

Brief summary for Tuesday 11th March (11.32 - 11.34 summary session)

We must thank all our teachers for their contribution to what has been written below. These are things we have learned and heard from other gracious souls whose teachings are expressed along with our own words/understanding.

If you missed part 180, [check out the notes here](#).

You can find [all the previous notes here](#).

In verse 11.32, Sri Bhagavan, The Supreme Lord, the Lord of Sri, said: I am time, powerful destroyer of the world, the mighty force that vanquishes everyone, who has come forth to annihilate everyone. My mission is to devour all who reside in this world. Even without your taking part, all those arrayed in the opposing ranks will be slain. Of all fighters in the enemy party, even if not slain by you, not one will be spared. Except for you, all who enter this fight on both sides will be slain. Time I am, destroyer of worlds.

Theoretical physicist Robert Oppenheimer is remembered for his role as director of the Manhattan Project, which developed history's first nuclear weapons during World War 2. When his team at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico tested their first atomic bomb, Oppenheimer (who was a student of the Gita) cited two verses from this chapter: "If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst at once into the sky," he quoted, "that would be like the splendor of the Mighty One. Now I am Death, the destroyer of worlds."

The Supreme Lord Krishna was requested to explain the reason for manifesting such a frightening aspect of His visvarupa or divine universal form. Being humbly asked by Arjuna, Krishna responds. What is Krsna's all-destructive form? Kala-rupa, time. What is the mission of the kala-rupa? Destruction of all the soldiers except the Pandavas.

The Lord said — Kala (Time) is the calculator which calculates (Kalayati). Calculating the end of the lives of all those under the leadership of Dhrtarastra's sons, I am causing their destruction. Fully manifesting Myself with this fierce form, I have begun to destroy the hosts of kings.

The word kalo means time and includes containing and terminating as well as the embodiment of eternal wisdom and the perennial principles of the resplendent Supreme Lord Krishna. The word kalo has as its root the word kala which is described as container, a binder, an integrator, as wisdom and as a provider of all desires. This same word is utilised to refer to the Supreme Lord. In the Moksa Dharma or Mahabharata there is a conversation between Bali Maharaja and Indra as follows: O Indra you are praising yourself before one who is bound by the shackles of time which is verily the power of the Supreme Lord Krishna who is of dark, lustrous hue and who binds the beings of this world and once having bound them directs their coming and goings by His intrepid potency of time. The Bhagavat Purana states: Lord Krishna synonymous with time draws the minds of all beings to Himself. The word pravridhho meaning great denotes completeness in its entirety since the beginning. The Bhagavat Purana states: From the Supreme Lord Himself the eternal cosmic truth manifested and this is the great eternal event from ancient antiquity. Pra in pravridhho refers to the Supreme Lord and the best worship to Him is eulogising His holy names. The Bhagavat Purana states that the Supreme Lord is never born nor does He ever die. Neither is He subject to growing up or any other modifications as He is complete in all respects. The Moksa Dharma states: The rupa or form of the Supreme Lord is completely transcendental and divine, never subject to diminution and expansion.

Being humbly asked by Arjuna, Krishna responds. The Lord said — Kala (Time) is the calculator which calculates (Kalayati). Calculating the end of the lives of all those under the leadership of Dhrtarastra's sons, I am causing their destruction. Fully manifesting Myself with this fierce form, I have begun to destroy the hosts of kings. The Varaha Purana states: Since the Supreme Lord Krishna is inherently endowed with complete attributes fully able to destroy all the worlds and because He is the creator, knower and controller of all, He is known as kala.

Sri Bhagavan is telling Arjuna, “I am all-destroying time, and at present I have accepted this gigantic form. I am here to annihilate Duryodhana and others. The result of My action in this form will be that except for you five Pandavas, no one on this battlefield will remain alive. Even without your endeavour or the efforts of other warriors like you, all will be devoured within the jaws of terrible time, because in My form as time, I have already taken their lives. Those heroes who are present on both sides will definitely enter the mouth of death, even without doing battle. Therefore, O Arjuna, if you remain aloof from the battle, you will fall from your svadharma, and still they will not be saved.”

