**Episode 34 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 1, Episode 34)**

**TOPICS:** The six rules for scriptural interpretation (**shadvidha tatparya lingas**), the importance of contextual understanding, and a detailed symbolic analysis of **Bhagavad Gita** Chapter 1, Verse 14.

**TAGS:** **Bhagavad Gita**, **Scriptural Interpretation**, **Shadvidha Tatparya Lingas**, **Symbolism**, **Chapter 1 Verse 14**, **Omkara**

Jai Srimannarayana!

Priya bhagavad bandhus,

Shastra (Vedic literature) recommends incorporating 6 aspects to conclude the purport of any scripture. What are those 6?

upakramo:pasamha:ro: abhya:sa: pur:vatha: phalam |

ardhava:da upapaththi:cha lingam ta:thparya nirnaye: ||

These rules are for those who want to respect the scripture for its true nature. They’re intended for those who want to understand the subject as it’s meant to be, benefit from it, and ultimately comprehend its value. These are not for speculators, who simply say what they think sounds nice and what people want to hear. In fact, these Gita discourses are also not for the audience of those speculators. These lessons are for those who have interest in Gita, trust it, and want to improve their life.

What are these rules called?

shadvidha tatparya lingas (elaborating a topic while following 6 rules)

1. **upakramopasamharau**: Observing the beginning and end of a scripture to ensure they correlate. A topic that starts in one place should conclude on the same point after its elaboration.
2. **abhyasa**: The repeated reminding of the central topic so the reader does not lose track.
3. **apurvata**: The unique aspect revealed by the scripture that distinguishes it from others, its sole purpose for being delivered.
4. **phala**: The resulting benefit of learning the scripture.
5. **upapatti**: The use of intriguing, relevant incidents or logical reasoning to reinforce understanding and faith.
6. **arthavada**: Linking a similar event from the past (often through stories or fables) to explain a current situation or moral value.

For example, the fable of “The Crow and The Fox” from **Panchatantra** is a perfect illustration of **arthavada**. The story's moral is the lesson: one should not be carried away by false praise, as it is often a ploy to gain something from you. The fictional narrative of animals speaking is simply a vehicle to make the moral easy for a child to grasp.

Authors of **shastras** establish the intended purpose of a scripture through these 6 aspects. Our **purvacharyas** (lineage of gurus) conveyed scriptures with exact meanings, never adding their own interpretations. **Ramanujacharya**, in particular, was known for this. When writing his commentary on **Brahma Sutras**, he stated that he was simply elucidating the meaning of the words and the depth of their connection, with no room for his own independent thought process. This is the hallmark of his work and the reason his commentary on **Bhagavad Gita** is so highly regarded. To truly understand **Sri Krishna’s** intention, one must follow authentic commentaries that adhere to these literary rules.

As an example, we must carefully observe the hidden message **Sanjaya** gave us in verse 14, Chapter 1.

**SLOKA WORD - thathas svethair hayair yukthe: mahathi syandane: stthithau | ma:dhavah pa:ndavas chaiva divyau sankhau pradadhmathuhu ||**

**SLOKA MEANING - Then, Madhava and the Pandava, seated in a magnificent chariot drawn by white horses, blew their divine conches.**

Let's dive into the words' in-depth meanings.

thathaha: "later on," after the clamor of the Kaurava army subsided.

shvethaihi hayaihi yukthe:: The chariot is "buckled with white horses." The word haya comes from the Sanskrit root haya gathau, which means "that which moves" and also implies giving intelligence or knowledge. The four white horses represent the four Vedas.

mahathi syandane:: The chariot is an "outstanding chariot." The word syandana comes from the root syandu prasravane, which means "flowing" or "moving forward." A rule in Sanskrit, gadyarthaha buddhyarthaha, states that words conveying movement also convey conscious intelligence. The chariot, therefore, is symbolic of pranava or Omkara, the ultimate guide of our knowledge.

stthithau: "are"

ma:dhavah pa:ndava: The two people on the chariot are Madhava (Sri Krishna) and Pandava (Arjuna).

What did they do?

divyau sankhau pradadhmathuhu: "they blew their conches, the most powerful ones."

This is more than a simple description of a scene. The chariot symbolizes **Omkara**. The horses symbolize the **Vedas** that navigate this **Omkara**. The two people on the chariot, **Madhava** and **Pandava**, represent something profound. They each hold a conch, creating a sound.

What do the two sounds in Om convey? What does the chariot symbolize? What do the horses symbolize? We will discuss this further.

Jai Srimannarayana!