**Episode 26 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 1, Episode 26)**

**TOPICS:** The three types of human nature as depicted in the **Bhagavad Gita**—**sattvic**, **rajasic**, and **tamasic**—and a deeper analysis of **Duryodhana's** fearful and arrogant psychology on the battlefield.

**TAGS:** **Bhagavad Gita**, **Sattvic**, **Rajasic**, **Tamasic**, **Duryodhana**, **Dronacharya**, **Arjuna**, **Bhima**, **Dhrishtadyumna**, **Fear**

**Jai Srimannarayana**

**Priya Bhagavadbandhus,**

**Bhagavad Gita** provides a process to reform and enhance one’s innate personality and nature. That is why anyone, regardless of nationality, race, etc., can easily face any adversity, in any situation, at any time, with **Bhagavad Gita**. We are trying to understand how that works.

There are 3 categories of people. Some conduct themselves such that they don’t hurt others, and don’t get hurt. They are **sattvic**. A few others are focused only on getting their work done. They don’t care about others’ feelings. They are **rajasic**. The last category focuses only on destroying others regardless of their own fate. We call them **tamasic**. Be it **sattvic**, **rajasic**, or **tamasic**, if they are willing to take guidance from the wise, there is a chance that they can attain a good state. **Bhagavad Gita** showcases this truth to us.

**Dhruthrashtra** is **tamasic**. **Duryodhana** is **rajasic**. **Arjuna**, though **rajasic** by nature, has a greater proportion of **sattvic** nature within. Hence, he became a role model among his other contemporaries. We can understand this when studying chapter 1 in the prescribed manner. We discussed how the **tamasic Dhruthrashtra** fails in spite of approaching **Sanjaya** as he did not take the given advice.

Now, we are trying to understand **Duryodhana's** arrogance and malice in chapter 1. **Duryodhana** is the crystallized form of **rajasam**. He was overwhelmed with sorrow. He needed a means to come out of it and thus, approached his guru. Seeking guidance, prostrating before his guru **Drona**, he was to receive apt guidance. However, **Duryodhana** forgot to pay obeisances. He even forgot what to ask for. Rather, he began to command his guru. He began exhibiting his own timid nature as well. Let us see how. We have discussed a few examples in previous sessions. To begin, he was terrified seeing the army in front of him. He started speaking offensively, hurting the feelings of his guru. Then, he started to identify prominent warriors from both sides. He cautioned his guru to be mindful of the presence of those warriors. He used this act of caution simply as an excuse to command his guru.

In the 4th **sloka** (verse), **Duryodhana** says...

athra suraha mahesvasaha

bhimarjuna sama yudhi

“Hey **Acharya**! Do you see all those brave warriors present here in the **Pandavas'** army?”

bhimarjuna samah yudhi

each and every one is comparable to Bhima and Arjuna in strength.

Why is he mentioning only **Bhima** and **Arjuna**? As the saying goes, '**bhithasya nunam bhayakari sarvam**'. As one inflicted with jaundice sees everything yellowish, one filled with fear is terrified with all his surroundings. **Duryodhana** is not afraid of anyone in the **Pandava** army. He is not afraid of **Dharmaraja**. He doesn’t care about **Nakula** and **Sahadeva**. He doesn’t consider the remaining **Pandava** army as actual warriors. However, he trembles with fear seeing these two warriors, **Bhima** and **Arjuna**. Why? Because these two took oaths. ‘**Ka karnaha kka suyodhanaha**’ – “I will put an end to both **Karna** and **Suyodhana**!”, pledged **Arjuna**. The valorous **Bhimasena** took a pledge to vanquish the entire **Kaurava** Army. Hence, **Duryodhana** was terrified of **Bhima**. He previously tried to kill **Bhima** many times, but each attempt was in vain. He poisoned **Bhima's** food, but it was easily digested. In another instance, he tried to drown **Bhima**, but **Bhima** survived and resurfaced. He placed **Pandavas** in a house of lac and set fire to it, but they safely escaped. He attempted to end **Bhima’s** life many times but was always unsuccessful. Hence, **Duryodhana** was scared of **Bhima** who pledged to eliminate the entire **Kaurava** army. He was afraid of **Bhima** and **Arjuna**.

Due to that fear, whoever he saw from the **Pandavas'** army appeared to him like **Bhima** and **Arjuna**. This is what **Duryodhana** clearly confesses.

athra suraha mahesvasaha

all the warriors from the Pandavas' army.

bhimarjuna samaha yudhi

seem as great as Bhima and Arjuna.

