

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 5: Chapter 1, Verses 15-21

(May 30 –June 5, 2018)

Please Note: Click Anywhere On The Dark Area Below to Listen to The Above Verses

ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT

TRANSLITERATION

पाञ्चचन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनंजयः ।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ १५ ॥

*pāñcajanyaṁ hṛṣīkeśo devadattaṁ dhanañjayaḥ
pauṇḍraṁ dadhmau mahā-śaṅkhaṁ bhīma-karmā vṛkodaraḥ*

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥ १६ ॥

*anantavijayaṁ rājā kuntī-putro yudhiṣṭhiraḥ
nakulaḥ sahadevaś ca sughoṣa- maṇipuṣpakau*

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डि च महारथः ।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥ १७ ॥

*kāśyaś ca parameśvāsaḥ śikhaṇḍī ca mahā- rathaḥ
dhṛṣṭadyumno virāṭaś ca sātyakis cāparājitaḥ*

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।
सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् ॥ १८ ॥

*drupado draupadeyāś ca sarvaśaḥ pṛthivī-pate
saubhadraś ca mahā-bāhuḥ śaṅkhān dadhmuḥ pṛthak pṛthak*

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलो व्यनुनादयन् ॥ १९ ॥

*sa ghoṣo dhārtarāṣṭrāṇāṁ hṛdayāni vyadārayat
nabhaś ca pṛthivīm caiva tumulo 'bhyanunādayan*

अथ व्यवस्थितान् दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान् कपिध्वजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसंपाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ।
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ॥ २० ॥

*atha vyavasthitān dṛṣṭvā dhārtarāṣṭrān kapi-dhvajaḥ
pravṛtte śastra-sampāte dhanur udyamya pāṇḍavaḥ
hṛṣīkeśaṁ tadā vākyaṁ idam āha mahī-pate*

अर्जुन उवाच

arjuna uvāca

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ २१ ॥

senayor ubhayor madhye rathaṁ sthāpaya me 'cyuta

TRANSLATION

- (15) Lord Kṛṣṇa blew His conchshell Pāñcajanya and Arjuna blew his conchshell Devadatta and Bhīma that activator of incredible prowess blew the great conchshell Paundra.
- (16) King Yudhiṣṭhira, son of Kuntī blew his conchshell Anantavijaya and Nakula and Sahadeva blew their conchshells Sughoṣa and Mañipuṣpaka. O king, the expert bowman King of Kāśī,
- (17) the mighty chariot warrior Śikhaṇḍī, Dhṛṣṭadyumna and King Virāta, the unconquerable Sātyaki and King Drupada of Pancala, the sons of Draupadī and Abhimanyu, the mighty
- (18) armed son of Subhadrā, all blew their respective conchshells.
- (19) The uproarious vibration resounding in the sky as well as the land shattered the hearts of the sons of Dhṛtasāṣṭra.
- (20) O King, thereafter while about to engage in the releasing of weapons, Arjuna on whose banner Hanuumān is pictured, having observed the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra ready for battle, at that time taking up his bow and spoke these words unto Lord Kṛṣṇa.
- (21) Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa please place my chariot between both of the armies so that I may look upon those warriors arrayed for battle with whom I have to fight in preparation for combat.

https://userpages.umbc.edu/~hosmane/BHAJANS/Bhagavadgita/Audio%20Recordings%20of%20Bhagavadgita%20Sung%20By%20Dr%20Ram/Bhagavadgita_Chapter1_Verses%2015-20_Sung%20by%20Dr%20Ram_051418.wav

Commentary:

