**Episode 27 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 1, Episode 27)**

Jai Srimannarayana!

Priya Bhagavad Bandhus,

We are discussing Duryodhana's situation in Bhagavad Gita chapter one today. Duryodhana is symbolic of rajasic nature. However, when he saw the Pandava army, he felt sad and fearful. To overcome his fear, he went to his guru. He reminded his guru of all the heroes on the other side. He started mentioning the great warriors on his side of the army too. He mentioned 18 great warriors from the Pandava army, but on his side, he could not name beyond 7 people. In fact, the total Pandava army was only seven akshauhini, large units of soldiers 218,700 not including the charioteers and large number of chariots, horses and elephants. The Kauravas army was eleven akshauhini.1 From seven akshauhini, he could point out twenty-three great warriors. However, from his eleven akshauhini, he could not count beyond seven.

Let us see who they are.

Starting with chapter 1, verse 8.

**SLOKA WORD - bhava:n bhi:shmas cha karnas cha krupas cha samithinjayaha | aswattha:ma: vikarnas cha2 saumadaththi: thatthaiva cha ||**

**SLOKA MEANING - (On our side are) yourself, and Bhishma, and Karna, and Kripa (who is) ever-victorious in battle, and also Ashwatthama, Vikarna, and Saumadatti.**

Full stop. He stopped there saying ‘**thatthaiva cha**’, which means ‘that is it’. Who all? He said “**Bhavan** – first you, oh **Dronacharya**!” **bhi:shmascha:** - my grandfather, **Karnascha** - who is my life, Equivalent to my brother **krupascha: samitinjayha:** - the one who is well experienced in battlefield, the great **Kripacharya** **Aswattha:ma:** - your son **vikarnascha:** - my brother In reality, **Vikarna** was a good person. Amongst the hundred brothers, **Vikarna** was the only one who openly spoke out against his brother’s evil deeds. However, it was of no use. All the other brothers asked him to stay silent, “You are young, be quiet and refrain from giving advice.” This was during **Draupadi's** incident. He said “**soumadatthihi: thatthaiva**:” then **Saumadatta** and that is all. He did not stop there. What he said further upset his teacher even more.

**SLOKA WORD - anye: cha bahavas su:ra:ha madartthe: thyaktha ji:vitha:ha | na:na: sasthra praharana:ha sarve: yuddha visa:rada:ha ||**

**SLOKA MEANING - And many other heroes have come to sacrifice their lives for me; they are all well-versed in warfare and equipped with various weapons.**

These words sound good, but we need to understand the intent. **anye:cha bahava suraha:** there are so many to count but none worth recognizing by name. That is still fine, but the way **Duryodhana** saw them is more significant. **madarthe: thyaktha ji:vithaha:** they sacrificed their lives for me. They sacrificed their lives implying they looked like dead bodies to him. They looked lifeless to him, they all seemed dead to him. Can we say so?! People proudly declare, “He is ready to sacrifice his life for me!” We say one is ready to sacrifice his life, but can we say he is equivalent to a dead body? What **Duryodhana** said was **thyaktha ji:vithaha** - **thyaktha** means that which has left. It is used in the past tense. Is it wrong? It is not about what is wrong, it is about the usage. He could have said it better as “They are ready to sacrifice their lives for me.” Wouldn’t the verse sound bad if we change it? Our great poets know how to phrase it in a better way. It could have been phrased as **madarthe: thyukthumudyathaha:**. This way, it would have not disturbed the flow of the verse and would have been auspicious too. Even before the battle started, he spoke in inauspicious terms like someone saying inappropriate words at a very auspicious time. **madarthe: thyaktha je:vithaha**. Not only this, he said something else…

**na:na: sasthra praharana:ha:** all of them knew how to use various weapons but no one was expert at using one as we say “jack of all trades”. When someone has many skills without expertise in a particular one, he is termed as a ‘jack of all trades but master of none’. Intending the same, he said all his warriors were like that. Each **Pandava** was an expert in using a particular weapon and could fight independently and efficiently. **Bhima** had different skills, **Dharmaraja** different, **Arjuna** different, **Nakula** in something else and **Sahadeva** in yet another one. One was an expert in sword fighting, another in archery, one knew how to use **gadha** (mace), while another other knew how to use **musalam**. Their expertise was so great that no one could defeat them at their skill. **Pandavas** were experts. However, in case of **Kauravas**, he said...

