

### Geeta for the Common Man -III

There could be questions like who is Dhritaraashtra? Why is he blind? Why is there a mention of his name in the beginning of the Geeta? Anything that is good and auspicious should begin with a good and healthy sign or person why then did the Great Vyaasa bring in Dhritaraashtra moreover in the beginning, etc. It is not an accidentally Veda Vyasa brought in Dhritaraashtra. Who is Dhritaraashtra would be the first question? Dhritaraashtra was the son of Ambika, the widow of Vicitraviirya. He was born blind. Blindness the word means the absence of the power of perception. There are two types of blindness from which each one can suffer. One is the blindness that comes as a result of a defective means of perception--eyes, the other being blinded because of the presence of some factor. We generally hear people saying that a person is blind with lust or blind with jealousy. Therefore, factors like jealousy, anger, passion, etc., can also blind one though one is with eyes. These two forms of blindness we know and we hear their usage in the world. There is a third form of blindness that is very much there, but we are all blind to it. This blindness is very detrimental to oneself as well as the world.

This is the blindness of ignorance. Dhritaraashtra was blind and was blind in all the three senses. The Mahabharata story clearly outlines this fact that he was born blind. The same Mahabharata reveals that he was also blind with anger and identification. The question that Dhritaraashtra asks Sanjaya clearly shows that he was ignorant of what is happening may be not outside in the battlefield but in the minds of these people. There is no doubt that one should bring in auspiciousness in the very beginning of an act. Everyone considers blindness an unfortunate incident in one's life and pities or sympathises a blind person. Veda Vyaasa bringing in the blind Dhritaraashtra in the beginning of Bhagavad Geeta is a hidden blessing as Bhagavad Geeta is a result of the question.

The word Dhritaraashtra can just be a name as even any other name like Mr. John or Mr. Butler. It then means the word is being used in the conventional sense. There is yet another sense in which one can use words. That is the derivatory sense in that case the word Dhritaraashtra means the one who is bearing the kingdom. Dhrita = bear, carry, sustains and Raashtra means kingdom. The question is every monarch does bear or sustain the Kingdom, then why this special mention. The speciality can be either in the bearing or the kingdom. So, the question can be which kingdom, for the first possibility does not apply in the case of Dhritaraashtra. The Kingdom that was not his own for which he only happens to be the Trustee, the Kingdom that he should hand over to Paandu's sons as they come of age. Therefore, by implication Dhritaraashtra means a usurper. Usurper of a kingdom is no different from the usurper of anything, for kingdom also happens to be an object of usurping as even any other object. At that point of time even when Dharma was on the wane there was just one Mr Usurper, but today every person seems to be one in varying degrees.

Dhritaraashtra virtually threw the Pandu's sons out of the country and that they had to establish themselves elsewhere. Mahabharata has a record of all this. An elder with plenty of wise counsel available around if he can do it to his children definitely the name Dhritaraashtra befits him. Some may say there is justification in that particular person being called Dhritaraashtra, but one cannot compare him to us we have not usurped anything. Well, we can see abuse in every sphere either as Child abuse, spouse abuse, employee abuse, etc. Each one takes the rights of the other and rides over them. It is either the spouse that enjoys no rights or the children or employees, citizen, members of a community or organisation or a group. We assume the rights of the other. We want to change the world to our patterns our way. The guideline seems to be 'my way or no way.' Is this not aggrandisement?

To be continued...