**Episode 24 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 1, Episode 24)**

**TOPICS:** **Sanjaya's** psychological analysis of **Duryodhana's** fear, **Duryodhana's** disrespectful and humiliating approach to his guru, **Dronacharya**, and the deep-seated animosity between **Dronacharya** and **King Drupada**.

**TAGS:** **Bhagavad Gita**, **Sanjaya**, **Duryodhana**, **Dronacharya**, **Dhrishtadyumna**, **Drupada**, **Vyuha** (war formation), **Humiliation**, **Guru-Sishya** relationship, **Rajsik** (arrogant)

**Jai Srimannarayana!**

**Priya Bhagavadbandhus,**

**Bhagavad Gita** is a monumental scripture clearly depicting human psychology.1 This is explicitly seen in the way **Sanjaya** describes the circumstances when responding to **Dhruthrashtra's** questions. **Sanjaya** explains to **Dhruthrashtra**, “Your son, **Duryodhana**, was scared as soon as he saw the **Pandavas'** army. He immediately ran towards his guru, **Dronacharya**.” **Duryodhana** should actually have approached the commander-in-chief of the **Kauravas'** army, **Bhishmacharya**. Instead he approached **Dronacharya**.

When approaching a **Guru**, one must be humble to seek advice or blessings. Instead he exhibited his **rajasik**, arrogant attitude. He could have at least spoken in a way that either assures the **Guru** or sought his encouragement. However, **Duryodhana** spoke in a way that humiliated his **Guru** and hurt his feelings. We notice this in the way he spoke in the third verse.

pasya etham pandu puthranam

acharya! mahathim chamum

acharya

Hey Dronacharya!

pasya

Look!

“Are you seeing or not? You have come to the battlefield to see. Look there!” **Duryodhana** uses a demanding tone with his **Guru**, asking whether he is looking at ‘that’ side. He starts by saying, “Look at that side, have you lost your sight?” **pasya**! Even friends get irritated when one uses this sort of tone. **Duryodhana** used this tone with his **Guru**, **Dronacharya**.

He points toward the opponent’s army and says, ‘**etham mahathim chamum**.’ These are very beautiful words. **etham** means that which is close; **tham** means that which is far. However, he said...

chamum etham

this army

He felt the opposing army was close, bearing down on him.

bhithasya nunam, bhayakari sarvam

When a person is in fear, everything around scares him.

That day, **Duryodhana** was in a state where anything he saw was frightening. He felt that the entire opponent’s army was attacking him.

pasya etham

Look at this army.

“Look at this army that is about to attack me! Whose army is this?”

pandu puthranam

army of Pandavas.

Look at it! How is it?

mahathim chamum

Oh my, such a huge, great army.

We know how big the army is. **Kauravas** had 11 **akshauhini** (1 **akshauhini** consists of 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 65,610 horses and 109,350 infantry) and **Pandavas'** only had 7 **akshauhini**. However, it was quite astonishing to see the **vyuhas**, tactical army formations, used by the 7 **akshauhini**. **Vyudam**! We already discussed that **vyuhas** have specific names.

**padma vyuham**, **sakata vyuham**, **suchi vyuham**, **varaha vyuham** .

**Varaha Vyuham** shows that it is ready to pounce and crush the opposing army. **Sakata Vyuham** warns that the army will crush the opponents under a cart’s wheels. Each **vyuham** conveys a different message to the opponent. **Padma Vyuham** is arranged to declare that it is impossible to exit for anyone entering the **vyuham**. **Suchi Vyuham** conveys that opponents cannot prevent penetration of their zone, no matter how hard they try. Each **vyuham** indicates a specific goal.

acharya

Hey Dronacharya.

vyudam dhrupada puthrena

Do you know who planned all these tactical war formations? The son of Drupada.

Whose name should he actually be referring to here? He should be using the name of the person, the commander-in-chief of the opponent’s army, **Dhrishtadyumna**. However, he refers to him as **Drupada's** son instead. This was meant to humiliate his **Guru**, **Dronacharya**. How?

