

Bhagavad-gītā 1.1

—
London, July 7, 1973

Pradyumna (leads chanting, etc.):

*dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca
dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre
samavetā yuyutsavaḥ
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva
kim akurvata sañjaya
[Bg. 1.1]*

Prabhupāda: (during chanting of *śloka*) Now, in your leisure hour you will try to repeat and get by heart some of the *ślokas*. That will be very nice. Go on.

Pradyumna: (after synonyms) "Translation: Dhṛtarāṣṭra said: O Sañjaya, after assembling in the place of pilgrimage at Kurukṣetra, what did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do, being desirous to fight?"

Prabhupāda: So the history is that same family, there was dispute who would occupy the throne. Dhṛtarāṣṭra and, actually he was the eldest son of the king, and next was Pāṇḍu. So every country the law of primogeniture, what is called? The eldest child... In your country even the eldest child is a girl, she also occupies the throne. Just like present Queen Elizabeth. Formerly there was Queen Victoria; before that, another Elizabeth. But in India woman has no such right. Woman is never given any responsible post. That is the opinion of the greatest politician in the history of the world, Cāṇakya Paṇḍita. According to his opinion, *viśvāso naiva kartavyaḥ strīṣu rāja-kuleṣu ca*. He has given his explicit opinion that "You cannot trust with any responsible post or any responsibility with a woman and politician." Those who are diplomat, politician, you cannot trust them.

So the general regulation is that woman should remain under the protection of husband, er, father, husband and children. Just like these Pāṇḍus, their mother, Kuntī, she was very, very qualified lady. But still, after the death of her husband, she always remained with the sons. The sons are going to the forest; the mother is also going. Also the wife is also going, Draupadī. This was the... So two parties... Dhṛtarāṣṭra was the eldest son, but he was blind, bodily defect. Therefore he was not awarded the throne. His next brother, Pāṇḍu, he was offered the throne, but he died very early age, a young man. When these Pāṇḍus, the five sons, Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, at that time not Mahārāja, Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva, they

were very small children, so they were taken care of by Dhṛtarāṣṭra and other elderly family... Bhīṣmadeva. He was the grandfather of the Pāṇḍavas. He was the elder uncle of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Bhīṣma was elder brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's father. He was so old. But he was... Actually, the kingdom belonged to Bhīṣma, but he remained a *brahmacārī*, he did not marry. There was no issue of Bhīṣmadeva. Therefore his nephews, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu, they were inheritor.

Now, after the death of Pāṇḍu, there was conspiracy. Dhṛtarāṣṭra wanted that "Actually, this is my kingdom. Now, somehow or other, I could not get it. Now my brother is dead. So if I do not inherit, why not my sons.?" This was the politics. Politics are always there, and enviousness, jealousy. This is the nature of this material world. You cannot avoid it. Spiritual world means just the opposite. There is no politics. There is no jealousy. There is no enviousness. That is spiritual world. And material world means politics, jealousy, diplomacy, enviousness, so many things. This is material world. So even in the heavenly planets, these things are there, politics. Even in animal kingdom, these politics are there. This is the nature. *Matsaratā*. *Matsaratā* means enviousness. One man is envious of another man. It doesn't matter, even they are brothers or family members. Here the family members, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu, two brothers, their sons, they were family members, but the enviousness...

So the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not for the persons who are envious. Envious. It is a movement to train people how to become not envious. It is very first-class scientific movement, yes. Not to become envious. Therefore *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the beginning introduces, *dharmah projjhita-kaitavo atra* [SB 1.1.2]. In this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *dharma*, religious principles, cheating type of religious principle is completely eradicated, thrown away, *projjhita*. They are kicked out, *projjhita*. Just like you collect all the dirty things from the room, sweeping and then kick out, don't keep it within the room. Similarly, cheating type of religious system—kicked out. It is not such religion, "this religion," "that religion." Any religion system, if there is jealousy, that is not religion. Jealousy means... We should understand jealousy, what is jealousy. Jealousy means that you are rightful owner of something; I won't allow you to take it. This is jealousy. This is jealousy. Jealousy, try to understand. Suppose you are rightful owner of something, and I am trying that "You don't own it. I shall own it. Or somebody own it. I shall not allow it." This is jealousy.

