**Episode 25 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 1, Episode 25)**

**TOPICS:** The **Bhagavad Gita** as a guide to human psychology, the three types of sorrow exemplified by **Dhruthrashtra**, **Duryodhana**, and **Arjuna**, and **Duryodhana's** disrespectful and arrogant behavior towards his guru, **Dronacharya**.

**TAGS:** **Bhagavad Gita**, **Sorrow**, **Dhruthrashtra**, **Duryodhana**, **Arjuna**, **Sanjaya**, **Guru**, **Dronacharya**, **Tamasic** (unresponsive), **Rajasic** (arrogant)

**Jai Srimannarayana!**

**Priya Bhagavadbandhus,**

**Bhagavad Gita** is a flow of knowledge which can purify even the Ganga River. Shedding light on our own personalities and inherent natures, **Gita** provides us with all the essential **sadhanas** (means) to reform and refine them for a purposeful life. **Bhagavad Gita** is an elixir, a divine message, from **Sri Krishna**.

He revealed this directly to **Arjuna** on the battlefield. Aside from **Arjuna**, no one else on the battlefield heard. However, **Sanjaya** was able to listen later due to the boon from sage **Veda Vyasa**. One should reveal knowledge only when requested. Hence, only when **Dhruthrashtra** asked **Sanjaya** on the 11th day of war, “What happened on the battlefield?”, **Sanjaya** revealed the entire divine message. Thus, the divine message has been spreading across the entire world since then, ultimately reaching us.

We should be mindful and watch ourselves when around Elders, the wise. We have to follow etiquette while sitting, walking or talking to them, or else one could be in trouble. **Sanjaya** was very much aware of this etiquette. Hence, though he could view the events in the battlefield, he revealed the incidents only after King **Dhruthrashtra** commanded him to do so 11 days after the war began. He disclosed the events lucidly without any shortcomings. Had **Dhruthrashtra** been sensible, after listening to **Sanjaya**, he would have stopped the war. He would have counseled his sons, **Kauravas**, to reconcile with **Pandavas** and give them what they requested. He would have instructed his sons to lead their own lives, however, **Dhruthrashtra** was blind in all aspects.

He was not only blind physically, but also ‘in the mind’ (**manas**). Hence, he was not able to provide essential guidance to his own children. As a result, he lost everyone. The first chapter of **Srimad Bhagavad Gita** is titled “**Arjuna Vishada Yoga**.” In fact, it was not only **Arjuna** who experienced grief in this chapter. **Dhruthrashtra** and **Duryodhana** also experienced anguish. However, It is only **Arjuna’s** sorrow that is taken as a means to become a better person. It is natural for anyone to experience distress. **Bhagavad Gita** also teaches us what kind of behavior at these times paves a path to grow from them. Man is very ambitious with desires in life. He wants to achieve many things. He also strives tremendously to succeed. However, there is no rule that all efforts fructify, and that all desires are fulfilled.

uthpathyanthe: vili:yanthe: daridranam manoratthaha

the endless ebb and flow of wishes and desires bring happiness when satisfied, and sorrow when not.

Most of them are not fulfilled. Hence, one generally remains in sorrow for most of life. However, it is essential to know how to conduct oneself when in sorrow. If one genuinely wishes to have his wishes fulfilled, it is important to know how to respond, and conduct oneself when in tough situations to become a better person. **Dhruthrashtra**, **Duryodhana** and **Arjuna** were all sorrow-stricken. How did they react? That is what we need to understand.

**Dhruthrashtra's** sorrow was not beneficial to the world and cannot be considered as a proper means.

**Dhruthrashtra** was engulfed in deep sorrow upon hearing that **Bhishma** had fallen on the battlefield. He was shocked. He felt sad. When in sorrow, one should seek refuge in a well-wisher, who can give good advice, and then carry out those suggestions. In brief, this is what needs to be done. **Dhruthrashtra** approached **Sanjaya** while in sorrow. **Sanjaya** was a good person, his well-wisher. Hence, there is no flaw in **Dhruthrashtra’s** approach in seeking refuge from a fit person. However, the attitude of the seeker is key. He asked **Sanjaya** about the happenings on the battlefield. **Sanjaya** revealed the entire scenario without reservation. However, **Sanjaya’s** entire narration was akin to rainfall on a buffalo’s back. It had no effect - **Dhruthrashtra** was an unresponsive recipient. He did not grasp the advice. Therefore, the first chapter is named “**Arjuna Visha:da Yoga**,” not “**Dhruthrashtra Visha:da Yoga**.” **Dhruthrashtra** asked for advice, listened to it, but ultimately did not implement it. This is not acceptable. The attitude that allows one to seek guidance, listen to it, but completely refrain from exercising it is a result of **tamo gunam**, unresponsive attitude. **Tamasic** sorrow is detrimental to man’s welfare. We learn this from **Dhruthrashtra’s vishada**, sorrow.

