

Geeta for the Common Man -V

1. Did the highly unexpected happen -- Paandavas and Kauravas decide to be good buddies-chums?
2. The location where they have assembled for the battle is Kurukshetra, but then in essence it is Dharmakshetra. It is a dharma = good, righteous and kshetra= field. It is a field where the Rishis, Brahmins, and Kings have performed very many righteous actions. Is it the glory of the place that it brought out the latent characteristics or tendencies to the fore in deciding the battle?

Thus varied and many questions could have been annoying Dhritaraashtra's mind for long and now it has manifested as this question. We can look into the word kshetra from a little deeper perspective. Kshetra we all know is a field. Every field-farm is a place of cultivation. Cultivation of some sort is possible if it is a farm irrespective of the form be it a poultry farm or cattle farm or whatever. The farm calls for a farmer, the varied inputs, produce, and their results. The people who live around receive the blessings so does the farmer too. Here we can compare the body to the farm. The varied inputs that keep the cultivation process going within the body are the varied organs we have. The produce is the rich experience irrespective of the good or bad side of things and the result is the pleasure and pain that we derive from them. The beneficiaries are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin, mind, people, and beings around.

So, what Dhritaraashtra may be meaning is in the battle within this field of action-body. This kshetra is one where lot of action is taking place every moment. 'Kuru' the word means do-act. KURUKSHETRA means a field of action where action is predominant. In the mention of the body as KURUKSHETRA there is a beauty. There are some kshetras that are purely kurukshetras but this is also a Dharma

Kshetra. Dharma kshetra can mean the kshetra that is a product of Dharma or a Kshetra that can help one gain Dharma. The body is both Dharma kshetra and a Kurukshetra as well, in which the others and me always assemble to fight. Invariably it is, 'you and yours' or 'I and mine.' In this battle what happened could be the question of Dhritaraashtra.

The mention of body as Dharma kshetra means it is a product of Dharma. By this what is being meant is all bodies are products of either punya or paapa, but the human being is a mixture of both punya and paapa. Acharya Sankara in the text Vivekacoodamani says "durlabham trayamevaitat daivaanugraha hetukam manushyatvam mumukshutvam mahaapurusha samsrayah." These three, being born a human being, a seeker, and finding refuge under a master are very difficult to gain. Acharya Sankara says a person gains the three because of the blessings of the Lord--punyam that is the results of dharmic acts.

Well, not only is the human body the result of Dharma it is also the cause for gaining dharma or adharma as well. The bodies of other beings (animals) are only to exhaust what is there in one's account and hence they are purely Kurukshetras. When it comes to human beings, they are born not merely to exhaust what are there in an individual's account but gain new results as well. Animals are being liberated from both Dharma and Adharma hence they are being called vimuktah (liberated). So in this human form kurukshetra that also happens to be a dharmakshetra what did 'My' people and Paandavas do? To the question whether there are beings who or which are purely dharma kshetras, the answer is 'Yes'. Gods are the ones whose bodies are purely dharma kshetras. This is because they are born to enjoy the results of the good deeds they performed so far.

We find many stories in the Puraanas and other related literature about the Gods drinking the Nectar, enjoying the company of celestial

damsels (apsaras) entering this world to enjoy the company of women, etc. These are all daily enjoyments for them. They are after enjoyments and so we can call them Bhogis or Bhoga jiivi just as their counterpart the asuras are. The only difference is the asuras were gross and cruel whereas the gods seem to have performed sugar coated actions that do not immediately strike as cruelty personified.

Well, our concern is not over how far it is justifiable. This whole issue has to reveal only a limited result and it is only this much. Gods and asuras are born only for exhausting what is in their lot but not for performing fresh actions and gaining new results. Let alone the question of fresh actions even the question of ending all action-reaction cycle itself is not possible for the Gods or asuras in their lokas. The animals being born have no control over their actions. They act as governed by their instincts. Their actions are not being governed by their faculty of choice unlike humans, for the simple reason that they do not have a faculty of choice. They are not born to perform actions and the physical form that they have is also just for enjoying the results of actions. Hence one can say they are kevala kuru kshetra-purely field of action.

To be continued...