same time. The commentator will discuss this. *Śaṅkarāchārya* is saying that these *adhikaris* are different from each other. Because of this, there is no contradiction when Arjuna is depicted in these different ways.

There is a Hindi book, which is very big. The subject of the book is the contradictions in the Gita. One person thought very hard and went to a lot of trouble to find and display contradictions in the Gita. There is such a book. It has been published. There is an old saying, 'the mosquito is only interested in the cow's blood.' This person's attitude was similar. He tried very hard to attain that, and strived a great deal. In his book, he says that all of the Gita is unrelated, because of all these contradictions.

These contradictions are very clear. For example, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna, '*Kuru Karmaiva Tasmāt Tvaṁ.*' 'You should perform karma alone.' Then, in the end of the Gita, Sri Krishna says to Arjuna, '*Sarva Dharmān Parityajya Mām Ekam Śaraṇam Vraja.*' Renounce all dharmas and surrender to Me.' This is an obvious contradiction.

So, this person discovered numerous such contradictions in the Gita, and said in his book that all of this is unrelated. This person exerted himself so much for that. Why? We can only say that this is because of his *vasana*. This individual didn't find a single instruction that he could accept. He then put forth efforts to prove this and wrote a book.

Therefore, we feel that these different instructions create contradictions in the Gita. However, this is due our lack of knowledge that these parts are for different types of aspirants. That's why *Madhusūdana Sarasvatī* says in his commentary that this *śloka* indicates a *sādhak* with *Sādhana Chatuṣṭaya*, the four qualities needed for *Advaita sādhana*; discrimination, dispassion, the six qualities such as tranquility and self-control, and the desire for Liberation. He says that that is what this section is showing. We can see the perfection of this in the end of the Gita.

Like that, this section shows an aspirant for *Ātma Vidyā*. Like this, we can see that there are so many different philosophies expressed through commentaries of the Gita. In these, we can see that these *āchāryas* found different principles instructed to different types of aspirants in the Gita. For an *adhikāri* of Dualism, there are the necessary instructions within. For an *adhikāri* of Non-dualism, there are also the needed instructions within the Gita. For whatever kind of *adhikāri* it may be, the Gita has inside it that *vidyā*. That's why the Gita is called a *samagra śāstra*, a *śāstra* that contains everything.

Anyone can accept the Gita. Even in the *Śaiva Sampradāya*, the Gita has been commentated on. A person from any kind of tradition can comment on the Gita. This is because whatever people can accept can be found in the Gita.

In India itself, there are different traditions of *Sanyassa*. There is the *Sampradāyam* of *Adi Śaṅkarāchārya*. Then there is the tradition of *Kabir*. In Northern India, there are numerous different traditions of *sanyassa*. Among all of these different spiritual traditions, one thing that is fully acceptable is the *Bhagavad Gita*.

That's why it is compulsory for a *sanyassi* in any spiritual tradition in India to study at least one *śloka* from the Gita a day. In whatever tradition it may be, in all traditions that comes from a *Guru*, it is not allowed to spend a single day without remembering the Gita. That is a strict, unwritten rule. This is true for all *sanyassa* traditions throughout all of India, and has been sustained for ages.

This is true for a dualist tradition as well as a non-dualist tradition. Why is this? It is because of the *samagrata*, the completeness of the Gita. In the Gita, different instructions are given for different types of aspirants. This matter is made clear by the different commentators. So, in this *śloka*, the disciple is revealing to the Guru his suitability to be instructed in *Ātma Vidyā*.

Arjuna has said all that he has to say. He has done all that he could do. There is no decision on the part of Arjuna. Everything that must be done on the disciple's part has been done. That is where *Vyāsa* says, '*Saṅjaya Uvācha*,' *Saṅjaya* spoke.'

***Saṅjaya Uvācha:***

***‘Evamuktva hr̥ṣīkeśam guḍākeśaḥ param̐tapah  
Na yotsya iti govindamuktva tūṣṇīm babhūva ha’ 2.9.***

2.9. ‘Having spoken thus to Hṛṣīkeśa, Guḍākeśa, the afflicter of foes, verily became silent, telling Govinda, ‘I shall not fight.’

