
अथ प्रथमोऽध्यायः

Chapter 1

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत संजय ॥ १ ॥

Dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca

dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre
samavetā yuyutsavaḥ
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś cai `va
kimakurvata samjaya [1]

Translation – Dhṛtarāṣṭra said, "Oh Samjaya! What did my sons and the sons of Pandu, who have gathered on the sacred land of Kurukṣetra with a desire of war, do?"

संजय उवाच

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।
आचार्यमुपसङ्गम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥
पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

samjaya uvāca

dr̥ṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānikam
vyūdhanm duryodhanastadā
ācāryamupasamgamyā
rājā vacanamabravīt [2]

paśyai`tām pāṇḍuputrāṇām
ācārya mahatīm camūm
vyūdhām drupadaputreṇa
tavaśiṣyena dhīmatā [3]

Translation — Samjay said, "Upon viewing the army of Pāṇḍavas in a battle formation, king Duryodhan approached ācārya and said, ' Oh! Ācārya, please look at this great army of Pāṇḍavas which your intelligent disciple, the son of Drupad has arranged in the battle formation.' "

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।
युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥ ४ ॥

atra śūrā mahēsvāsā
bhīmārjunasamā yudhi
yuyudhāno virāṭaśca
drupadaśca mahārathāḥ [4]

Translation — Here, in this battlefield, are valiant great archers like Bhima and Arjuna. Yuyudhān, Virāt and the great warrior Drupada are here.

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः ॥ ५ ॥
dhr̥ṣṭaketuścekitāṇaḥ
kāśirājasca vīryavān
purujitkuntibhojaśca
śaibyaśca narapungavaḥ [5]

Translation — Dhr̥ṣṭaketu, Cekitān, mighty Kashirāj, Kuntibhoj-Purujiṭ and the great Śaibya are here.

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥ ६ ॥
yudhāmanyuśca vikrānta
uttamaujāśca vīryavān
saubhadro draupadeyāśca
sarva eva mahārathāḥ [6]

Translation — Valorous Yudhāmanyu, mighty Uttamoujā, sons of Subhadra and Draupadi, they are all great warriors.

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ॥ ७ ॥
asmākam tu viśiṣṭā ye
tānnibodha dvijottama
nāyakā mama sainyasya
samjñārtham tān bravīmi te [7]

Translation — Oh! The great brahmana! Please know the main warriors who are on our side. I shall narrate their names for your knowledge.

भवान्भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिंजयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥ ८ ॥
अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥ ९ ॥
bhavānbhīṣmaśca karṇaśca
kr̥paśca samitimjayaḥ
aśvatthāmā vikarṇaśca
saumadattistathai'va ca [8]
anye ca bahavaḥ śūrā
madarthe tyaktajīviṭaḥ
nānāśastrapraharāṇāḥ
sarve yuddhaviśārādāḥ [9]

Translation — Yourself, Bhiṣma the great, Karṇa, Kṛpācārya the victor (conqueror), similarly Aśhvattāmā, Vikarṇa, and the son of Somadatta, and also many others who would lay down their lives for me. They are all equipped with various arms and weapons and are proficient in the art of warfare.

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥१०॥

aparyāptam tadasmākam
balam bhīṣmābhirakṣitam
paryāptam tvidametēṣām
balam bhīmābhirakṣitam [10]

Translation — Our force that is guarded by Bhīṣma is wanting¹ but their force guarded by Bhima is thorough².

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥११॥

ayaṇeṣu ca sarveṣu
yathābhāgamavasthitāḥ
bhīṣmamevā`bhirakṣantu
bhavantāḥ sarva eva hi [11]

Translation — Hence please keep guard at all entries of the formation, keeping everyone's respective places and protect Bhīṣma in every manner.

तस्य संजनयन्हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥१२॥

tasy samjanayanharṣam
kuruvṛddhaḥ pitāmahāḥ
simhanādam vinadyo`ccaḥ
śaṅkham dadhmau pratāpavān [12]

Translation — Then Bhīṣma, the mighty veteran grandfather of Kauravas, enhanced their spirit by roaring like a lion and blew a conch.

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥१३॥

tataḥ śaṅkhāśca bheryaśca
paṇavānakagomukhāḥ
sahasai`vā`bhyahanyanta
sa śabdastumulo`bhavat [13]

Translation — After this, conches, drums, various tabors were blown and horns started sounding at once. Their sound was frightening.