Was everyone as mighty as **Bhima** and **Arjuna**? No, but his mental state was such. He began counting the warriors on his side. This is a noteworthy quality of a leader. Being able to identify capable ones is a quality of the wise. However, if blown out of proportion, it becomes harmful. This is what he did. Let’s keep track of who he counted as a mighty warrior from the **Pandava** army.

First, he mentions the commander-in-chief, **Dhrishtadyumna**, son of **Drupada**.

Let’s count as each one is named.

yuyudhanaha viratas cha drupadas cha maharathaha

maharathas (great warriors) Drupada, Virata, Yuyudhana (Satyaki).

3 so far.

dhrushtakethuhu chekitanaha kasirajas cha viryavan |

Dhrishtakethu, Chekitana, and the great warrior, Kasi Raja.

The total comes to 6.

purujith kunthi bhojas cha saibyas cha narapungavaha ||

the good and noble Saibya, Purujith, Kunthi Bhoja.

Adding 3 more, taking the total to 9.

Including the commander-in-chief, this totals 10.

yudhamanyus cha vikranthah authamaujas cha viryavan

valorous Yuddhamanyu, mighty Authamaujas, a very fierce opponent.

Another 2 warriors named here.

saubhadroha draupadeyahas cha

great Abhimanyu, son of Subhadra, the five sons of Draupadi born to 5 Pandavas.

They are all very young children.

However, he refers to all of them as ‘**sarva evama:haratthaha**’, great warriors. In fact, a **maharathi** is one who can defeat 10,000 warriors single-handedly. However, **Draupadi’s** children could not achieve this feat. **Abhimanyu** might be great, but **Upa Pandavas** (**Draupadi’s** sons - **Prathivindhya**, **Shruthasoma**, **Shruthakeerthi**, **Shataneeka**, and **Shruthasena**) were not that capable.

He identified 18 warriors and categorized all of them as **maharathas**. This shows how his fear tainted his perception. That’s okay, it’s good to identify others’ strengths. However, one shouldn’t look down on his own people. He should not discourage them. He should not insinuate and demean their bravery and swordsmanship. He should equally encourage and give them confidence. That is the true nature of a leader.

These days, we see many people advocating social service. Many times, they neglect their own family, pretending to serve society. Families become distressed, unhappy while these folks reach out to serve others. The earlier leaders of **Bharat** (India) ruled our country in that way. Current leadership has enabled us to at least take care of our own people first. Beginning with the education system that doesn’t let our children learn our own history, all of us are bereft of it. We think those who learn others’ version of history as great, we feel only those who respect foreigners are great. We have been brainwashed to take pride in leaving behind all our history and traditions. This was the mandate. We were subdued and oppressed all these years. This is not Equality. **Duryodhana** belongs to the same category.

Hence, while speaking to his guru, **Dronacharya**, **Duryodhana** says... “Hey **Acharya**! There are 18 of them excluding the five **Pandavas**.” If we add them as well, they total 23. Now, let me identify soldiers from our side.

In the 7th **sloka** (verse)...

asmakam thu visistaha ye:

than nibodha dwijotthama! |

nayaka mama sainyasya

samjartham than bravimi the:

“Oh great **acharya**! We have remarkable warriors on our side as well!” “But alas, the ones in their army are greater.” “You were their instructor! And you are a **Brahmin**!” Apparently, according to **Duryodhana**, a **Brahmin** is one who only chants **Vedas**. “You are supposed to do only that, chant **manthras**.” “However, you have now come to fight a war! You became our **acharya**! What can we do? This is our fate!”

You might question, “Swamiji, what are you saying?! Did he really mean that?” Yes. Observe how he addressed his guru, **Drona**.

‘**than nibodha dwijotthama**!’

“Hey great one! I identified **maharathas** from their army, right? Let me tell you about my army too! Listen!”

nayaka mama sainyasya

He could have said “our army.” Instead, he said, “my army.”

“You may or may not remember them. Let me remind you.“

These words spoken by **Duryodhana** seem simple and straightforward. Yet, the underlying current of his words indicates contempt towards his **acharya**. However, he is compelled to show respect to **Drona**, an elder whom **Bhishmacharya** appointed. We will be surprised to see that he identified only 7 warriors as capable from his army. He says “There is no one else.” Really? Let’s see in the 8th **sloka**.

**Jai Srimannarayana!**