

SREE MAHAABHAARATHAM

INTRODUCTION

🙏 Let us start this Jayam or Sree Mahaa Bhaaratham by worshiping and saluting Naaraayana, Nara, and Saraswathi Dhevi 🙏

It is traditional not to read Mahaabhaaratham after sunset. The belief is that it is inauspicious to read it at night may be because the main story of Mahaabhaaratham is the battle between sons of two brothers. Of course, it's only a myth. But in Kerala most of the upper- or middle-class Hindu households used to have a copy of MahaaBhaaratham Kilippaattu by Thunchaththu Ramanujan Ezhuththachcchan like Raamaayanam, Bhaagawatham, Geetha, etc. Though it is only a myth, Achcchan and Amma never used to read Bhaaratham at night. Achcchan sometimes used to read it during the day. My maternal Appuppan, G. Kesava Pillai, was by-heart of MahaaBhaaratham and he and some of his friends used to debate about MahaaBhaaratham daily, including a Christian friend.

I started reading MahaaBhaaratham Kilippaattu when I was 15, in the early 1960's, and read it a couple of times. At that time, I was enjoying it like a fiction though I also enjoyed the question answers by Yeksha and Ddharmmaputhrar, the prayer or worship of Karnnan, etc.

At that time, I didn't even pay that much attention that Bhagawath Geetha is a part of MahaaBhaaratham as it's not detailed in that Kilippaattu.

Later, in early 1970's, while I was working at Indian Bank, Andheri Branch, Bombay incidentally one of my colleagues, M. A. Kulkarni (Madhav Anand Kulkarni, We friends call him MAK) and I wanted to talk about Bhagawath Geetha as I told him that I was very familiar with Geetha, and I have read it many times. Actually, when he asked about Bhagawath Geetha I was wondering how he could be familiar with Geetha as he does not know Malayalam and Geetha is only in Malayalam. After the first one or two questions he asked me which commentary I was following. I was stuck-up and I told him I have read the commentary in Malayalam by Pandit P. Gopalan Nair, and I had no knowledge of any other commentary.

Next day he took me to a Book Depot at Princes Street, Bombay and advised me that without reading Srimad BhagavadGeetaa-Rahasya (Gita

Rahasya) by Bal Gangadhar Tilak very analytically with critical view I will not be competent to discuss about Gita. As Gita Rahasya was not available, we looked for it, but he got me 1) Bhagavadgita by Annie Besant, 2) Bhagavad Gita: The Song of God by Mahatma Gandhi, 3) Bhagavad Gita by Dr. Radhakrishnan, and 4) Talks on the Gita by Vinoba Bhave. He asked me to read all of them. Within one year we got Gita Rahasya by Tilak. I read it thoroughly. And thereafter, I have read many other commentaries in Malayalam and in English. Some of them to mention are: 1) Srimad Bhagavad Gita – Sivaravindam (Malayalam) by Prof. G. Balakrishnan Nair, 2) Gitapranthangalil (Malayalam) by Sri Puthethath Ramamenon, 3) Bhagavad Gita As It Is by His divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, 4) Bhagavad Gita Bhasya of Sri Sankaracharya, and 5) The Holy Geeta Commentary by Swami Chinmayananda.

I want to quote from the General Introduction of Bhagawad-Geeta by Swami Chinmayananda: “.... Geeta is an intrinsic part of the entire Mahabharata, and the classic would have been a hotch-potch story, without the pith and dignity, if Sreemad Bhagawad Geeta was not in it – and Geeta would have been a mere philosopher’s riddle-poem without the Mahabharata background. The story and the poem together are an organic whole; each devoid of the other would be ineffectual and empty.”

Yes, Geeta is an intrinsic part of Mahabharata, but it also has many other parts as good as or superior to Geeta like Ashtavakra Charitham – Story of Ashtavakra inclusive of Ashtavakra Gita, Vidura Hitha Vakyam – The Advice given by Vidura to Ddhritaraashtra who was unable to sleep, Raja Dharma Parva – where Bheeshama Pithamaha provides advice of Raja Dharma to Yudhishtira from his deathbed, and many other parts....

MAK advised me to get a word-by-word translation of Mahaabhaaratham in Malayalam and read it with full concentration to understand Gita and its imports. I have accepted him as my Maanasa Guru for Bhagawath Geetha and MahaaBhaaratham.

I inquired about it and came to know about Sree MahaaBhaaratham by Kodungallur Kunjikkuttan Thampuran. But again, it took a few more years to get all the Seven Volumes. Thanks to Dr. S. Geethamony Amma and Prasannan, son of my Kochchachchan, who went to the Book Depot at

Paththanamthitta and got it. By the time it was 1996. Remember there was no google search or any other facilities like that at that time.