ततः श्वेतैर्हर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।

¹ Lacking in quality or quantity

² Complete

माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ।।१४।।

tataḥ śvetairhayairyukte
mahati syandane sthitau
mādhavaḥ pāṇḍavaścai'va
divyau sankhau pradadhmatuḥ [14]

Translation — Then Madhava and Pāṇḍava, seated in a huge chariot pulled by white horses, also blew their divine conches.

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनंजयः ।

पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ।।१५।।

pāñcājanyaṃ hr̥ṣīkeśo
devadattam dhanamjayaḥ
paṇḍram dadhmau mahāśankham
bhīmakarmā vṛkodaraḥ [15]

Translation — Hr̥shikeśa blew Pāñcājanya, Dhanamjaya blew Devadatta and Vṛkodar Bhima, the performer of terrible acts, blew the great conch Paṇḍra.

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।

नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ।।१६।।

anantavijayam rājā
kuntīputro yudhisthirah
nakulaḥ sahadevaś ca
sughoṣamaṇipuṣpakau [16]

Translation — King Yudhisthir, the son of Kunti, blew the conch Anantavijay and Nakul and Sahadev blew the conches Sughośa and Maṇipushpak respectively.

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।

धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ।।१७।।

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।

सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खन्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् ।।१८।।

kāśyaśca paramēsvāṣaḥ
śikhāṇḍī ca mahārathah
dhr̥ṣṭadyumno virāṭaśca
sātyakiścā'parājitaḥ [17]

drupado draupadeyāś ca
sarvaśaḥ pṛthivīpate
saubhadraśca mahābāhuḥ
śankhām dadhmauḥ pṛthak-pṛthak [18]

Translation — Great archer Kasīrāj, great warrior Śikhandī, Dhr̥shtadrumnya, Virāta and invincible Sātyaki, and also King Drupada, sons of Draupadi and the great warrior sons of Subhadra blew their separate conches, Oh King!

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलोऽव्यनुनादयन् ॥१९॥
sa ghoso dhārtaraṣṭrāṇām
hṛdayāni vyadārayat
nabhaśca pṛthivīm cai'va
tumulovyanunādayan [19]

Translation — That great sound caused vibrations to pervade the sky and the earth and rended the hearts of the sons of Dhṛtarāśtra.

अथ व्यवस्थितान्दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिध्वजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसंपाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवाः ॥२०॥
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ।
सेनयोरूभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥२१॥
atha vyavasthitān dr̥ṣṭvā
dhārtarāṣṭran kapidhvajaḥ
pravṛtte śāstrasampāte
dhanurudyamya paṇḍavaḥ [20]
hr̥ṣīkeśam tadā vākyam
idamāha mahīpate
senayorubhayormadhye
ratham sthāpaya me'cyuta [21]

Translation — Oh Mahipate³! Kapidhvaja⁴, the son of Pāndu then saw the sons of Dhṛtarāśhtra present there, he lifted his bow just when arms were about to be crossed and asked Hṛśhīkeśa thus, "Oh! Acyuta⁵, please station my chariot between both the armies."

यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थिताम् ।
कैमर्या सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन्नरणसमुद्यमे ॥२२॥
yāvaetānnirīkṣe'ham
yoddhukāmānavasthitān
kairmayā saha yoddhavyam
asmin ṛṇasamudyame [22]

Translation — So that I may see those warriors who have come here with a desire to fight and know whom I have to battle with.

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥२३॥
yotsyamānānavekṣe'ham
ya ete'tra samāgatāḥ

³ Epithet for Dhṛtarāśhtra, The lord of Earth

⁴ One whose flagbearer is Hanuman, Arjuna

⁵ Immutable, epithet for lord Shrikrishna

dhārtarāṣṭrasya durbuddher
yuddhe priyacikīrsavah [23]

Translation — I would see the warriors who have come here with a desire to benefit the evil minded sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra in war.

संजय उवाच

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।
सेनयोरूभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥२४॥
भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरूनिति ॥२५॥

evamukto hr̥ṣīkeśo
gudākeśena bhārata
senayorubhayormadhye
sthāpayitvā rathottamam [24]

bhīśnadroṇapramukhataḥ
sarveṣāṃ ca mahīkṣitām
uvāca pārtha paśyai'tān
samavetānkurūniti [25]

Translation — Samjaya said, "Oh descendent of Bharat! When Guḍākeśa said thus, Hṛṣhikēsa stationed the imposing chariot amidst the armies facing Bhīśma, Droṇa and all other kings and said, Oh Partha! See this congregation of the Kauravas."