**Drupada**, the king of **Panchala**, and **Dronacharya** were childhood classmates. Generally, after graduation, childhood friends make vows to help each other anytime, sharing joys and sorrows with each other always. While returning to their homes after finishing their studies, **Drupada** and **Drona** also did the same, promising each other to help when needed. As he was the prince, **Drupada** went on to become the **Panchala** king. However, **Drona** was a poor Brahmin unable to meet his family needs.2 **Dronacharya** loved his son, **Ashwatthama**, tremendously.3 He was saddened for not even being able to feed him milk due to his poverty-stricken situation. **Dronacharya** thought of taking help from someone, remembered **Drupada's** promise to help and reached out. However, **Drupada** behaved as if he never knew him. **Dronacharya** was angered with **Drupada** because he showed no value for friendship - he made false promises as though they were words written on sand, ready to be erased.4 He took an oath to teach him a lesson. He planned to train someone in his primary skill, archery, and humiliate **Drupada** via this student. He wanted to prove himself. In that search, he visited **Pandavas**, trained them with the necessary skills to be great warriors. After completing training, all the students wanted to offer whatever **Guru** wished for as **Guru Dakshina**, an offering out of gratitude. Both **Kauravas** and **Pandavas** stood in front of their master, **Dronacharya**, and asked him what they could offer as **Guru Dakshina**.

**Dronacharya** said that he wanted his students to defeat King **Drupada**, tie him up and place him at his (**Drona's**) feet. All the other students were shocked after hearing this and backed out, but **Arjuna** said he would do what his **Guru** wished for. **Arjuna** fought with **Drupada**, won, and tied him to his chariot, placing him at the feet of his **Guru**, **Dronacharya**. As he was a king, after being humiliated like this, **Drupada** got upset and performed intense penance. He was blessed with two children, a girl and a boy, who could kill **Dronacharya** after performing a **yajna**, a ritual with an objective. **Draupadi** and **Dhrishtadyumna** were both born to him that way. The reason for their birth was to kill **Dronacharya**.

**Duryodhana** says, “Hey **acharya**, knowing that **Dhrishtadyumna** was born to kill you, you made him your student. You knew that training him would be harmful to you.” “Despite that, what did you do?”

drupada puthrena thava sishye:na

you made him your student.

He said to his **acharya**, “Were you out of your mind? Would any normal person train a student to be a warrior despite knowing that the student would kill the teacher in the future?” “As a boon for his penance, **Drupada** had a son with the strength to kill you.” “You picked him as a student and trained him in all skills, on par with **Arjuna**.” “Such a person is now the opponent’s chieftain. What did you expect to happen??”

“You are our **Guru**. You have to protect us. However, the opponent’s army chief, who was also your student, was born to kill you.”

thava sishye:na dhimatha:

you took him in as a student and thus, nicely sharpened his intellect.

Did you train him to become brilliant or take him as your student because he was brilliant?

When reversed, the order of the words give totally different meanings.

dhimatha: sishye:na

sishye:na dhimatha:

“Despite knowing that he would kill you, you have trained him with many skills, sharpening his intellect.” “You gave him so many powerful weapons and taught him the secrets of war.” “We have such a (dumb) person, you on our team as **acharya**, what should we do now?” That was how **Duryodhana** expressed himself.

**Dronacharya** knew **Drupada** humiliated him after **Drona** sought his help. While training **Drupada’s** son, **Drona** was aware that the son was born to kill him. So, what was the need to bring up his name now? It wasn’t necessary. However, **Duryodhana** somehow wanted to hurt his **Guru**. Some people are sadists.5 They poke another person and enjoy the resulting pain. It’s their nature. This was probably natural for **Duryodhana**. He started by hurting **Dronacharya**, using humiliating, harsh words.

**Duryodhana** did not stop with this, but continued to further hurt his **Guru**. We must study his words carefully to understand how he was crushing his **Guru’s** heart. Let’s keep this in mind as we move further.

**Jai Srimannarayana!**