

Hanuman and the Bhagavad Geeta

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

*The Bhagavad Geeta;
Chapter 1, Verses 20 & 21*

"At that time Arjuna, the son of Pandu, seated in the chariot bearing the flag marked with **Hanuman**, took up his bow and prepared to shoot his arrows. O King, after looking at the sons of Dhritarashtra drawn in military array, Arjuna then spoke to Lord Krishna these words."

During the great battle of Kurukshetra, Arjuna entered the battlefield with a flag displaying Hanuman on his chariot.



The incident that led to this was an earlier encounter between Hanuman and Arjuna, wherein Hanuman appeared as a small talking monkey before Arjuna at Rameshwaram, where Rama had built the great bridge to cross over to Lanka to rescue Sita.

Upon Arjuna's wondering aloud at Rama's taking the help of monkeys rather than building a bridge of arrows on his own, Hanuman challenged him to build a bridge capable of bearing him alone;

Arjuna, unaware of the vanara's true identity, accepted.

Arjuna then proceeded to effortlessly build the bridge. Once it was done, Hanuman stepped on the bridge, and the whole bridge collapsed.

Arjuna was immensely disappointed with this and decided to end his life.

Suddenly, a Sanyasi appeared and was wondering what was happening. When the Sanyasi heard the story, he told Arjuna that there was no need for him to end his life as there was no witness to the incident.

Hence, Arjuna decided to build the bridge again. This time, when Hanuman walked on the bridge, it did not break. When Hanuman looked under the bridge, he saw a tortoise

holding up the bridge. Hanuman immediately realised that the tortoise was nothing but ordinary and it must be Sri Krishna.

Sri Krishna then appeared before them both after originally coming in the form of a tortoise, chiding Arjuna for his vanity and egoism; and Hanuman for making Arjuna feel incompetent. **As an act of penitence, Hanuman decided to help Arjuna by stabilizing and strengthening his chariot during the imminent great battle.**

However, during the great battle between Karna and Arjuna at the war, even Hanuman failed to stabilize the chariot of Arjuna and Lord Krishna praised Karna for this feat. After the battle of Kurukshetra was over, Krishna asked Arjuna, that today you step down the chariot before me. After Arjuna got down, Krishna followed him and thanked Hanuman for staying with them during the whole fight in the form of a flag on the chariot. Hanuman came in his original form, bowed to Krishna and left the flag, flying away into the sky. As soon as he left the flag, the chariot began to burn and turned into ashes. Arjuna was shocked to see this, then Krishna told Arjuna, that the only reason his chariot was still standing was because of the presence of Himself and Hanuman, otherwise, it would have burnt many days ago due to effects of celestial weapons thrown at it in the war.

Hanumanji's flag signifies the control of the mind and senses that results in victory to those with a higher nature over the lower nature.