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान्पार्थः पितृनथ पितामहान् ।
आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातृन्पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ॥२६॥
श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरूभयेरपि ।
तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्बन्धून्वस्थितान् ॥२७॥

tatrā`paśyatsthitānpārthāḥ
pitṛnatha pitāmahān
ācāryānmātulānbhrātr̥n
putrānpautrānsakhīṃstathā [26]

śvaśurānsuhr̥daścai`va
senayorubhayorapi
tānsamīkṣya sa kaunteyah
sarvānbandhūnavasthitān [27]

Translation — Arjun saw paternal uncles, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, in-laws and well wishers positioned in both the armies.

When Kounteya⁶ saw the entire fraternity in a position like this, he was seized by extreme lament and said thus in sadness.

⁶ Son of Kunti, an epithet for Arjuna

कृपया परयाविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ।

अर्जुन उवाच

दृष्टमेवं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ॥२८॥

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥२९॥

kr̥payā parayā`viṣṭo
viśīdannidamabravīt

Arjuna uvāca

dr̥ṣṭve`mam svajanam kṛṣṇa
yuyutsum samupasthitam [28]

sīdanti mama gastrani
mukham ca pariśusyati
vepathuś ca śarīre me
romaharṣaśca jāyate [29]

Translation — Arjuna said, "Oh Kṛṣhna! Watching my people present here to embattle is causing all my organs to slacken and my mouth is drying up as well. My body is shivering and is getting goose flesh."

Exposition — Only he, who is lost in the crowd of his thoughts, is afraid of facing a crowd. Whereas the one, who has singled out one particular, thought from the multitude of thoughts and has practiced to bring it forth, can face the world all by himself.

गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥३०॥

gāṇḍīvam sramsate hastāt
tvakcai`va paridahyate
na ca śaknomyavasthātum
bhramatī`va ca me manaḥ [30]

Translation — Gāndiva⁷ is falling from my hands, my skin is burning, my mind is getting confused and I am not able to stand steadily.

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥३१॥

nimittāni ca paśyāmi
viparītāni keśava
na ca śreyo`nupaśyāmi
hatvā svajanamāhave [31]

Translation — Oh Keśava! I envision only adverse omens and do not see any good in killing my own people.

⁷ Epithet for Arjuna's bow

न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ।
किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥३२॥

na kāṅkṣe vijayam kṛṣṇa
na ca rājyam sukhāni ca
kim no rājyena govinda
kim bhogairjivitena vā [32]

Translation — Oh Kṛṣṇa! I have no desire for victory, no desire for the kingdom and the pleasures. Oh Govinda, of what use is the kingdom, and of what use are the pleasures and the life?

येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगः सुखानि च ।
त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ॥३३॥

yēṣāmarthe kāṅkṣitam no
rājyam bhogāḥ sukhāni ca
ta ime `vasthitā yuddhe
prāṇāṁstyaktvā dhanāni ca [33]

Translation — All those for whom we wish kingdom, pleasure and happiness are present in this battle to forsake their wealth and their lives.

आचार्यः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ।
मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः संबन्धिनस्तथा ॥३४॥

ācāryāḥ pitarāḥ putrās-
tathai`va ca pitāmahāḥ
mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ pautrāḥ
śyālāḥ sambandhinastathā [34]

Translation — Teachers, uncles, sons and similarly grandfathers, in-laws, grandsons and other relatives are here.

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ।
अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ॥३५॥

etānna hantumicchāmi
ghnato`pi madhusūdana
api trailokyarājyasya
hetoḥ kim nu mahīkṛte [35]

Translation — Oh Madhusudan⁸! What of this world, I do not wish to kill them all even for the kingdom of the three worlds.

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ।
पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान्हत्वैतानाततायिनः ॥३६॥

nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrāṇṇaḥ
kā prītiḥ syājjanārdana

⁸ An epithet for Krishna

pāpamevāśrayedasmān-
hatvai'tānātatāyinaḥ [36]

Translation — Oh Janārdan⁹! What happiness can be gained by killing the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra? It will only bring us sin to kill these barbarians.