Lord Krishna reveals that even without Arjuna slaying them, they will cease to exist do to Lord Krishna terminating their life span by His force of time. Lord Krishna destined that all the demoniac forces on the Earth were collected together in the guise of kings, princes and warriors in the Kaurava and Pandava armies and that they shall perish relieving the Earth of its burden.

Srila Prabhupada writes:

“The Lord is saying that even if Arjuna did not fight, every one of them would be destroyed, for that was His plan. If Arjuna stopped fighting, they would die in another way. Death could not be checked, even if he did not fight. In fact, they were already dead.”

Arjuna cannot save anyone’s life by not fighting, but he has the choice whether or not to participate in the battle. Krsna, however, wants Arjuna to perform his duty. Even though the opposition is already dead, He wishes Arjuna to fight as His instrument.

He is all powerful time destroyer of all the worlds. By Lord Krishna’s desire, imbued with His power and might, time itself will destroy all these armies arrayed in battle even without Arjuna participating in the fight. The Kaurava army along with their commanders such as Duryodhana, Bhishma and Drona will not survive and will all be slain. By use of the word api Arjuna is assured that He and the other four Pandavas are excluded from the annihilation of both armies.

In verse 11.33 Krishna says: Therefore rise up and become glorious. Take your stand for battle. Defeat your enemies and enjoy a prosperous kingdom. Take the glory. These opposing warriors have already been killed by me and you will be but an instrument taking the credit, O Savyasaci, expert bowman. Just become My instrument. Get up, fight and reclaim your kingdom. They are already dead. Be the instrument of victory.

The Supreme Lord Krishna is the absolute and independent controller of all creation, Every living being depends solely upon Him for their existence and maintenance. He is also the absolute and independent destroyer and He confirms that all the warriors of the battle are *nihatam-purvam* meaning already slain by His mere desire.

Lord Krishna reiterates that it is His will that the Kauravas are to perish and that Arjuna should arise for battle and attain fame by conquering Bhishma, Drona and Karna who are unable to be conquered even by the demigods. Vanquishing his mighty foes he and his brothers can abundantly enjoy the flourishing kingdom of Earth.

The Kauravas and their army have already been slain before the battle has even commenced by the desire of Lord Krishna through His potency known as *kala* or all consuming time and He informs Arjuna that he is *nimitta-matram* or merely the instrument, for accomplishing this.

Lord Krishna addresses Arjuna as Savyasacin. Be you merely an instrument (*Nimitta*) of Mine in destroying them — just like a weapon in my hand, O Savyasacin! The root ‘*Sac*’ means ‘fastening’. A ‘*savyasacin*’ is one who is capable of fixing or fastening the arrow even with his left hand. The meaning is that he is so dexterous that he can fight with a bow in each hand. One who can fight ambidexterously, with either hand, left or right. Skilful with the left hand because being ambidextrous he is able to shoot arrows equally with his left hand as well as with his right hand. Expert archer able to discharge arrows with either hand.

Krishna therefore encourages Arjuna to now use all his skills to fight, without pride, because *purvam eva*, “by previous arrangement,” not because of Arjuna’s skills, the warriors are as good as dead. All the

Kaurava warriors Arjuna will be fighting are already slain before he fights with them by Lord Krishna and Arjuna should merely as a conduit be the Supreme Lord's implement for slaying them. Srila Prabhupada writes:

"Arjuna was refusing to fight, but he was told that he should fight in accordance with the desire of the Supreme Lord. Then he would be happy. If one is in full Krishna consciousness and his life is devoted to the Lord's transcendental service, he is perfect."

In verse 11.34 Krishna says: Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, as well as Karna and other heroic warriors have already been killed by me. Do not be afraid! Do not hesitate! Fight! Without any doubt, you shall conquer the enemy in battle. Your victory in battle is assured; therefore fight.