**Duryodhana's** sorrow was a result of his **rajasic** nature.

Now, let’s analyze **Duryodhana’s** sorrow. Why would **Duryodhana** be sorrow-stricken? In fact, he should have been enthusiastic. Charged with eagerness to fight, **Duryodhana** should have been proud to display his valor and swordsmanship. We may question the genuineness of **Duryodhana’s** sorrow. Many were mistaken too. Great **acharyas** like **Bhagavad Ramanujacharya**, disciple of **Yamunacharya**, did not have such doubts. They clearly perceived the scenario and elucidated the same for our benefit. What was the state of **Duryodhana**? He was in an emotionally aggressive and sorrow-stricken state. He approached his guru for respite, which was the right thing to do. However, the inherent **rajasic** nature of **Duryodhana** made him use harsh words and behave disrespectfully towards his guru. This caused immense pain to his guru. He lacked even an iota of inclination to listen to his guru’s advice.

Compared to **Duryodhana**, **Dhruthrashtra** was far better because he at least keenly listened to **Sanjaya’s** advice, though not implementing it. When **Sanjaya** said, “Hey King! That day when **Pandavas** blew their conches, the sound shattered (**vyadarayath**) the hearts of all your people, **Kauravas**.” There was no reaction from **Dhruthrashtra**. **Dhruthrashtra** just listened passively. Towards the end of the divine message, **Sanjaya** said, “Wherever there is **Sri Krishna**, **Arjuna** can’t act on his own. He will act only as per **Sri Krishna’s** will.” Though **Arjuna** was initially against fighting the battle, **Sri Krishna** motivated him to fight.

yathra yo:ge:swara krushnaha yathra pa:rttho: dhanur dharaha

Sri Krishna made Arjuna pick up the bow which he earlier flung aside, and made him fight in the war.

**Sanjaya** said “Hence, Oh King!”

thathrasri:hi

prosperity will be with them only.

thathra vijayaha

they alone will be victorious.

...implying “your sons will lose everything. They will be defeated.” Could there be a more transparent way of conveying this message to the king? However, **Dhruthrashtra** simply shut off his brain. **Sanjaya** continued, “Listen to me. I am speaking the truth.”

ithi dhruvam

even morality is on their side.

bhuthihi

all wealth will be on their side.

However, **Dhruthrashtra** did not want to accept this advice. **Sanjaya** did not mince any words while advising him. He described the situation on the battlefield as it was because he was a **hithaishi**, a well-wisher.

**Duryodhana** was worse than **Dhruthrashtra**. It is said, **puthra dhicheth parajayam**, the son exceeds his father in exhibiting atrocious behavior. Knowing that one must seek refuge in **acharya** in times of distress, sorrow-stricken **Duryodhana** approached his guru, **Dronacharya**, without delay.

**sa gurum evabhi gacheth**

What should one do after approaching? He should express his pain and agony and listen to the advice. After approaching his guru, he expressed his anguish without any reservations. He criticized his guru in all possible ways. However, he was not inclined to listen to even a single word of his guru’s advice. He left immediately without looking back. Is it so? When examining chapter 1 of **Bhagavad Gita**, we can understand. In chapter 1, **Duryodhana** spoke approximately 9 **slokas** (verses) with his guru **Dronacharya**. After all that, he commanded his guru...

bhishma evabhi rakshanthu bhavantha sarva evahi

be vigilant and protect Bhishmacharya, don’t act on your own - all of you be attentive.

He then simply left. Is this the way to speak to a **Guru**? Do you plead for advice or order him? This is **rajasic** nature, a state of extreme **rajasic** behavior crossing all boundaries. He had to experience the fruits of it. The sorrow resulting from this **rajasic** nature made him extremely angry. We already spoke about this during previous episodes. In chapter 1 **sloka** 3, **Duryodhana** reminded his guru about his inimical relationship with **Drupada**. He spoke satirically, “See your disciple, **Dhrishtadhyumna**, who is now the commander-in-chief of **Pandavas** army.” “It is you who trained him to be a duty-bound, brave soldier. You imparted excellent skills of designing tactical army formations (**vyuhas**).” “Giving such knowledge to the person who is going to kill you is beyond my comprehension. You were so dumb to do that!” This is how he spoke to his guru. He did not stop there. He started identifying warriors on both sides. This is a recommended action. A capable commander identifies warriors and their strengths to prepare for battle.

However, how must one do it? He singled out only 7 warriors from his own side in a disappointing tone. “That’s all”, he said.

However, from the opponents, he identified almost 18 warriors, praising their capabilities. Did he really do that? Yes, he did.

Let’s listen to what **Duryodhana** said in the upcoming sessions, beginning with the 4th verse.

**Jai Srimannarayana!**