

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

living on alms—both are forbidden. But, I think it is more sinful to kill the preceptors, than to live on alms.

**'Hatvārthakāmāṁstu gurūṇihaiva bhuñjīya bhogān rudhirapradigdhān'**—If I carry out your command to wage war, I would enjoy blood-stained pleasure, which will not give me peace and salvation.

Here, a question might arise, that Bhīṣma and Droṇa etc., preceptors were attached to Kauravas, because of pecuniary motives. Therefore, what is the objection if 'Arthakāmān' is taken as an adjective qualifying 'Gurūn'. The answer is, that it is not proper, because they had no desire for money. It was incumbent upon them to fight on Duryodhana's side, because they had eaten his salt.

Secondly, Arjuna has used the term 'Mahānubhāvān' (most noble). So, how can the most noble souls desire money? Those who desire money could not be most noble. Therefore, here 'Arthakāmān', is the adjective which qualifies 'Bhogān'.

### An Exceptional Fact

Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the second and the third verses, orders Arjuna to array himself by casting off, petty faint-heartedness and fight. But Arjuna gets him wrong, because he thinks that Lord Kṛṣṇa had ordered him to wage war, so that he might enjoy the pleasure of kingship.\* Arjuna however perceived only evil, in waging the war. He said that it would be better for him, if his opponents killed him in the war. So with his mind affected by grief he sat slumped on the seat of the chariot (1/47). He had also said, that Duryodhana and his companions being goaded by greed, were prepared to wage war. Now Arjuna says, for himself that if he

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\* The worldly people having a materialistic outlook cannot even think of spiritualism. Here Arjuna also being overtaken by family attachment and infatuation is thinking only of materialism rather than spiritualism. So he is thinking that Lord Kṛṣṇa wants him to wage the war so that he may obtain kingdom but Lord Kṛṣṇa wants him to attain salvation.

carries out his order and wages war, he will enjoy only blood-stained pleasure in the form of wealth and sensual enjoyment. Thus, he perceives nothing but evil, in waging war.

When an evil comes to us, in the form of an evil, it is easier to do away with it, than when it comes in the garb of something good. Rāvaṇa and devil Kālanemi, could not be recognized by Sītā, and Hanumān respectively, because both of them disguised themselves, as sages. Similarly, Arjuna perceives that it is virtuous not to wage war and it is an evil to wage the war, but he is completely mistaken. Hence, even Lord Kṛṣṇa, finds it difficult and time consuming, to bring Arjuna round, to the realization of this fact.

Today in the name of unity in society, people are determined to abolish caste, stage of life system (Varna Āśrama) thinking of their action, as virtuous. But they are not thinking about the disastrous consequences, that this abolition would force the people, to lead a degraded and demoniacal life. In the same way, in the accumulation of wealth, people do not perceive falsehood, fraud, dishonesty, knavery and treachery etc., as evils. Thus, here for Arjuna also, an evil of unmanliness has disguised itself, as righteousness and thus he says how he can slay his noble elders. It means, that whatever Arjuna considers a virtue, is in fact, an evil. But, it does not appear to him, to be an evil, as in the abandonment of his duty, has crept in the guise of virtue of nonviolence, because of his attachment for his relatives.

**Appendix—**The feelings of elders and preceptors such as Bhīṣma and Droṇa etc., are noble and pure because even while waging the war, they have no partiality.



*Link:—The holy words of God had a singular effect and exerted a deep and far reaching influence, on Arjuna, as a result of which, he starts doubting the correctness of his decision, not to wage war. In such a state of mind, Arjuna says.*

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो  
 यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।  
 यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम-  
 स्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥ ६ ॥

na caitadvidmaḥ kataranno garīyo  
 yadvā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ  
 yāneva hatvā na jijīviṣāma-  
 ste'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ

We don't know which is meritorious for us, to fight or not to fight, nor do we know, whether we shall win or they will conquer us. The sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, by killing whom we do not even wish to live, are arrayed against us. 6

*Comment:—*

'Na caitadvidmaḥ kataranno garīyaḥ'— I cannot decide whether I should wage war or not, because you consider it better to wage war but I do not do so, as it is a sin to kill noble elders and preceptors.

'Yadvā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ'—If I carry out your order and wage war, we do not know, whether we shall win or lose.

Here, it does not mean that Arjuna has no confidence in his own power, but he is uncertain about the future, because no one knows, what may happen in future.

'Yāneva hatvā na jijīviṣāmaḥ'—Not to speak of pleasures and kingdom, we do not even wish to live by killing our kinsmen because by killing them we shall be bereaved of them and thus shall suffer pangs of bereavement.

'Te'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ'—Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons, are our kinsmen and they are arrayed against us. So, how can we kill them? We are damned, if we wish to live, by killing them.



*Link:—Finding himself at the crossroads Arjuna, being restless, prays to Lord Kṛṣṇa.*