By early 2000 I finished reading all 7 volumes of about 125,000 stanzas. After reading MahaaBhaaratham I told my brother, Kochattan, that my life would have been worthless had I not read this MahaaBhaaratham. It is beyond words to describe how fulfilled and satisfied I am after reading MahaaBhaaratham.

The answer to what is the only wonder of the world is certainly MahaaBhaaratham. The answer to what is the second wonder of the world is certainly Vyasa Bhagawan who wrote MahaaBhaaratham. The answer to what is the third wonder of the world is that there is no third wonder and there will not be a third wonder when the above two are wonders, meaning when we consider MahaaBhaaratham and Vyasa Bhagawaan are two wonders nothing else can reach anywhere near and consider as a wonder.

See an astounding fact about Mahaa Bhaaratham is:

यदिहास्ति तदन्यत्र
यन्नेहास्ति न तत् क्वचित्

Meaning, what is here could be somewhere else but what is not here cannot and will not be anywhere else.

When I read MahaaBhaaratham fully I also got the answer to the question, which was bothering me, of why Ddhritharaashtra should ask a question like:

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः |
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय ||1||

On the tenth day after hearing that Bheeshma fell on the battlefield.

As Dhuryoddhana tricked Sallyar and made him promise that he and his half an Akshouhini soldiers to fight for his side, Ddhritharaashtra was sure that Ddharmmaputhrar will not engage in the war as it would be Addharmma to fight against an army with more than one third of his

soldiers. That is why Ddhritharaashtra was asking that question: what happened in the battlefield or what changed in the battlefield?

I can only salute and copy Sri Puthezhath Ramamenon in naming his essays on Bhagawath Gita as "GITAPRANTHANGALIL" meaning on the Borders or Peripherals of Gita I would name this as "MahaaBhaaratha Praanthangalil" on the "Borders of MahaaBhaaratham" as I am simply trying to translate what is written by Kodungallur Kunjikkuttan Thampuran. I also have to mention that I have got inspiration and guidance from "VyaasaMahaaBhaaratham" by Vidwan K. Prakasam. "VyaasaMahaaBhaaratham" is the complete translation of Sri MahaaBhaaratham in prose.

This MahaaBhaaratham is so difficult to conceive with one or two concentrated readings and also it is far beyond our imagination. We all know that Bhagawath Geetha provides the best and most appropriate Ddharmma Karmma Yogam. And that is what inspired, prompted, and allured the desperately dejected Arjjuna to fight against his own grandfather, Bheeshma Pithaamaha, and Kauravaas. Without the advice of Bhagawath Geetha the Kurukshethra War would not have taken place. At that time Sree Krishna Bhagawaan was able to convince Arjjuna that whatever he advised is pure Ddharmmam or morally righteous duty.

See the advice given by Sree Krishna Bhagawaan to Yuddhishtira after a few days in Salya Parvnam.

“मयानेकैरुपायैस्तु
मायायोगेन चासकृल्
हतास्ते सर्व एवाजौ
भवतां हितमिच्छतां”

Meaning: I have more than one time with many deceitful and deceptive means of advice instigated to kill your enemies to bring happiness and satisfaction for you guys.

"यति नैवं विधं जातु
कुर्या जिह्ममहं रणे
कुतो वो विजयो भूयः

कुतो राज्यं कुतो धनं ?"

Meaning: If I have not used such deceitful and cheating means in the war, where is victory for you? Where is the kingdom for you? Where is the wealth for you? [That means Paandavaas gained or acquired all these fraudulently.]

This does not mean that what Sree Krishna Bhagawaan advised Arjjuna in Bhagawath Gita is incorrect. He has also explained that in order to destroy Addharmma even a strict Ddharmmishтта should commit some Addharmmam and that is not considered as Addharmmam. It is very difficult to distinguish between Ddharmmam and Addharmmam. It varies according to time and place. Ddharmma of Dhevaas is not Ddharmma of Asuraas. Again, Ddharmma of Manushya may differ from that of Dhevaas and Asuraas.

When we read SreeMahaaBhaaratham fully it will be clear to us.

My effort is purely with a layman perspective. It is not perfect. This will be an evolving task. I will make editions/corrections. Your valuable suggestions and recommendations are appreciated.

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<https://arthistoryproject.com/timeline/the-ancient-world/classical-india/the-mahabharata/the-mahabharata-book-1-chapter-1/>

Season's Greetings!!!

**Warmest Wishes For
Happy, Prosperous, And Peaceful New Year!!!**

Kuttan & Thanky

Satchi: We have created, or rather trying to create a Family Tree under Geni. Of course, it is an ongoing project. I just added your name. Hope you will get an email. <https://www.geni.com/family-tree/index/6000000202941923823>

Otherwise, you can access the above link and update the details and your parents, siblings, their parents, etc. Or you can provide me the details and I will update.

Thanks,