Lord Krishna is annihilating any doubts that may linger in Arjuna regarding chapter two verse five and six when he questioned fighting superiors with the word gariyo meaning is it beneficial. In the same way Arjuna by the code of royal ksatriyas or warriors should annihilate all opponents on the battlefield and not be distressed or afraid of any retribution as they have already been slain by Lord Krishna specifically naming Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha and Karna.

Krishna, in the form of time personified, tells Arjuna that no one escapes his will. Time reveals its ultimate proprietorship by devouring all, and those who appear to destroy are merely the instruments by which he achieves his ends. Here Krishna informs Arjuna that he need not fear, for the outcome of the battle will be that all of the opposing warriors will be slain. Krishna thus confirms Duryodhana's words in chapter 1 (Bhagavad-Gita 1.9) when, unwittingly inspired by the goddess of learning, he predicted that all of his soldiers would lay down their lives for him.

The might of Drona, Bhishma, and Karna is directly underscored in this verse, as Krishna answers the mental doubt of Arjuna regarding the possibility of their being slain, even in the face of time. Bhishma in particular had been blessed with the power of choosing the time at which he would die. Bhishma has received the boon that he can die at the time of his choosing and educated by Brihaspati the guru of the demigods, he was

invincible. Krishna also adds Jayadratha's name to the three warriors already mentioned in text 26. Although he is not as powerful as the others, Jayadratha was given a boon by Lord Shiva to be able to stop the Pandavas once. Jayadratha was once benedicted by Shiva with the power to diffuse the Pandavas. Because Arjuna knows this, he is concerned about Jayadratha. Krsna assures Arjuna that his concern is unwarranted. Thus Arjuna's doubt is dispelled by the force of Krishna's proclamation imploring him to fight.

Jayadratha has the boon from his father that whoever severs Jayadratha's head from his body causing it to fall on the ground will instantly have their own head burst into pieces. Thus one who slays him is also in the mouth of death and that is why his name is specially mentioned as this was a boon given to him by his father.

Karna, the son of the Surya the sungod, has special power given to him by a weapon from Indra that will slay any one it strikes but only can be launched once. Bhishma has the boon that he will die only at the time he so desires and Drona cannot be defeated by any weapon receiving the boon of knowledge of every weapon and how to neutralise them from the avatar or incarnation Parasurama Himself. Also he is hesitant to slay Drona who had taught him so well the science of archery making him the greatest archer in the world.

Also there are other warriors such as Kripacarya and Asvatthama who are undefeatable in battle. Arjuna is certainly not doubting the words of Lord Krishna but with such a powerful array of mighty warriors against him, he was wondering how he will be able to defeat them all. By the express desire of the Supreme Lord Krishna they all will certainly perish on the battlefield and Arjuna and the Pandavas will be victorious.

There is a hidden meaning to the statement, "I have already killed Bhishma, Drona, Jayadratha, Karna and others." Bhagavan is saying that when all the warriors on the side of the Kauravas were publicly insulting Draupadi by disrobing her, at that time they were all killed by Him because of their heinous offence to a great devotee. "I have made these people stand before you like puppets, only to give you fame. It is as if they are already

lifeless. Just be the instrument in killing them.” Sri Krishna had already taken the life force of all the heroes who were participating in the battle of Mahabharata. Similarly, in Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.9.35, Bhishma prayed on his bed of arrows as follows:

"In obedience to the command of His friend, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the arena of the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra between the soldiers of Arjuna and Duryodhana, and while there He shortened the life spans of the opposite party by His merciful glance. This was done simply by His looking at the enemy. Let my mind be fixed upon that Kṛṣṇa."

Let my supreme attachment be to that Sri Krishna, who, upon hearing the request of His friend Arjuna to situate his chariot between both armies, immediately brought the chariot to that spot. "There is Drona, there is Bhishma." On the pretext of pointing out the warriors in the opposing party He shortened their life just with His glance.