So what is the rightful ownership of the living entity? That is to be understood. Birthright, what is called birthright. Just like everyone has got right to live under the protection of the government, everyone. That is good government. Government should give security of life and property. That is government. Not only for the human being, but even for the ant. This is government. Not that I give protection to my brother, and not to others. That is not... Just like Parīkṣit Mahārāja, he was giving protection to the animals also. When he was on his tour, as soon as he saw that a black man was trying to kill one cow, oh, immediately he took his sword, "Who are you? You are trying to kill?"

So this is good government. Unless the government is equal to everyone... Just like God is

equal to everyone. The king or the government must be representative of God. Therefore, according to Vedic civilization, king is offered as good respect as to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. King is called *nara-deva*, *nara-deva*. That means "God in human form." King is given... Why? Because he acts as the representative of God. He cannot be jealous to any living entity, at least, born in his kingdom. That is called *praja*. *Praja* means one who has taken birth, or, in other words, national, national. So that was the duty.

So formerly, when there was fight between two kings, it is on the principle that who is giving good protection to the citizens, not for personal profit. Who is able to give good protection, life, security for life and property, he should become king. So these persons, this Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his sons, they were jealous. How they could give protection to the citizens? They are themselves jealous. Just like nowadays, all these politicians, they are jealous. They cannot give any protection to the citizens. They are simply interested with their party politics. They have no time even to think how to give nice protection to the citizens so that they may feel happy always that "We have got good government. There is no cause of anxiety. We have got sufficient food, sufficient protection, sufficient opulence, everything sufficient." That is good government.

So here, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, he is jealous. He cannot give any good government. Kṛṣṇa knew it. Kṛṣṇa sent a messenger, Akrura. You have read in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Before this Battle of Kurukṣetra from Dvārakā, He sent his uncle Akrūra: "Just go to Hastināpura, New Delhi, and see what is the situation." So Akrūra understood that Dhṛtarāṣṭra was planning something. So he talked with him that "Why you are implicated in such planning? Kṛṣṇa does not want it." Although Dhṛtarāṣṭra knew that Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Personality of Godhead... So Dhṛtarāṣṭra said that "I know that what I am planning, that is not good. I know Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And He has requested me. But I tell you frankly, I cannot do without it. So when Kṛṣṇa will be pleased upon me, I may be."

So this is the position of the materialistic person. A materialistic person knows that he is sinful. A materialistic person knows that whatever he is doing is wrong, but he cannot check. Just like the thief. A thief knows that if he commits stealing, he will be arrested, he will be punished. He knows. Because he heard from lawbooks, from other sources, and he has also seen that a thief is arrested and he is taken by the police for being punished. So we have got two kinds of experiences: by hearing and by seeing directly. In Bengali it is called, *dekhā-śunā*. In India it is called. The two kinds of experience: one by seeing, practically experiencing, hand to hand; another by hearing. So one who is intelligent, he gets his experience simply by hearing from the right source. That is nice.

So our process is that we are getting experience about the perfect knowledge, the destination of life, simply by hearing from Kṛṣṇa. So we are the most intelligent person. It is not possible to experience directly, but if one has got intelligence, then simply by hearing and considering and thinking over it, he gets the experience. So those who are very sinful, they get experience by

hearing and by direct, directly seeing also; still, they cannot check from sinful activities. So Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, by his sinful activities he became so much fallen that he did not hear anybody's advice, Vidura's advice, Bhīṣma's advice, that "Don't plan like this. They are rightful owners. The Pāṇḍavas, they are rightful owners. They are minor, but don't try to cheat them." But Dhṛtarāṣṭra was...

So when the planning was complete and the warfield was set up at *dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre* [Bg. 1.1]. *Dharma-kṣetre* means, *kuru-kṣetre*, that place is a pilgrimage. People still go to observe religious ritualistic performances. And in the Vedas there is injunction, *kuru-kṣetre dharmam ācaret*: "If you want to perform some ritualistic ceremonies, religious, then go to Kurukṣetra." So Kurukṣetra is a *dharma-kṣetra*. It is a not fictitious thing, just like rascal commentators, so-called, they say, "Kurukṣetra means this body." It is not that. As it is. Try to understand *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. Kurukṣetra, *dharma-kṣetra*. It is a place of religion. And especially when Kṛṣṇa was present there, it is already. Why this house? Before our occupation, why this house was an ordinary house? Now it is temple. It is *dharma-kṣetra*, it is a religious place. Why? Because Kṛṣṇa is there. Kṛṣṇa is there. So either you take Kurukṣetra, ordinary place. But because in the battlefield Kṛṣṇa was there directing Arjuna. So it is already *dharma-kṣetra*.