**na:na: sastrapraharnaha:** they simply know how to use all the weapons. He continued saying as if to sound a bit positive... **sarve: yudhavisa:rada:ha:** everyone knows a little about warfare. All these inauspicious words came involuntarily out of **Duryodhana’s** mouth indicating his sorrow and arrogance. He used another set of words, denoted in chapter 1 verse 10.

**SLOKA WORD - aparya:ptham thad asmakam balam bhi:shma:bhi rakshitham | parya:ptham thwidam e:the:sha:m balam bhi:ma:bhi:rakshitham ||**

**SLOKA MEANING - That army of ours, protected by Bhishma, seems inadequate, while this army of theirs, protected by Bhima, appears sufficient (to defeat us).**

These words are really surprising. “Oh teacher, you have heard all this.” **thath** means so **thasma:th ka:rana:th** because of the reasons I told you till now **asma:kambalam apariya:ptham** the army we have is **apariya:ptham**, not adequate. We have a shortage of troops. Many people are confused with this word, **apariya:ptham**. People think **apariya:ptham** means abundant. Sanskrit does not define it that way. **Apariya:ptham** means ‘it is not enough, it is not efficient’. Why? **bhi:shma:bhirakshitham** because **Bhishma** is leading. “Although we are an army of eleven **akshauhini**, I feel it not sufficient because **Bhishma** is leading.” However...

**pariya:ptham thvidhamethe:sha:m balam** – he says **ethe:sham** which means it is these people’s. **Idham** means this. It refers to something near. **Ethe:sha:m** refers to people who are around him. **The:sha:m** or **thath** is used to refer to someone far away. However, he did not say **the:sha:m** or **thath** (he said **e:the:sha:m** meaning people who are around him). He felt that his army was far away and that the opponent’s army was sitting right on top of his head. **pariya:ptham thu idham** this army **e:the:sha:m balam** the power of these **Pandavas**. **Pariya:ptham** means it is enough to kill us. How? **bhi:ma:bhirakshitham** because it is protected by **Bhima**. We need to observe this very carefully. When we compare a person on one side with the one on other side, both should have the same capability and should be of the same level. For example, when a prime minister visits another country, the PM of that country receives him. Similarly, a foreign minister is received by his counterpart in another country. The same protocol applies to a Secretary or under secretary. In brief, when a person of a certain level visits another country, he will be received by a person of similar level even though he can meet others. Because **Bhishma** was commander of **Duryodhana’s** army, he felt the army on his side was not capable enough. Whereas on the other side, **Bhima** was commander. So he felt that side had the capacity to defeat his army. He compared **Bhishma** to **Bhima**. Is this fair? Here the words **thath**, **apariya:ptham** and **pariya:ptham** are crucial. Also, comparing **Bhishma** and **Bhima** is very significant. We have discussed **apariya:ptham**, **pariya:ptham** and **thath**. However, why is he comparing **Bhishma** from his side with **Bhima** from their side? Is it because he was the commander-in-chief? No. **Dhrishtadyumna** was commander of **Pandavas** army, not **Bhima**. Is it because he was the eldest? No, **Dharmaraja** was the eldest of the brothers, not **Bhima**. Or is it because he was the chief advisor for the entire army? No. That was **Sri Krishna** for **Pandavas**, not **Bhima**. Or is it because he was a renowned and efficient fighter? That was **Arjuna**, not **Bhima**. Then why did he consider **Bhima** to be fit for this comparison? Because all he could think of were the two oaths. Nothing else. One by **Bhishma** from his side and another by **Bhima** on the other side. What were they? **Bhishma** declared that if he had to lead the **Kaurava** army, they would have to respect his oath. His oath was that he would not directly attack any of the **Pandavas** brothers. Then why be the commander? He mentioned that he would fight anyone else. **Karna** immediately reacted stating that they will fight the five **Pandavas** and that **Bhishma** should take care of the rest. He asked, “Will you fight the rest?” **Bhishma** replied “except for **Pandavas**, I will fight and kill the rest of the army,” For which **Karna** gave assurance to **Duryodhana** that he will fight and kill **Pandavas**. Therefore, the commander-in-chief of **Kauravas**, **Bhishma**, will not harm **Pandavas**. **Bhima’s** oath was that he will not spare anyone from the **Kaurava** army. Thus, **Duryodhana** could only see **Bhima** from **Pandavas** and **Bhishmacharya** from **Kauravas**. That is why he compared both and expressed his opinion to **Drona**. This incident describes **Duryodhana’s** fear. We will also discuss how he continued to express his fright.   
**Jai Srimannarayana!**