Srila Prabhupada's purport to this verse of the Bhagavatam is beautiful:

"In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (1.21-25) Arjuna ordered the infallible Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to place his chariot between the phalanxes of the soldiers. He asked Him to stay there until he had finished observing the enemies he had to face in the battle. When the Lord was so asked, He at once did so, just like an order carrier. And the Lord pointed out all the important men on the opposite side, saying, "Here is Bhīṣma, here is Droṇa," and so on. The Lord, being the supreme living being, is never the order supplier or order carrier of anyone, whoever he may be. But out of His causeless mercy and affection for His pure devotees, sometimes He carries out the order of the devotee like an awaiting servant. By executing the order of a devotee, the Lord becomes pleased, as a father is pleased to carry out the order of his small child. This is possible only out of pure transcendental love between the Lord and His devotees, and Bhīṣmadeva was quite aware of this fact. He therefore addressed the Lord as the friend of Arjuna.

The Lord diminished the duration of life of the opposite party by His merciful glance. It is said that all the fighters who assembled on the

Battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained salvation by personally seeing the Lord at the time of death. Therefore, His diminishing the duration of life of Arjuna's enemy does not mean that He was partial to the cause of Arjuna. Factually He was merciful to the opposite party because they would not have attained salvation by dying at home in the ordinary course of life. Here was a chance to see the Lord at the time of death and thus attain salvation from material life. Therefore, the Lord is all good, and whatever He does is for everyone's good. Apparently it was for the victory of Arjuna, His intimate friend, but factually it was for the good of Arjuna's enemies. Such are the transcendental activities of the Lord, and whoever understands this also gets salvation after quitting this material body. The Lord does no wrong in any circumstance because He is absolute, all good at all times."

Although it is time, God's hand, that takes the life of all, people identify with the apparent cause of death, God's instrument. Thus Savyasaci Arjuna, the ambidextrous archer, will become famous in the eyes of common people for slaying great heroic warriors superior in prowess to himself. He will become famous among the learned and devoted for his willingness to be an instrument in God's hands.

Krishna has justified Arjuna's fighting in many ways, but here for the first time he says that he should do so because he wants him to be his instrument. This implies that God has work to do in this world and that persons can be his instruments through which he executes it. If God has work to do in this world, then to that extent the world itself has value. However, we learned from chapter 4 (Bhagavad-Gita 4.7-8) that God's primary purpose for being in the world is mitigating his devotees pangs of separation from him. Secondly, in the course of tendering to the devoted, he vanquishes the ungodly. This is the work that Krishna wants Arjuna to be instrumental in. He is not really concerned with Arjuna's fighting for dharma's sake and all that dharma ordinarily implies. He clarifies this in chapter 18 (18.66).

Events appear abhorrent sometimes, and God's will seems incomprehensible. At such times we can remember Krishna's words in the Bhagavad Gita. He urges us to have faith that the world moves to bring all souls to freedom and love when they are ready. God comes at last, even to the unfaithful, in the form of death, the ultimate fear in this world. One who seeks as Arjuna does to be God's instrument, living as Krishna has asked with detachment and compassion for others, has nothing to fear in life or in death.

In Bhagavad-gita. 2.6, Arjuna expressed his uncertainty as to who will win the battle. Here Krishna says, jeta asi, "You will conquer," to certify that Arjuna will be victorious. Srila Prabhupada writes:

"Every plan is made by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but He is so kind and merciful to His devotees that He wants to give the credit to His devotees who carry out His plan according to His desire. Life should therefore move in such a way that everyone acts in Krishna consciousness and understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the medium of a spiritual master. The plans of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are understood by His mercy, and the plans of the devotees are as good as His plans. One should follow such plans and be victorious in the struggle for existence."

Next time we study verses 11.35 - 11.41 where Arjuna will respond to Krishna with beautiful prayers.