

'Ācāryāḥ'—I should serve respected and benevolent teachers, such as Droṇa etc., rather than fight them. It is appropriate on our part, even to sacrifice out lives at their feet.

'Pitarāḥ'—How can we slay our uncles (fathers), out of anger or greed, when we have got this body linked with them?

'Putrāḥ'—It is our duty to bring up our sons and our brother's sons, even though they may stand against us or act badly.

'Pitāmāḥ'—When our grand-uncles are worthy of adoration, as our father, they deserve still greater adoration, from us. Though, they may rebuke and punish us, yet we should not cause any suffering to them, we should rather serve them and give comfort to them.

'Mātulāḥ'—Our maternal uncles, being the brothers of our mothers, who rear us, deserve adoration from us.

'Śvaśurāḥ'—These fathers-in-law, are the father to my wife and my brother's wives. They are just like fathers to us. So how can I slay them?

'Pautrāḥ'—We should bring up our grandsons, in a better way, than our sons, rather than kill them.

'Śyālāḥ'—How can we slay the loving brothers of our wives?

'Sambandhināḥ'—I should serve and bring up all the relatives, rather than kill them. It is improper on our part, to kill them, even for the sovereignty of the three worlds.



*Link:—Now Arjuna justifies his intention, not to slay his kith and kin, even from a point of view of consequences.*

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ।

पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान्हत्वैतानाततायिनः ॥ ३६ ॥

nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrānnāḥ kā prītiḥ syājjanārdana  
pāpamevāśrayedasmānhatvaitānātātāyinaḥ

O Janārdana, (Janārdana, the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, means a person who is worshipped by people for prosperity and emancipation), what delight can we derive by slaying the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra? Sin alone will attach us by slaying these desperadoes. 36

*Comment:—*

'Nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrānnaḥ kā prītiḥ syājjanārdana pāpamevāśrayedasmānhatvaitānātātāyinaḥ—We cannot derive even the slightest joy, by slaying the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the warriors of their army. If we kill them, out of anger or greed, we shall have to repent, because the memory of those kinsmen will obsess us and the grief of their death, will torment us. We cannot get joy in this world, by killing them and sin will accrue, to us in the next world, which will torment us there.

There are six kinds of desperadoes—one who sets fire, who poisons, who murders, who seizes wealth, who usurps kingdoms and those who kidnap others' wives.\*

Duryodhana and his companions have committed all these criminal offences. They secretly set fire to the residence, where Pāṇḍavas were expected to be sleeping, they poisoned Bhīma and threw him into water; they made an attempt on the life of Pāṇḍavas; while gambling, deceitfully they deprived Pāṇḍavas of their wealth and kingdom, and in the assembly, Duryodhana insulted Draupadī, by calling her his waiting-maid and persuaded Jayadratha to kidnap Draupadī, and he kidnapped her.

In the scriptures, it is mentioned that there is no sin in killing a desperado (Manusmṛti 8/351). But, it is also mentioned in the scriptures, that non-violence is of great virtue. Therefore, why should we slay our kith and kin, out of anger and greed?

Though Duryodhana etc., being desperadoes, deserve to be killed, yet sin will accrue to us as a result of such action, because they are our kith and kin. It is mentioned in the scriptures, that

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\* Vasiṣṭha smṛti 3/19

one who kills his kith and kin, is a great sinner. So how can we kill them? Therefore, it is better to break off our relationship with them, rather than to kill them. In the same way, as relationship could be cut off from a son, but he cannot be slain.



*Link:—Having pointed out the evil consequences of war, Arjuna now dwells upon the sheer impropriety of waging war.*

तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान् स्वबान्धवान् ।  
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥ ३७ ॥

tasmānnārhā vayam hantum dhārtarāṣṭrān svabāndhavān  
svajanam hi katham hatvā sukhinaḥ syāma mādhaba

O Mādhava, therefore we should not slay the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, our kinsmen; for how can we, by killing our own kinsmen, gain happiness? 37

*Comment:—*

'Tasmānnārhā vayam hantum dhārtarāṣṭrān svabāndhavān'—The arguments against the slaughter of our kith and kin, advanced so far (from 1/28 to this verse) are enough to convince us, that it is improper to indulge in a destructive activity, like war. How can we, who are regarded as virtuous persons, perform such a hideous act?

'Svajanam hi katham hatvā sukhinaḥ syāma mādhaba'—Mādhava, if mere thought of their slaughter, is so painful, just imagine how much more painful, it would be to slay them, after being blinded by avarice and anger. How can we feel happy after their slaughter? They are our close relations.

Delusion, which is born of a sense of mine, deprives Arjuna of his sense of duty, as a member of the warrior-class. Where there is delusion, there is no discretion. When discretion is suppressed by delusion, the sense of duty, gets blurred.