So formerly people were religiously trained up. So they could not speak lies in a *dharma-kṣetra*. That is still the practice. Just like in the western world, the Christians go to the church, they admit, confession, "Yes, I have done it." But that has become a formality. But actually, one should admit in religious place that "Yes, I have done this." But that does not mean you admit and again do it. No. You admit once, then you are excused. But don't do it again.

So here Dhṛtarāṣṭra says, *samavetā yuyutsavaḥ* [Bg. 1.1]. "All these people, my sons, *māmakāḥ*..." *Māmakāḥ*. That means "my sons," and *pāṇḍava*, "my brother Pāṇḍu's sons." *Samavetā*, "they assembled." What is the purpose? The purpose is *yuyutsavaḥ*. This word *yuyutsu* is still used in Japan. Perhaps you know, *yuyutsa*, fighting. So *yuyutsu*, those who are desirous of fighting. Now, both the parties were desiring to fight, and they assembled. Why he is asking question, *kim akurvata*: "What did they do"? Because he was little doubtful that "These boys, after being assembled in *dharma-kṣetra kuru-kṣe*..., they might have changed their ideas. They might have settled up." Actually, the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra might have admitted, "Yes, Pāṇḍavas, you are actually the owner. What is the use of unnecessarily fighting?" So he was very much anxious whether they had changed their decision. Therefore he is asking. Otherwise there was no question of asking, *kim akurvata*. He... Just like if you are given food, if I ask somebody that "Such and such gentleman was served with nice dishes. Then what did he do?" This is foolish question. He would eat. That's all. (laughter) What is the question of "What did he do?" Similarly, when it is already settled up that they were to fight, there was no such question as *kim akurvata*, "What did they do?" But he asked this question because he was doubtful whether they had changed their opinion.

Kim akurvata sañjaya [Bg. 1.1]. He was asking his secretary. He was blind man. He was always conducted by his secretary Sañjaya, a very faithful secretary. And he is explaining the *Bhagavad-gītā* by experiencing, by television within the heart. That art is not yet developed. You have got television through machine, but there is another television—you can see within your heart everything, what is going on outside. So that television was known to... That will be explained by Sañjaya, that by the grace of Vyāsadeva, he learned this televisioning, and he was sitting with his master within the room and he was actually seeing how the fighting is going on. And he was explaining. This is the basic principle of *Bhagavad-gītā*, I mean, the basic platform. So let us discuss gradually, one after an... Thank you very much. Hare Kṛṣṇa. [break]

...leader to *Bhagavad-gītā* and became a *sādhū*, *mahātmā*, but when they found that a *mahātmā* is leader and he is a great student of *Bhagavad-gītā*, and by the way all people gathered round him. Although he was a politician, he has nothing to do with *Bhagavad-gītā* or *mahātmā*, no. (laughter) Because the definition of *mahātmā* is given in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The definition of *mahātmā* is there: *mahātmānas tu mām pārtha daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ, bhajanty ananya manaso* [Bg. 9.13]. This is *mahātmā*. *Mahātmā* means he has taken shelter of Kṛṣṇa cent percent, and his only business is to worship and glorify Kṛṣṇa. That is *mahātmā*. So Gandhi never believed that there was Kṛṣṇa, but he became *mahātmā* by popular vote. That's all. That kind of *mahātmā* is not accepted by the *śāstra*. *Mahātmā* is, first symptom of *mahātmā* is that he must be a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. That is *mahātmā*. That is.... *Mahātmānas tu mām pārtha daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ* [Bg. 9.13]. And he is not under any material world. He is in the spiritual world. *Daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ*. And what is the symptom? *Bhajanty ananya-manaso*. *Ananya-manaso*, without any diversion, he's simply devoted to Kṛṣṇa. This is *mahātmā*. Everything is there in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, therefore I request you to study *Bhagavad-gītā* thoroughly as it is. Then you become perfectly powerful, spiritual. Now chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. (end)