Sri Krishna calls Arjuna, ‘*Parantapa.*’ We said before that for a *kṣatriya*, this means one who scorches his enemies. In the level of a *sādhak*, this means one who performs great *tapas*. Then, Arjuna is called, ‘*Guḍākeśa.*’ ‘*Guḍāka,*’ means sleep, laziness. Arjuna is the *Isān*, one who has conquered sleep. Arjuna is a warrior. In all ways, he has conquered sleep and laziness. He has manliness and one-pointedness. These all show the suitability of Arjuna. Such a suitable person, Arjuna, ‘*evam̐ uktvā*’ – Arjuna spoke this. Arjuna said all of this to the Lord, from the beginning of ‘*Ratham̐ Sthāpaya Me Chyuta.*’ ‘Krishna, please halt my chariot between the two armies.’

What was the ultimate essence of all of this? ‘*Na Yotsya.*’ ‘I am not ready to fight.’ *Saṅjaya* is summarizing what Arjuna has said. ‘I am not ready for battle. I am ready for *sanyassa.*’ ‘*Na yotsya iti govindam uktvā*’ – he spoke this to *Govinda*.

First, Arjuna told his decision. Then, Arjuna revealed his *jijnāsa*, his spiritual interest. After saying all of this, it says, ‘*Tūṣṇīm Babhuva.*’ Arjuna then became silent and still. This is the attitude where one has nothing else to say. Why? This is because for Arjuna, the Lord is the one who must decide, the one who should make a decision. Thus, ‘*tūṣṇīm babhuva,*’ Arjuna became still.

When a sincere *sādhak* approaches a Guru’s presence, what does he do? He brings the sense-organs and mind under control, and peacefully becomes ready to accept all of the Guru’s instructions. This scene is what is shown to us by Lord Vyasa. This phrase, ‘*tūṣṇīm babhuva,*’ indicates the stillness of the outer sense-organs, the stillness of the mind, and ultimately, the renunciation of *ahaṁta*, the ego. This is called ‘*tūṣṇīm sthiti.*’ In that complete renunciation of ego, the *sādhak* gains the complete fitness for the acceptance of *Vidyā*. This is depicted through Arjuna. The *adhikāri*’s suitability is being depicted here. For such an *adhikāri*, the Lord next begins His instruction.

In this śloka, the word ‘*ha*,’ is used. This is a *nipatham*, a word generally used without meaning. *Vyāsa* shows his expertise in the use of this word. *Vyāsa* reveals many ideas through the use of a single sound, a single word that seems meaningless. However, when it is used in a particular circumstance, this small word can show a vast universe of ideas. Normally, commentators describe this word as ‘*aścharyārtham*’ – the expression of wonder.’

*Lord Vyāsa* is expressing wonder here. Here, what happens to the warrior Arjuna, who can even defeat the *Devas* in battle? He becomes peaceful, like a baby, and pure. He has rejected all of his manliness, ego, and expertise. He has discarded everything. Thus, Arjuna desires to gain *Ātma Vidyā* from the Lord.

This was a sudden change for Arjuna. If we look in the chapters prior to this in the *Mahābhārata*, Arjuna never revealed this attitude. In this special circumstance, in the presence of the Lord, Arjuna underwent a transformation. This is *aśchāryam*, a wonder. How did this happen? How did Arjuna become like this? That’s why *Vyāsa* feels wonder.

That’s not all. This is a situation where the Lord is preparing to instruct *Ātma Vidyā*. This has never happened before. This is because for this *Vidyā*, two things that are most necessary are one-pointedness and introspection. A war is not a suitable place for these two qualities. In that situation, the ego and likes and dislikes of the mind will be most manifest. Thus, the Lord has chosen a situation that is generally not at all suitable for the instruction of *Ātma Vidyā*. In this kind of situation, which has never happened anywhere in the world, Lord *Vyāsa* expresses wonder.

This is the preparation of the Lord’s instruction. This is felt as a great wonder. In this way, there are several wonders combined together. The grasping of the instruction, the disciple, the Guru, and everything composing this imparting of *Ātma Vidyā* is seen as a wonder.

Lord *Vyāsa* indicates this here. This is all the Lord’s *Līla Vilāsa*, the Lord’s play. This sound ‘*ha*’ is revealing that this is a suitable situation for the imparting of *Ātma Vidyā*. This is a condition where the *jīva*’s life becomes full of disturbances, the mind falters, and one collapses. Without any way to escape, all expressions of the ego are extinguished. Then, the mind unknowingly

becomes peaceful and still. At first, the mind was wavering, and then attains a state of stillness.

