

Geeta for the Common Man -IV

We seem to take the whole world with all the people for granted. We seem to take the body mind complex for granted and we drive them to the point of exhaustion. Whose is this world or the body-mind-complex that we are just using and discarding? What is the thing in this world that we can claim as our own? Every blessed thing that is there within as well as outside us is all a gift to us--a special kind of gift that the giver can claim at any point of time. Generally one cannot take back a gift that one gives and if one does, it does not speak well of the person. Here we said it is a gift that the giver takes back and that means it is not a gift that we received. Then what else is it if one were to ask, we are only being asked to look after it or take care of it. It is not our property in the real sense of the term.

We commit the mistake of taking a thing that does not belong to us as ours. Not only do we not know what is ours but we also see what is not ours is as ours. This is nothing short of blindness. The blindness is of the inner eye of discrimination. Just as Dhritaraashtra was blind we are also blind so are each one of us. Therefore, the Rishi suggestively points out a fact 'beware, that if one was to be a Dhritaraashtra nothing much one could achieve!' The sad part of our story is we already are one. The wise Rishi-sage Baadaraayana or Veda Vyaasa says it is okay to be a Dhritaraashtra but then, reading or committing to the study of the Geeta--the life of enquiry, is useless. The pursuit is useless because of the very Dhritaraashtra frame of mind. Commit with the Arjuna frame of mind. Arjuna had the right mental make up that we can see from the study of the Mahabharata. We will also be seeing that a little later in the first chapter itself. Let us go a little more into the first verse.

The verse if we translate in simple language means, 'Whatever did happen in the battlefield between *my people* and *Paandavas*?' Can you

see that! "My people and X." Well, human problems arise from these two factors. 'Me' and 'Mine' on one side and the sense of distinction that causes the notion of 'me' and 'mine.' In this, we can see two forms of blindness. The first is the emotional blindness born of emotional immaturity that has its basis in intellectual blindness. The other blindness is the blindness born of non-appreciation of the Spiritual content.

This emotional blindness we can very clearly see with the use of the word *my* first and *Paandavas* later. It seems the blind King's concern is very much over his children and there is a sense of urgency behind this question. The concern is for 'My' people as that is what struck Dhritaraashtra first. His concern was not about the Paandavas and that reveals a hidden fact of the high confusion that has beset the mind of Dhritaraashtra and does not know what he is talking. The 'Paandavas' are also his people being the sons of his brother. Does it mean that it was not confusion, but the hidden fact that surfaced up now at a very fag end? This highlights the blindness is a blindness that is many sided.

Let us now go on to the word 'kim akurvata?' What did they do? Well, Dhritaraashtra knew very well that they have assembled there for battle. This idea he expresses in so many words yuyutsavah = yoddhum icchaa = yuyutsaa = desire for battle. So, they gathered there for battle not for Halloween, thanksgiving, or even birthday celebration, what else can they do? This question from Dhritaraashtra regarding what they did in the battlefield raises many points. The fact though Dhritaraashtra was blind in many ways still was not totally blind that we can appreciate from the context. He had a vision of Dharma and adharma and knew that his sons and grandsons were not practising Dharma. He also knew that Paandavas under the guidance of Yudhishtira had firmly established themselves in Dharma. So, the possible questions annoying the mind of Dhritaraashtra's could be:

1. Did Paandavas too set aside Dharma and start the battle?
2. Did Paandavas withdraw from the battle with their vision of Dharma?
3. Did better sense prevail among the Kauravas and they called truce?
4. Did the grandsire Bhishma and Dronaachaarya walk out of the Kaurava side?
5. Did Bhiishma and Drona ask Paandavas to call of the battle?
6. Did the battle end even as it began--because all people following adharmas ganged up on one side and followers of dharma on the other?

To be continued..