

wants to know the path or discipline by pursuing which, he may obtain the highest good—the supreme bliss (Gītā 3/2). So, in the third chapter he asks, which is the force that impels a man to abandon his duty viz., (in 3/36) Arjuna, asks the question as a striver, about his duty, not as a person, having attachment for his family.]



*Link:—Engrossed in surprise and sorrow, Arjuna in the verse that follows relates his decision, arrived at after these arguments.*

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।

धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥ ४६ ॥

yadi māmāpratīkāramaśastraṁ śāstra-pāṇayaḥ  
dhārtarāṣṭrā raṇe hanyustanme kṣemataraṁ bhavet

It would, indeed, be better for me, if the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra armed with weapons, killed me in battle, with me, while I will be unarmed and unresisting. 46

*Comment:—*

'Yadi māmāpratīkāramaśastraṁ śāstra-pāṇayaḥ dhārtarāṣṭrā raṇe hanyustanme kṣemataraṁ bhavet'—Arjuna says, "If I turn away from the war, perhaps our opponents will also desist from it. Why will they fight, if we are determined not to fight? But even if, regarding us as their enemy, they zealously, armed with weapons kill me, that will indeed be in my own interest, as it will be a kind of repentance for the determination, which I had made, in the war to kill my preceptors, and I shall be purified of the sins. It means that if I do not wage war, I will escape sin and my race, will not be destroyed."

[When a man talks about a subject, it has its effect, on him also. When Arjuna, possessed by extreme passion, started to

speak in sadness, in the twenty-eighth verse, he was not so much overwhelmed with grief as he was now. Then, Arjuna did not turn away from war, but went on speaking, overwhelmed with grief. But at last, he turns away from war, and sits down having laid down his bow and arrow. Lord Kṛṣṇa did not speak, to enable Arjuna to give an outlet for his feelings of sadness completely, because he knew, that his teachings would be of some avail to him, only when there was an outlet for his sorrow.]

### **An Important Fact**

Worldly people will support the arguments adduced by Arjuna, but they will not agree with Lord Kṛṣṇa, who will justify war later. The reason is, that as Arjuna is full of attachment and love, the worldly people also belong to the same class. So they cannot understand the point of view, expressed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, who always thinks about the welfare and benediction of beings. They will say that Arjuna wanted to escape the sin, by not waging war, but it was Lord Kṛṣṇa, who inspired him to wage war. So, it was not proper on His part, to do so.

The fact is, that Lord Kṛṣṇa did not make Arjuna wage war. He reminded him of his duty only. It was Arjuna, who had invited Lord Kṛṣṇa, to the war front. But seeing his kinsmen on the hostile side, he was turning away from his duty. So Lord Kṛṣṇa reminded him not to neglect his duty, out of delusion but to wage war, because there was nothing more welcome to a member of the warrior-class than a righteous war.

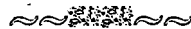
For example; if a man is going to Badrīnārāyaṇa, but by mistake he starts going in the opposite direction. He then happens to meet a person, who asks him where he was going. The latter, tells him that he has taken the wrong direction, so he should turn back, in order to reach his destination. Here, the person shows

the right direction (way), to the man who had lost it. Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa showed Arjuna the right direction, of his duty.

After seeing his kinsmen arrayed, on the war front, Arjuna said to Lord Kṛṣṇa, "I will not fight" (2/9). But after hearing the gospel of Lord Kṛṣṇa he did not say "I'll not fight" but he said, "I will carry out your bidding" (18/73) viz., "I will do my duty." It shows, that Lord Kṛṣṇa reminded him of his duty.

The fact is, that war was inevitable because Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, while revealing his supreme divine form to Arjuna, said, "I am the mighty world-destroying time, the destroyer of the world. My purpose here is to destroy these people. Even if you do not kill them, all those warriors arrayed in the enemy's camp, will not survive" (11/32). Thus this destruction of human beings was inevitable, even if Arjuna did not fight. If Arjuna did not fight, Yudhiṣṭhira, who with his four brothers married Draupadī by obeying his mother, would certainly fight by obeying her. Similarly, Bhīma would never deviate from the war because he had already taken a pledge to kill the Kauravas. As far as Draupadī is concerned, she had even said, that if her husbands, the Pāṇḍavas did not fight, her father (Drupada), her brother (Dhṛṣṭadyumna), her five sons and Abhimanyu, would fight against the Kauravas\*. All these facts, show that the war was inevitable.

A man cannot control the happenings that are pre-destined. By discharging his duty one can attain salvation, but by neglecting it, he can degrade himself. It means that man is free to attain, either desirable or undesirable results. Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa, by reminding Arjuna of his duty, has preached to human beings, that they should always discharge their duty, by following the ordinance of scriptures and never turn away from these.




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\* Mahābhārata, Udyoga. 82/37-38.

*Link:—In the preceding verse, Arjuna expressed his intention based on many arguments. What he did after this, is contained, in the verse that follows.*

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वार्जुनः सङ्ख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।  
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः ॥ ४७ ॥

*sañjaya uvāca*

evamuktvārjunaḥ saṅkhye rathopastha upāviśat  
visṛjya saśaram cāpaṁ śokasaṁvigna mānasaḥ

Arjuna, grief stricken on the battlefield, having spoken thus, and having laid down his bow and arrow, slumped into the central part of the chariot. 47

*Comment:—*

'Evamuktvārjunaḥ saṅkhye rathopastha upāviśat visṛjya saśaram cāpaṁ śokasaṁvigna mānasaḥ'—War, is the root cause of all evils. It will destroy a race and will lead us to hell in the next world. By thinking so Arjuna, overwhelmed with sorrow, became firmly determined not to wage war. Arjuna, who had come to the battlefield with great zeal with Gāṇḍīva bow in his hand, put the bow and arrow down, and overwhelmed with sorrow, sat on the seat of the chariot.

The main reason of Arjuna's grief, is that when Lord Kṛṣṇa placed the chariot between the two armies and asked Arjuna, to behold the Kauravas, he saw Bhīṣma and Droṇa standing in front of him. So his attachment was aroused. Thus, he thought about the destruction of his race (which Duryodhana etc., did not perceive being goaded by greed) and the sin, accruing from it. Then he said that, even if the warriors of the hostile army killed him, while he was unarmed and unresisting, that would be for his good. Thus empowered by delusion, Arjuna perceives