In the beginning, Arjuna raised all kinds of justifications and arguments for his decision. His mind was turbulent. Finally, his mind became peaceful. Similarly, after attaining a Guru in this state, one becomes receptive to *Ātma Vidyā*. We can commentate on this as a general idea. You can also see Arjuna and Krishna as inner principles, disciple and Guru. This is a suitable situation for this. It is a suitable situation for the instruction and acceptance of *Ātma Vidyā*. To indicate all of these ideas, the word, ‘*ha*,’ is used at the very end of the *śloka*, showing wonder. After this, *Vyāsa* says,

***Tamuvācha hr̥ṣīkeśaḥ prahasanniva bhārata  
Senayorubhayormadhye viśīdantamidam vachah 2.10.***

2.10. ‘O descendant of Bharata, to him who was sorrowing between the two armies, Hṛṣīkeśa, as if smiling, said these words.’

*Saṅjaya* is speaking to *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*. That’s why he calls *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, ‘*Bhārata*,’ ‘descendant of the lineage of *Bhārata*!’ What will happen in the beginning of the war? After 10 days, the grandfather of the *Pāṇḍavas* and *Kauravas*, *Bhīṣma*, will be lying on a bed of arrows. *Saṅjaya* is the one who tells this news to *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*. Because *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* is blind, he must be told everything that happens in the war. He must know clearly what is happening in every moment. Here, *Saṅjaya* is saying to *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*, ‘*Bhārata*!’

*Saṅjaya* has seen all of Arjuna’s confusion. ‘*Senayor ubhayor madhye*’ - in between both of these armies, ‘*viśīdantam*,’ to one who is in great sorrow..’ In other words, Arjuna was despondent up until the point where it is says, ‘*sādhi Mām Tvām Prapannam*’ - ‘Instruct me, who am surrendered to You.’ Till this point, Arjuna was in sorrow, but after this, he became peaceful. ‘*Tam*,’ To him, who was sitting, in sorrow, the Lord spoke.

What is the *bhāva* of the disciple? It is sorrow. Then, it says, ‘*Hṛṣīkeśaḥ*.’ The meaning is; ‘*Hṛṣīkāṇām*,’ of the senses, ‘*īśaḥ*,’ the Lord. This means ‘the Lord of the constantly moving senses, who is within all creatures.’ He is the

Inner Controller of All.’ Sri Krishna says in the Gita, ‘*Bhramayān sarvabhūtāni Yantra Rudhāni Māyayā.*’ ‘Being within all beings, I constantly inspire these jivas to act.’ That’s why Krishna is called ‘*Hṛṣīkeśa.*’

After the Lord has seen all of this, it says, ‘*prahasann iva.*’ ‘*Hāsam,*’ means ‘one who is smiling.’ However, there is a small prefix added, ‘*pra,*’ so it is ‘*prahasam.*’ This ‘*prahasam*’ is impossible to explain. What is this smile of the Lord in this situation? When a person’s dearest friend is in pain, he won’t feel like smiling. If Lord Krishna smiles upon seeing the sorrow of Arjuna, we will have to say that this is very ‘sadist.’ However, this is not that kind of smile. That’s why it says, ‘*prahasam.*’

This is a smile that comes from seeing the Beginning and the End. This is spontaneous for the Lord. You can look in the *Mahābhārata*, from the beginning till the end. From the time of his birth, since he was born from *Devaki*, the Lord was always seen with a smile. Till he ascended to Vaikuntha, this ‘*prahasam,*’ was clearly on the Lord’s face. It continues here.

Many *āchāryas* have commentated on this, such as *Ramanujāchārya*, *Madhvācharya*, *Sri Vāllabhān*, and *Abhinavagupta*. All of these scholars have looked at this part and written commentaries on the Lord’s smile. This smile lasts from the beginning till the end of His Incarnation. This is the smile of someone who has understood the secret of the Universe. It is the smile of an *Avatar* who understands the secret of Creation, Sustenance, and Dissolution.

That smile is unusual, unworldly. To show this, Lord *Vyāsa* uses the prefix, ‘*pra.*’ Thus, it is ‘*prahasam.*’ So, Arjuna was being affected by all of the defects and delusions of *Samsāra*. Arjuna was being completely controlled by these. Arjuna was in the grip of this *samsāra*, and though all of this was right in front of Krishna’s eyes, Krishna was not affected at all. This smile indicates this.

It’s not that Krishna is taking pleasure in the pain of Arjuna. God doesn’t ever take pleasure in the sorrow of the *jiva*. If the Lord were to do this, He would become cruel. That is not what is happening here. This smile happens when one realizes the insignificance and smallness of the *jiva*’s sorrow and *samsara*. That’s why Krishna is called *Madhusūdana*. The Lord is always situated in his own True Nature. He is always in the bliss of the Self. The Lord



constantly outwardly manifests this bliss of the Self. That's why it says here, '*prahasan.*'

No matter what the circumstances are, He never falls from His *Niṣṭhā*, his abidance. This fall is called *chyūti*. So, the Lord is called *Achyuta*. The Lord is never moved from His True Nature. That is the *bhāva* of *Achyuta*. This smile reveals this nature of the name *Achyuta*.

The Lord is never subject to *Samśāra*. He doesn't follow *Samśāra*. Those in the world will sometimes feel that the Lord follows *Samśāra*, from His external actions. However, internally, this smile of the Lord always remains.

Also, here the Lord is in a situation where he must instruct *Ātma Vidyā* to the disciple. Thus, it says, '*prahasan iva.*' *Vyāsa* adds, '*iva,*' 'as if.' When seen, it appears like a smile. Looking at the Lord's face, one sees what appears to be a smile. However, it cannot be called a smile. It is indescribable and unexplainable. But we feel that it is like a smile.

Because *Vyāsa* himself cannot describe this, he uses the word, '*iva,*' 'as if.' '*Prahasan iva.*' That word, '*iva,*' is very full of meaning. Krishna always fully reveals his oneness with God. This is true whether it is a battlefield, or any other scene. However, those who approach him, whether disciples, followers, people, or devotees; they are unable to understand this. This 'smile' reveals His oneness with God. However, others cannot grasp this. In truth, no other instruction is needed. For a person who truly desires Liberation, the sight of this is enough.

In truth, for attaining *Mokṣa*, no other verbal instruction is needed. This *Bhāva* of the Lord alone is enough. This can be said about true Gurus. Instruction is *śāstra*. This instruction through spoken words is not needed along with this. Just one *darśan*, one sight, or one glance can awaken *Ātma Bodha* in the disciple.

To destroy the beginningless veil of ignorance in the *jīva*, the instruction in the form of spoken word isn't necessary. However, we normally say that the spoken word is the only way. I also have said this. Why? This is because this is needed for the ordinary *Jīva*. There are people who are beyond this. For them, this is not needed. However, if this is said, we will immediately decide, 'I am beyond, so I don't need that.' That's why it's said that it is necessary.

One instruction is not the end. After that, there are other things beyond to say. That's why this *Bhāva* of the Lord alone is enough, in truth. However, the disciple doesn't have the capacity for that. That is why the Guru has to speak. '*Tat darśanam.*' This is said in another section. For a true *adhikāri*, the Guru's *darśan* alone is enough. The Guru doesn't have to see him. He just has to see the Guru. That's enough. Then the Guru will see the disciple.

All of this depends upon the maturity of the individual. For a completely mature aspirant, the mere sight of the Lord as the *Avatar* is enough for release from *Samsāra*. However, that cannot be grasped. That is why it cannot be explained. Thus, this moment, with the Guru preparing to give instruction, is described with, '*prahasann iva.*' Then, what does it say? '*Tam Uvācha*' - 'The Lord spoke to Arjuna.' What did he say? '*Idam Vachaḥ*' - these words.' Thus, the Lord's *Upadeśa* will begin.

Arjuna had the constant presence of Lord Krishna from childhood itself. Even after so much time, he didn't make use of it. This is because Arjuna wasn't suitable enough to utilize the Lord's presence. In this circumstance, the Lord now begins to think, 'let me give instruction and correct him.'

### *Śrī Bhagavān Uvācha:*

*Aśochyānanvaśochastvam̐ prajñāvādāmścha bhāshase  
Gatāsūnagatāsūmścha nānuśochanti paṇḍitāḥ. 2.11.*

2.11. 'You grieve for those who are not to be grieved for, and you speak words of wisdom. The Wise do not grieve for the departed and those who have not departed.'

The Gita begins from here on. '*Bhagavad Gita*,' means the Gita instructed by *Bhagavān*, the Lord. This instruction in *Ātma Vidyā* begins from here.

The first place where *Śaṅkara* took up his pen, was the very first *śloka* of the first chapter. This is, '*Dharmakṣetre Kurukṣetre.*' He only wrote, '*Dharmakṣetre iti.*' From there, till this *śloka* in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, *Śaṅkara* didn't write anything. One reason is that these *ślokas* in the first and beginning of the

2<sup>nd</sup> chapters have a very clear meaning. These sections make clear the *jīva*'s condition in *saṁsāra*.

There is no point for another person to tell and reveal to a *jīva* his condition in *saṁsāra*. Therefore, there is no reason to explain and commentate on this. Everyone is aware of this. However, the parts that come after this require explanation in order to be understood. So, for *Śaṅkara*, these parts in the beginning have a very clear meaning. This means that everyone understands their own condition. It's not needed for someone else to say this.

