

'Anāryajuṣṭam'—Great people do not become faint-hearted, they shun the feeling because, it does not lead them, to any good.

Great men who want to achieve success do so with fixed objectives, during activity as well as non-activity. They do not shirk their duty. According to prevailing circumstances, they perform their duty thoroughly, with zeal and readiness, in order to achieve emancipation. So, it is not proper on his part to refrain from the duty of fighting, because of cowardice.

'Asvargyam'—If we leave aside the goal of success and consider the matter from a worldly point of view, the attainment of heaven, is the highest achievement. With this timidity you cannot even attain the heaven.

'Akīrtikaram'—Even without having the aim of attainment of heaven, a noble person performs those deeds which bring him name and fame in the world. But this cowardice would defame you. So it does not befit you at all, to be faint-hearted.

Here, the Lord by giving these three expressions 'Anāryajuṣṭam', 'Asvargyam' and 'Akīrtikaram', in a sequence has explained that there are three types of persons (i) Thoughtful—whose aim is to attain benediction, (ii) Virtuous—who by doing virtuous actions want to attain heaven, (iii) and Ordinary—who want name and fame in the world. So, by giving the above-mentioned three kind, Lord Kṛṣṇa wants to warn Arjuna that, his affliction would bring him neither benediction, nor heaven nor fame, but would degrade and defame him, and lead him to hell.



Link:—In the verse that follows, Lord Kṛṣṇa points out what to do, when a person is in the grip of cowardice.

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ ३ ॥

klaibyaṁ mā sma gamaḥ pārtha naitattvayyupapadyate
kṣudraṁ hṛdayadaurbalyaṁ tyaktvottiṣṭha parantapa

O Pārtha (son of Pṛthā viz., Kuntī), yield not to cowardice. It does not befit you. Cast off this petty faint-heartedness and wake up, O vanquisher of foes. 3

Comment:—

'Pārtha'*—Lord Kṛṣṇa addresses Arjuna as 'Pārtha', to remind him of Mother Kuntī's message† and arouse in him feelings of bravery which befits the members of a warrior-class. It means, that he should not disobey his mother by showing cowardice.

'Klaibyaṁ mā sma gamaḥ'—It is because of faint-heartedness that Arjuna perceives it, righteous not to wage war and unrighteous to wage war. Therefore to warn him, Lord Kṛṣṇa says that it is impotence rather than righteousness, not to wage war. So he should abandon this weakness.

'Naitattvayyupapadyate'—You should not have developed this timidity in you, because you are, the son of a brave mother of warrior-class, and you yourself are also brave. Therefore, this weakness does not befit you at all.

'Parantapa'—You are the scorcher and vanquisher of foes. So, will you gladden your enemies by showing your disinclination for war?

'Kṣudraṁ hṛdayadaurbalyaṁ tyaktvottiṣṭha'—Here, 'Kṣudram', has two meanings—(i) This faint-heartedness will make you lowly viz., it will deprive you of salvation, heaven or fame and if you

* Being the son of Pṛthā Arjuna is called 'Pārtha'. This word manifests intimacy between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. In the Gītā Lord Kṛṣṇa has used this address thirty-eight times, more than any other address. The second place goes to 'Kaunteya' which has been used twenty-four times.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa wants to say something special or give assurance to Arjuna or there is an overflow of love for him, He calls him 'Pārtha.' By addressing him thus, he wants to remind him that besides being the son of his father's sister, he is his loving devotee and friend (Gītā 4/3). Therefore He tells him something very secret and true for his welfare.

† Kuntī's message to Arjuna and to Bhīma who were ever eager to fight—
It is the time for which the mother of the warrior-class gives birth to her sons.