**Episode 16 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 1, Episode 16)**

**TOPIC:** The role of Sanjaya in the Bhagavad Gita and the nature of true knowledge versus ignorance.

**TAGS:** **Bhagavad Gita**, **Gita Jayanti**, **Dhruthrashtra**, **Sanjaya**, **Arjuna**, **Sri Krishna**, **Upadesa** (divine message), **Kauravas**, **Pandavas**, **Veda Vyasa**, **Divya Drushti** (divine vision), **Bhisma**, **Karna**, **Duryodhana**, **Tamas** (dullness/ignorance), **Kesava**, **Virat Rupama** (divine colossal form)

**Jai Srimannarayana!**

**Priya Bhagavad Bandhus,**

**Bhagavad Gita** was narrated to **Dhruthrashtra** by **Sanjaya**. Through this channel, the entire world received it. **Gita Jayanti**, its birthday, is celebrated on **ekadasi**, the 11th day of the waxing moon in **margasira** month as per the lunar calendar. On this day, everyone chants **Bhagavad Gita**. However, is it the actual day **Bhagavad Gita** was born? It reached the world on that day, but it was born on the first day of **margasira**. The battle of **Bharata** started on **amavasya** day in **aswayuja** month after **tarpanas** (offerings of gratitude to ancestors), were completed. The battle started on **amavasya** day.

At the outset, **Arjuna**, steeped in sorrow, declared, “I will not fight!” **Sri Krishna** used 'urging **Arjuna** to fight' as an excuse to deliver an **upadesa** (divine message). That's how it reached the world as **Bhagavad Gita**. So, when was its birth? The first day of **margasirsa masam**. Then why are we celebrating **Gita Jayanti** on **ekadasi** day? There is a reason.

When it was decided that war was inevitable between **Kauravas** and **Pandavas**, everyone gathered to fix a commencement date. **Veda Vyasa Bhagavan** arrived at the venue. **Dhruthrashtra** offered his obeisances to the great sage. Appreciating **Dhruthrashtra’s** affection towards his children, **Veda Vyasa** offered him a boon of **divya drushti** (divine vision), to see the war live in action. **Dhruthrashtra** said, “When my children were happy, I couldn't see. Now, I don’t want to see them fighting... Do I need divine vision for that? I don’t want divine vision to see such a war situation”. “However, oh great sage, you offered me a boon out of love. Please offer the same **divya drushti** to my friend, well-wisher, and charioteer, **Sanjaya**.” He can narrate the situation when required. I will ask him and get the details.” **Veda Vyasa** then granted **divya drushti** to **Sanjaya**.

The power of **divya drushti** enables one to clearly view an event instantly when it is happening. **Sanjaya**, who is always with **Dhruthrashtra**, received this power. However, **Dhruthrashtra** never felt like enquiring about the progress of the war. Why? Because he was extremely confident. Why? Well, he thought, with **Bhisma**, **Dronacharya**, **Ashwathama**... and great men like **Karna** on his side, why be anxious! So, **Dhruthrashtra** assumed that the result would be in favor of **Kauravas**. However, the message relayed was different. For the first, second, third, fourth and up until the 10th day, there was no message from the battlefield. Nor did he enquire.

On the 11th day, there was a message saying **Bhisma** was struck down on **ampasayya** (bed of arrows). **Dhruthrashtra** felt very sad. He was anxious, “**Bhisma**! Such a great warrior! How did this happen? What are **Pandavas** and **Kauravas** doing?” **Bhisma** is loved and respected by both **Pandavas** and **Kauravas**, as he is a well-wisher for both. Generally, that is how elders should be. **Bhisma** had abundant regards for **Pandavas**. As he was the guardian and commander-in-chief of the kingdom, he trained the army with great discipline. **Dhruthrashtra** wondered what was happening, as **Bhisma** ended up on the bed of arrows despite **Pandavas** and **Kauravas** being present. That’s when he called upon **Sanjaya** and asked him to use **divya drushti** given by **Veda Vyasa** to narrate what was happening. He questioned, “What are my people doing? What are those **Pandavas** doing?” The question is odd. We will revert to it sometime later.

To answer his master’s question, **Sanjaya** then used his **divya drushti** and described everything that happened. Since he had the capacity to see everything directly, he replayed all events from the first day. **Sanjaya** started describing clearly to **Dhruthrashtra** the details about the exceptional prowess of **Pandavas** which outstands that of **Kauravas**. **Sanjaya** narrated to **Dhruthrashtra** exactly what he saw and what was happening, and that is what we are now referring to as **Bhagavad Gita**. After narrating it, he gave one important conclusion. Those whose well-being is being taken care of by **Sri Krishna**, and when **Pandavas** follow the advice of **Sri Krishna** unquestionably, they will always be victorious. They cannot be defeated. What does this denote? Victory for **Pandavas**! Defeat for **Kauravas**!

**Sanjaya** clearly confirmed that **Dhruthrashtra** will lose all his men fighting in the war.

tathra srihi vijayaha

bhuthihi nithihi dhruvaha

whomever Sri Krishna is with, that party will always prevail.

What should **Dhruthrashtra** have done after listening to this? He should have asked **Duryodhana** and the rest to call off the war, advise them, and follow whatever **Sri Krishna** says. However, **Dhruthrashtra’s** pride didn't allow him to do this. He still held on to the hope that **Kauravas** would win the war. **Sanjaya** later clarified that his people will live no more. Even then, **Dhruthrashtra** didn’t make a wise call.

After the entire narration, **Dhruthrashtra** asked one question to **Sanjaya**. “How are you able to explain everything that you witnessed so wonderfully??” He said, “we both learnt from the same **guru**, we lived together for so long, but your knowledge astounds me. My understanding seems inadequate.” “Did you take another course elsewhere? Have you approached anyone else to acquire such a clear understanding?” **Sanjaya** replied beautifully.

vidya: rajan nathe:

vidya: mama vidya: nahiyate: | vidyahi:naha thamo:dhvasthaha nabi: janasi ke:savam ||

“Oh King, you do not understand **Kesava**. Even after I told you clearly that victory follows Him, your heart is not able to accept.” “My knowledge can never be destroyed.” “Yes, it is true that we studied together.” “However, now - you don’t even possess the knowledge taught then.” “It means nothing that you learnt got into you.”

nathe vidya

yours is not real knowledge

mama vidya: nahi:yate:

and my knowledge can never be destroyed.

“Why did I not grasp it?”, asked **Dhruthrashtra**.

vidyahi:naha

you lost your knowledge because

thamodvastaha

you are surrounded by tamas (dullness).

“Your blind eyes are not the cause.” “However, your **tamas** (ego, ignorance, deceit) are blocking your knowledge.”

mama vidya: nahi:yate:

as I don't have those, my knowledge is not destroyed.

“Without knowledge, '**nabi: janasi ke:savam**', you are unable to realize **Bhagavath Tattva** (supreme eternal entity), though it is directly in front of you.” “Though I have seen **virat rupama** (that divine colossal form **Sri Krishna** revealed to inspire **Arjuna** 18 days ago), the day before the war started...”

tathya samsrthya -

tathya samsrthya

even now, each time I think of that form, I get goosebumps.

“I was able to identify **tattva** because my conduct is righteous and I serve Lord with devotion.” “Thus, I have the chance to narrate this to you as it was,” **Sanjaya** explained to **Dhruthrashtra**. With that, he exactly relayed to **Dhruthrashtra** what **Sri Krishna** conveyed to **Arjuna**. Then the same reached the rest of the world.

Let's try to understand in our next sessions how **Bhagavad Gita** can help enhance our lives.

**Jai Srimannarayana!**