That's why *Śaṅkara* begins his commentary from this *śloka*. The parts that come from here on are the Lord's *Upadeśa*. These are sections that must be grasped. That's why *Śaṅkara* commentates from here on. That's not all. Before *Śaṅkara*'s commentary, there were other commentaries written. These are no longer available to us, such as commentaries by *Vṛttikāraṇa*, etc. In their commentaries, up to this point, everyone has the same opinion. This is that these sections describe the fit aspirant for *Ātma Vidyā*. These sections speak about a *jijñāsu*.

No one has any disagreements in these parts, but from here on is the Lord's *Upadeśa*. These are where the differences of opinion begin. Several *āchāryas* have different opinions about the principle that the Lord is revealing, and the *adhikāri* of that principle. *Śaṅkara* said this before. When that happened, these commentaries begin from here to try to prove their own ideas. *Śaṅkara* has not commentated on the entire first and the second chapter till this *śloka*. Now, the Lord's *upadeśa* begins.

So, first we can take the *Bhāṣyā*, and then see the *śloka*. Then, the *śloka* will become more clear. '*Śaṅkara Bhāṣyā*.' This is next. *Śaṅkara* describes the sections before this with a single sentence;

*'Dr̥ṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkam'ityārabhya 'na yotsya iti govindamuktvā tūṣṇīm babhūva ha' ityetaḍantaḥ prāṇinām śokamohādisaṁsārabīja doṣodbhava-kāraṇa-pradarśanārthatvena vyākhyeyo granthaḥ.'*

How should the scripture be explained till this point? '*Śokamohādi saṁsārabījam*,' as showing the seed of *saṁsāra*, '*prāṇinām*,' for all *Jivas*.'

*Samsāra* is the cycle of birth and death. What is the seed of *samsāra*? It is *śoka* and *moha*, grief and delusion. *Samsāra* is full of sorrow. The seed of this is both grief and delusion, and this creates a constant defect in the *jīva*. The birth of this defect comes from Ignorance.

‘*Śokamohādisamsārabījabhūtadoṣodbhavamī.*’ Thus, grief and delusion consist of the seed of *samsāra*. The defects of grief and delusion come from Ignorance. Thus, the basic cause of this defect of grief and delusion is *ajñāna*, spiritual ignorance. From ignorance, comes ego. From that ego comes grief, delusion, and so on, and this constitutes the *Samsāra*.

This *samsāra* consists of *śoka* and *moha*, grief and delusion. These two are what is mostly seen in *samsāra*, the cycle of birth and death. That’s why it says that *śoka* and *moha* themselves constitute the *Samsāra*. The seed of both of these is *ahaṁta* and *mamata*, the feeling of ‘I’ and ‘mine.’ The cause of both of these is *Ajñāna*, Ignorance. From *Ajñāna* comes *mamata*. From that comes grief and delusion, as well as birth and death. This is how this happens. The primary cause of all of this is *Ajñāna*, spiritual ignorance.

To show that cause, ‘*Pradarśanatvena.*’ To show *Ajñāna*, Ignorance, these preceding sections were used. Remember, from Ignorance comes *Ahaṁta*, ego, from which come grief and delusion, and birth and death. For showing these, ‘*vākhyeyoḥ granthaḥ.*’ From the 2<sup>nd</sup> *śloka* in the first chapter till where Arjuna says, ‘I will not fight,’ what is shown in these sections? It is shown that *Ajñāna*, Ignorance is what puts the *jīva* in bondage. From *Ajñāna* comes ego and attachment. From these come grief and delusion. This is the experience of the *jīva*. That is *samsāra*, the journey through the cycle of birth and death. *Śaṅkara* says that the parts before this should be commented on according to this.

Through this commentary alone, *Śaṅkara* has made these sections clear. *Śaṅkara* is showing that the first sections give an awareness of the condition of *samsāra*. After that, we can enter into the commentary of the *śloka*. So, we should understand this matter according to this progression. The basic cause of Arjuna’s sorrow is *Ajñāna*, spiritual ignorance. From that comes ego and attachment. Those are also a cause for sorrow. That’s why it says, ‘*doṣodbhava kāraṇam.*’ From these, come *śoka* and *moha*, grief and delusion. When *śoka* and *moha* are said, we also mean all of the other emotions of the mind. When

the *jīva* constantly experiences these emotions such as grief and sorrow through the cycle of births and deaths, then that is *Samsāra*. *Śaṅkara* has made these things clear through the commentary.