तस्मान्नाहं वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान्स्वबान्धवान् ।
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥३७॥

tasmānnārhā vayam hantum
dhārtarāṣṭrānsvabāndhavān
svajanam hi katham hatvā
sukhinaḥ syāma mādharma [37]

Translation — Oh Mādhava! Hence these sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra do not deserve to be killed by us, as how are we going to be happier by killing our own people.

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥३८॥

yadyapyete na paśyanti
lobhopahatacetasāḥ
kulakṣayakṛtam doṣam
mitradrohe ca pātakam [38]

Translation — Their mind is preoccupied by greed and they do not realize the evil of hostility against friends and the ills arising out of terminating a pedigree.

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्विर्जनार्दन ॥ ३९ ॥

katham na jñeyamasmābhiḥ
pāpādasmānnivartitum
kulakṣayakṛtam doṣam
prapaśyadbhirjanārdana [39]

Translation — Oh Janardan! Why should we not think of dissociating ourselves from this sin in view of the ills that are caused by terminating the family lineage?

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥४०॥

kulakṣaye praṇaśyanti
kuladharmāḥ sanātanaḥ
dharme naṣṭe kulam kṛtsnam
adharmo'bhibhavatyuta [40]

Translation — When a family is wiped out, its age-old blood lineage is ruined. When dharma is lost, the lineage sinks into viciousness.

अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।

⁹ An epithet for Krishna

स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वाष्ण्येय जायते वर्णसंकरः ।।४१।।

adharmābhibhavātkr̥ṣṇa
pradṛṣyantikulastriyaḥ
strīṣu duṣṭāsu vārṣṇeya
jāyate varṇasamkarāḥ [41]

Translation — Oh Śr̥kriśna! When viciousness grows, women in the family are corrupted. Oh Varshneya! When women are corrupted, inter-class breed is produced.

संकरो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।

पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ।।४२।।

samkaro narakāyai `va
kulaghnānām kulasyaca
patanti pitaro hyeṣām
luptapiṇḍodakakriyāḥ [42]

Translation — Cross-color breeding invariably sends the clan and the ruiner of the clan to hell. Even the manes are debased due to non-observance of the rituals of pīṇḍa¹⁰ and tarpaṇa¹¹.

दोषेरैतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसंकरकारकैः ।

उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माःकुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ।।४३।।

ḍoṣairetaiḥ kulaghnānām
varṇasamkarakāraakaiḥ
utsādyante jātidharmāḥ
kuladharamās ca śāśvatāḥ [43]

Translation — The guilt that produces cross-colour progeny destroys the time honored family traditions and the class traditions.

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।

नरकेऽनियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ।।४४।।

utsannakuladharmāṇām
manuṣyaṇam janārdana
narake'niyatam vāso
bhavatī'tyanuśuśruma [44]

Translation -Oh Janardan! It is learnt that, when, the family rituals are not observed, their family-members have to rot in hell for indefinite periods.

अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।

यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ।।४५।।

aho bata mahatpāpam
kartum vyavasitā vayam

¹⁰ Pinda – offering funeral rice balls.

¹¹ Tarpana – presenting libation of water.

yadrājyasukhalobhena
hantum svajanamudyatāḥ [45]

Translation — Ah! It is sad that we are prepared to commit a great sin. We are intent on killing our own people for the desire of stately pleasures.

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥४६॥
yadi māmapratikāram
aśastram śastrapāṇayaḥ
dhārtarāṣṭrā raṇe hanyus
tanme kṣemataram bhavet [46]

Translation — It would be more auspicious for me to die unarmed and unresisting at the hands of armed sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the battle.

संजय उवाच
एवमुक्त्वार्जुनः संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपविशत् ।
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः ॥४७॥
Samjay uvāca

evamuktvārjunāḥ samkhye
rathopastha upāviśat
visrjya saśaram cāpam
śokasamvignamānasāḥ [47]

Translation — Samjay said, “Overwhelmed by sorrow in the battlefield, Arjuna said thus, left his bow and arrows and sat down at the rear of the chariot.”

Thus ends the first chapter named Arjuna Vishad Yoga in the Upanishad of the Shrimadbhagavad Gita, Brahma-Vidhya (the discipline of knowing the Absolute), the yogic scripture, and the dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna.