



Chanakya - 1

An average looking guy was walking on the streets of the Pataliputra (today's Patna city in India) for routine work. In his hurried walk, he stumbled on a stump of a noxious grass and injured his foot. Grass was deeply rooted in the earth and it was not easy to uproot it out. Little upset he sat down right there in the burning sun. He poured a sugar-syrup on the grass and stood by as if he was waiting for something!! A passing by kid, named Chandragupta, was watching him curiously, but carefully. All of a sudden, from nowhere, several ants and other insects came and attracted towards sugar-syrup. They destroyed the grass completely. Chandragupta curiously asked him, "It was just a grass. Why did you do it?" Brahmin replied back, "It was poisonous (evil) and fatal. And all evil things should be destroyed completely eventhough they are small. This is everybody's duty. I would remove even a king if the king adopted adharma." This average looking guy was not merely a common guy, but a very smart, clever and learned brahmin. His name was Vishnugupta.

Vishnugupta lived in the capital city Pataliputra of an empire Magadha during the period 350-275 BC. His father, Chanak, was a learned brahmin. Being a teacher himself, Chanak knew the importance of education. He started teaching his son Vishnugupta in his early age. He himself was learned, noble and self-esteemed brahmin. He would not tolerate any injustice or adharmik deeds. Naturally, the corrupt and arrogant Magadha King Dhanananda did not like him. Chanak's family was harrassed by the king on some false reasons. He was put in the prison where he died. Nobody raised a voice against the injustice caused with Chanak. Vishnuputa was a young boy at this time. He was extremely sad on his father's death and injustice happened with him. His life was also in danger. He left Pataliputra by taking an oath that he would come back and fight against injustice and a corrupt king Dhanananda.

Vishnugupta went to Takshashila, a world famous University for all kinds of education. There he studied Vedas and Uapanishadas. He was more interested in economics and politics. He gained proficiency in it. In politics, his acumen and shrewdness was visible right from childhood. Just like his father, he was disciplined, bold and fearless. He would debate with his fellow teachers on various subjects. Due to his intelligence and leadership qualities, he was dear to all including other students and teachers. After completing studies, he started teaching in the University. He was called by Acharya. Many kings and other aristocrats were his students. He not only taught various subjects, but also taught about values, attitude and

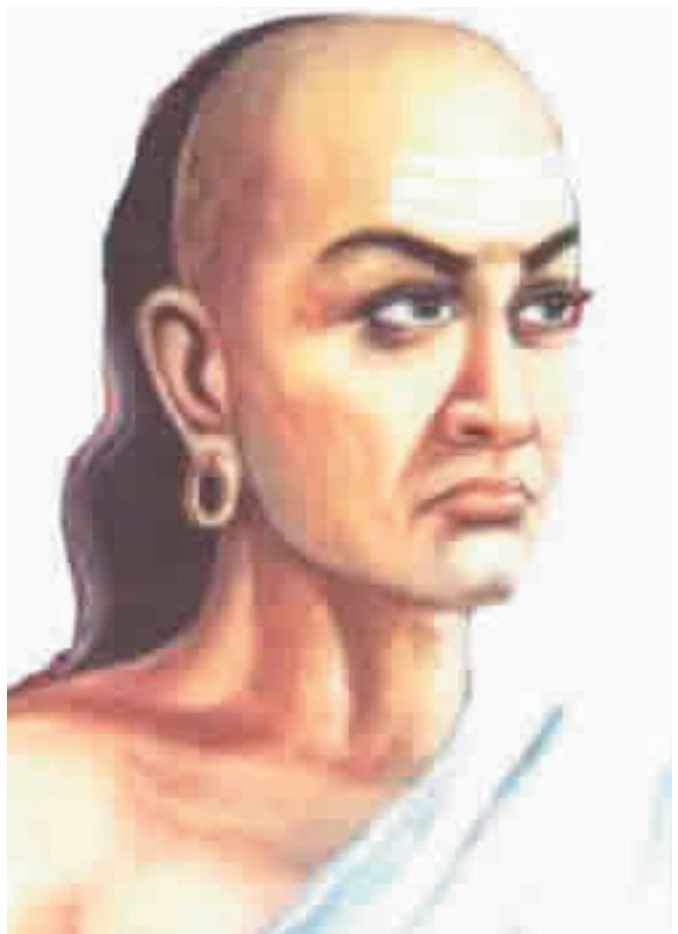
patriotism to his students to make them good and responsible citizens.

During that time, Bharat (India) was divided in various kingdoms. Only handful of them were big such as Magadha. All others were small and most of them were engaged in fighting against each other. Vishnugupta worried about this situation as it would invite invaders to attack Bharat. He wanted to change it. He saw a dream of united Bharat ruled under one administration and by one king. Even though his profession was teaching, he had detailed information about various kings in Bharat and surrounding areas, and happenings in their kingdoms. He had established a spy-network and he kept himself up to date through it.

During that time, a Greek king Alexander was ruling in the country Greece in the middle-east. He had an ambition to win the entire world. He even won all the kingdoms in the middle-east and was ready to attack Bharat.

Alexandar's plan became clear to Vishnugupta. He also realized that Alexandar and his troops were brave and armed with arsenal and divided Bharat would not be able to stand against his forces. He left the University to gather and unite all Bharatiya kings to be able to present a formidable defence to Alexandar. He travelled all the bordering kingdoms warning about the grave danger of invasion and tried to convince their kings for unity. He even sought help from king Dhanananda forgetting his personal enmity with him. But he was humiliated there. Few kings responded to his call though. In the beginning, Alexandar won few small kingdoms in the bordering areas with the help of self-indulgent Bharatiya king Ambhi who betrayed his own people and joined him. But Alexandar could not move further because of strong and dreadful retort from other Bharatiya kings. Finally, he had to return back to his country. This is how Bharat was saved from the alien Alexandar.

Such an intelligent Vishnugupta was smart enough in turning tables into his favour irrespective of circumstances. He was also popularly known by Chanakya and Kautilya (based on his Gotra). He did great things in his life. He threw away corrupt king Dhanananda and made his pupil Chandragupta a king and established a great and mighty empire Magadha.





Chanakya - 2

As learnt in earlier chapter, Chanakya (Vishnugupta) was a great teacher (shikshak), statesman, philosopher, thinker and a born patriot. Many great people including aristocrats and people from royal families were his students. There was no branch of knowledge, which he had not mastered. There seemed to be nothing, which he did not know. He was, in other words, a conglomeration of all things that make a genius. Although he was expertise in many subjects, his favourite subjects were politics and economics (artha-shastra). He was very much proud and confident about his profession of teaching. He used to say that – *the mother and a shikshak have the ability to bring about the revolution. If they desire, they can change the future of the current generations. They can play a bigger role in making the character based society that holds esteem values and principles. If they desire, they can even throw out the powerful kings.* And he proved it by defeating the arrogant king Dhanananda.

Although Chanakya was a teacher, he took lot of interest in politics. He had a strong spy-network and his spies kept him uptodate about what was going on in various kingdoms around Takshashila. He never budged to the pressure by the ruthless politicians. He was known for the meticulous planning to minute details including backup plans and it's perfect implementation. His calculations never went wrong. His brain was full of information, ideas and planning. But he would never disclose anything to anyone unless it was necessary. Nobody could make out what was going on in his mind. Because of his secretive and harsh nature, he could employ various methods carefully at the right time to destroy his enemies. He believed that everyone (kings) had their own weaknesses and they can be defeated by one way or another. Being known as a masterful political strategist, he discovered koot-yuddha (Guerilla Warfare).

Chanakya envisioned Bharat (India) as a united nation ruled under one administration. He knew that only united Bharat could protect herself and her culture from foreign invasions. His favourite student (pupil) was a brilliant and bright boy named Chandragupta. Since childhood Chandragupta was with him. For Chandragupta, he was not only a teacher but also a guardian. He carved Chandragupta's personality. A young boy Chandragupta turned into a patriot, brave and fearless warrior. Chanakya is not complete without Chandragupta and Chandragupta is not complete without Chanakya. Chandragupta was trustworthy. He would not even think about leaving or betraying or doing any harm to his guru Chanakya. Chanakya utilized him very well to fulfill his dream of uniting Bharat.

In those days, Magadha was the biggest empire in Bharat which was ruled by arrogant and ruthless king Dhanananda. As learnt in earlier chapter, Chanakya's father was tortured by the king and he himself was humiliated several times. Although he really didn't care about his personal enmity, he had taken an oath that he would teach Dhanananda a lesson for his arrogance and bad administration. He also felt that once the biggest empire Magadha comes under his control, he would easily bring the entire Bharat under one rule. At last, with excellent planning and Chandragupta's bravery, king Dhanananda was thrown out of the throne and killed later. After that, Chandraputa became a king of the mighty empire Magadha. Chandraputa became very popular because of his excellent administration and selfless love towards people of his kingdom.

After becoming Chandragupta a king of Maghadha, many small provinces and kingdoms happily agreed his leadership and joined him; thus already big Magadha kingdom grew further. Those who did not join technically, became friends of the Magadha because they were already influenced by Chanakya. Thus Chanakya fulfilled his dream of uniting Bharat. Chandragupta ruled Magadha for many years. Chanakya stayed with him in Magadha and became his prime-minister.

Chanakya continued teaching also. He also wrote many books on political ethics, nitishastra (thesis on the ideal way of life), and economics (kautiliya artha-shastra). His books are translated into many other languages including English, French and German. His literature was unique because of its rational approach and an unabashed advocacy of real politics. It shows his in depth study of the Bharatiya way of life. In his literature, he has touched many topics including the duties of king at length such as - how a king should keep an eye on the things that are going on in his kingdom, how to make sure that his associates and ministers are honest to him, what good governance means, how to make people give taxes without feeling any burden, how to keep vigil on borders, how a king should make sure about his people's character, how to make use of spies and so on.... He was already impressed by the big and famous University Takshashila and he felt necessary to have similar University in Magadha also. So he established another big University at Nalanda city. Later, like Takshashila, Nalanda also became a world famous University.

Such an intelligent and visionary Chanakya lived selfless and aesthetic life. His life was mysterious but blot-free. Just like lord Krishna, he would give up values and morals and do anything to uphold the Dharma. He had powers to turn over the kingdoms but he never thought of becoming a king. He would make impossible things possible. Indeed, Chanakya was an excellent personality. His life and teachings will continue to guide entire Hindu society.