Verse 15: Here the names of the conch shells sounded by the Supreme Lord Krishna, Arjuna and Bhima are being described. The names Dhananjaya is used for Arjuna, which means winner of wealth. The name Vrikodara is used for Bhima, which means the one with a voracious appetite (or stomach), just like that of a wolf. *Panchajanya* is the name of Lord Krishna's divine, transcendental conch shell and the other names mentioned are the conch shell named Devadatta of Arjuna, and that named Paundra of Bhima. Lord Krishna is referred to as *Hrsikesa*, which means the director of everyone's senses. The use of the name *dhanajaya* for Arjuna meaning conqueror of riches, indicates that he would conquer all the wealth by defeating all the rich and powerful kings arrayed against him on the battlefield. With the word *karma* added to the name of Bhima refers to his slaying the demon Hidamba after he and his mother and brothers were forced to flee their burning house instigated by Duryodhana and indicates what is in store for him in the future.

Verses 16-18: Here the superiority of the Pandavas is illustrated along with the inferiority of the Kauravas. The purport is that the conchshell Panchajanya of Lord Krishna and the conch shells Devadatta, Paundram, Anantavijaya, Sughosa and Manipuspaka of the five Pandavas are renowned and famous; but in the army of Duryodhana there are no famous conch shells with any names. The point is whoever has aligned themselves with the Supreme Lord Krishna as their protector,

undoubtedly will be victorious. Then the warriors of the Pandava army began to sound their conch shells. Shikhandi is the son of Drupada who was born out of penance especially to slay Bhishma. Dristradyumna was born from a fire sacrifice especially to slay Drona. Satyaki was invincible like Arjuna never knowing defeat. So this verse is indirectly revealing to Dhritarastra that he should not entertain any ideas that his son Duryodhana will be victorious in the battle even with the assistance of Bhishma and Drona.

Verse 19: The uproarious sound of the Pandavas' conch shells caused great fear to the sons of Dhritarastra. It filled the heavens and earth with reverberations. Bhishma and all those in favour of the Kauravas felt pain in their heart as if their heart was actually shattered. The Kaurava army had also made an uproarious noise just minutes before but it did not have the power to create any anxiety in the army of the Pandavas and this was undeniably proven by the potency of the Pandavas' response. Duryodhana while witnessing the strength of the Pandavas army supported by the might of Bhima weighed his own armies strength under the command of Bhishma and perceiving the mood of his perceptor Dronacarya, he could understand the inadequacy in his own troops and the perfection of strength on the Pandavas side to be victorious and internally this aggrieved him heavily.

Verse 20: At that very moment after appraising the army of the Kauravas, when the reverberations were at their peak, Arjuna addressed Lord Krishna as Hrishikeesh, the master of the senses.

As the Kaurava army became fearful, the Pandava army by contrast remained fearless and their boldness increased. This is exhibited by the mere mention of Arjuna's flag, which displays as its emblem the fearless Hanuman who diminishes the courage of the enemy. At the very brink of battle when the clash of weapons was almost about to start, Arjuna held up his invincible bow named Gandiva which was given to him by Agni, the demigod of fire, and calmly looked upon the well arrayed army of the Kauravas before him and spoke to Lord Krishna by addressing Him as *Hrsikesa*, the master of the senses. The use of the vocative epithet *mahi-pati*, meaning the lord of the earth, in reference to Dhritarashtra, is sardonic indicating that his very rulership of the earth will be terminated due to a lack of righteousness.

Verse 21: Addressing Lord Krishna again as *Achyuta*, the infallible one, Arjuna requested Him to place the chariot between the two armies. Why would Arjuna request that the chariot be placed between the two armies like a spectator? The reason for placing the chariot as instructed is being explained by the verse beginning: *yavad etan*. The Kauravas are only desirous of war not peace and externally appear unmoved by trepidation. One might say that Arjuna is a warrior not a spectator, so what is the necessity of viewing the enemy? The answer to this is that since the battle is taking place between relatives, Arjuna desires to see just what friends have joined the ranks of the enemy that he will have to fight. If it is argued that out of friendship these friends seeing him would want to make a truce, the answer is given by the verse beginning with: *yotsyamanan* meaning they have only come to fight.