

**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

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\* 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.

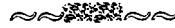
† Kuntī's message to Arjuna and to Bhīma who were ever eager to fight—  
It is the time for which the mother of the warrior-class gives birth to her sons.

do not abandon it, you will become insignificant. (ii) This faint-heartedness, is petty. So it is not difficult for a brave person like you to abandon.

You are thinking that being virtuous, you do not want to commit a sin by waging war, but it is your cowardice. So by abandoning it, you should discharge your duty, by arraying yourself to wage war.

Lord Kṛṣṇa knows for certain, that it is Arjuna's first and foremost duty to wage war. So, He, without caring for Arjuna's lame excuses, orders him quickly to wage war, with full preparations.

**Appendix**—This fact has been described in detail by the Lord ahead from the thirty-first verse to the thirty-eighth verse of this chapters.



*Link:—In the first chapter, Arjuna gave several arguments against the war. But without attaching importance to his arguments, Lord Kṛṣṇa suddenly scolded Arjuna for his faint-heartedness, and ordered him to array himself to wage war. So Arjuna without getting any satisfactory reply to his arguments, got excited and spoke abruptly.*

अर्जुन उवाच

कथं भीष्ममहं सङ्ख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन ।

इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥ ४ ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

katham bhiṣmamaham saṅkhye droṇam ca madhusūdana  
iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi pūjārḥāvarisūdana

Arjuna said:

O slayer of Madhu, and slayer of foes, how shall I fight Bhīṣma and Droṇa, with arrows, on the battlefield? Both of them are worthy of our worship. 4

*Comment:—*

[Arjuna addresses the Lord as 'Madhusūdana' and 'Arisūdana', because he had killed unrighteous, villainous and cruel demons, such as Madhu etc., and foes also who always are jealous of others, without rhyme or reason. But how can he kill his great well-wisher, the respected grandfather Bhīṣma, and adorable preceptor Droṇa, who have great affection for him?]

'**Katham bhīṣmamamaham saṅkhye droṇam ca**'—I am not turning away from war because of faint-heartedness, but because it is unrighteous for me to fight, with the revered grandsire Bhīṣma and venerable teacher Droṇa. I would be called unmanly if I were afraid of death. I am not afraid of dying but I do not want to kill my venerable elders, who have always been very affectionate to me.

Grandfather Bhīṣma, has loved me since my childhood. When I addressed him as father, he very affectionately used to say, that he was my father's father. Similarly, my adorable preceptor Droṇa, has been so kind to me that he imparted to me better training, than he imparted even to his son. He taught the use of Brahma-weapon, (a kind of weapon which caused infallible destruction and set in motion by incantation) to both of us, but as far as its control or end is concerned, he taught that only to me, not to his son. He also granted me a boon that no one would excel me, in military science. So it is a mortal sin, to wage war against them.

'**Iṣubhiḥ pratityotsyāmi pūjārhu**'—Both Bhīṣma and Droṇa being elderly are venerable and adorable. They have a right to attack me. But it is a deadly sin for me to fight against them with my arrows.



*Link:—In the preceding verse, Arjuna, being excited, revealed his decision to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Now being influenced*

by Lord Kṛṣṇa's words and balancing his decision, with that of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he says.

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्  
श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।  
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरूनिहैव  
भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५ ॥

gurūnahatvā hi mahānubhāvān  
śreyo bhoktum bhaikṣyamapīha loke  
hatvārthakāmānstu gurūnihaiva  
bhuñjīya bhogān rudhirapradigdhān

Better to live on alms in this world, than to slay these noble elders, because after killing them we could enjoy only blood-stained pleasure, in the form of wealth and sense-objects. 5

*Comment:—*

[It seems after reading this verse, that the words of Lord Kṛṣṇa, uttered in the second and third verses, had some effect on Arjuna. He is thinking, that though Lord Kṛṣṇa knows that it is not justified for him to kill his venerable elders, yet he is unable to understand why He is ordering him to wage war. So Arjuna, does not speak with excitement, but speaks, somewhat, politely.]

'Gurūnahatvā hi mahānubhāvān śreyo bhoktum bhaikṣyamapīha loke'—Arjuna, first presents his point of view, saying that if he did not fight with reverend Bhīṣma and Droṇa etc., Duryodhana by himself, would not fight with him either. Thus he would lose his kingdom and suffer. Then he would be leading a life of misery and could even depend on alms. But he thinks it better to live on alms, than to slay his reverend elders.

'Iha loke' means—if I live on alms, people in the world will dishonour, reproach and insult me, but I think accepting alms is better than killing my reverend preceptors.

'Api' (Even) means—for me slaying the noble preceptors and