

side. Thinking thus his stout-heartedness gave place to cowardice and he gave up the idea of war. This faint-heartedness, has been called by Lord Kṛṣṇa (in 2/2-3) 'Kāśmalam' viz., dejection and 'Hṛdayadaurbalyam' viz., weakness of the heart. Arjuna (in 2/7) also accepted it as 'Kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ' viz., nature being tainted by the weakness of faint-heartedness. 'Kṛpayāviṣṭaḥ' means, that faint-heartedness is a temporary phase in him, while stout-heartedness is a permanent virtue, of his life. Thus the temporary phase of faint-heartedness cannot last too long, while his stout-heartedness will remain, forever.

What is extreme cowardice? Extreme cowardice in Arjuna is, that he does not think and make effort to kill his cruel and unrighteous opponents, such as Duryodhana, Duṣṣāsana and Śakuni etc., who, without any reason, insulted the Pāṇḍavas gave them trouble and tried to kill them, somehow or the other. On the other hand, he is taking pity on them (Gītā 1/35,46) and is thus deviating from his duty, of the warrior-class.

'Viśīdannidamabravīt'—Arjuna, is very much dejected after thinking over the consequences of a war for the family, tribe and country, and speaks the following words.



अर्जुन उवाच

दूष्टेभ्यं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ॥ २८ ॥

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥ २९ ॥

गाण्डीवं स्रंसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥ ३० ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

dr̥ṣṭvemaṁ svajānaṁ kṛṣṇa yuyutsum samupasthitam  
sīdanti mama gātrāṇi mukhaṁ ca pariśuṣyati

vepathuśca śarīre me romaharṣaśca jāyate  
 gāṇḍivam sramsate hastāttvakcaiva paridahyate  
 na ca śaknomyavasthātum bhramatīva ca me manaḥ

Arjuna said:

O Kṛṣṇa, at the sight of these kinsmen thus arrayed here, eager to wage war, my limbs give way, my mouth is parched, my body shivers and hair stand on end. The bow, Gāṇḍīva slips from my hand, my skin burns all over. My mind is reeling as it were and I am not able even, to stand. 28—30

*Comment:—*

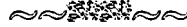
'Dr̥ṣṭvemaṁ svajānaṁ kṛṣṇa yuyutsum̐ samupasthitam'—Arjuna loved the name Kṛṣṇa, very much. So he has been addressed by this name in the Gītā nine times, more than any other name. Lord Kṛṣṇa, similarly loved Arjuna's name 'Pārtha' (the son of Pr̥thā, Kuntī). Therefore, while talking together, both of them addressed each other by these names and this fact was well-known to other people also. Therefore, Sañjaya at the end of the Gītā in 18/78 mentions 'Kṛṣṇa', and 'Pārtha'—'Yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanurdharaḥ (viz., wherever is Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yoga and wherever is Pārtha (Arjuna), the wielder of the bow).

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, in the first verse of this chapter, uses the phrase 'Samavetā Yuyutsavaḥ' (gathered together desirous to fight) and Arjuna here has said, 'Yuyutsum̐ Samupasthitam' (arrayed eager to fight). But there is a vast difference, in the views of the two. Dhṛtarāṣṭra is partial to his sons. So, he uses the words 'Māmakāḥ' (Mine), and 'Pāṇḍavāḥ' (Pāṇḍu's). But Arjuna is impartial. So he uses the term 'Svajanam' (Kinsmen), which includes, persons of both sides. It means, that Dhṛtarāṣṭra is worried about the death of his sons in the warfare, while Arjuna is worried about the death of warriors, in both armies, because he thinks that both the warring groups, are his own kith and kin.

Till now the word 'Dr̥ṣṭvā' (having seen), has been used three

times—'Dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkam' (Having seen the army of the Pāṇḍavas) (1/2), 'Vyavasthitān dṛṣṭvā dhārtarāṣṭrān' (Having seen Dhṛtarāṣṭra's party arrayed) (1/20), and here 'Dṛṣṭverman svajanam' (Having seen these kinsmen). It means, that there is no change in the attitude of Duryodhana, as far as war is concerned. But, there is a lot of change in Arjuna's attitude. First, after seeing the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Arjuna like a hero, gets ready for war. But after seeing his relatives present there, he is overwhelmed with extreme compassion, his bow slips from his hand, and he is not inclined to fight.

'Sīdanti mama gātrāṇi.....bhramatīva ca me manaḥ'—Thinking of the consequences of the war, Arjuna is worried and sad. So his limbs are giving way, his mouth is getting parched, his body shakes, and his hair is standing on an end. The same Gāṇḍīva bow, the sound of whose string, terrified enemies, is dropping from his hand and his skin is burning all over.\* His mind is reeling, he is in a dilemma, and he is unable even to stand at the war-front. He feels, as if he will fall unconscious, and thinks it is a sin to wage war.



*Link:—After describing the eight signs of his sadness in the previous verses, now Arjuna mentions the inappropriateness of war with inauspicious omens, he sees.*

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥ ३१ ॥

nimittāni ca paśyāmi viparītāni keśava  
na ca śreyo'nupaśyāmi hatvā svajanamāhaye

O Keśava, I also find the omens inauspicious and I do not see any good in killing my kith and kin, in battle. 31

\* Worry had been compared with pyre. There is a little difference between the two. Worry burns a living man while pyre burns a dead man.