

Geeta for the Common Man -VIII

Never does a bad or unbecoming quality come alone. They have a knack of coming together as a package. It may take some time for the remaining to manifest. Nobody can show us a person who has just one bad or unbecoming quality. Well, it is not for us to judge who has what, but it is enough if we understand the nature and be twice as careful in dealing with things and people. Being aware of this fact only will arm a person from falling into traps. So, in Duryodhana's case, we do see one more quality. The other factor that is being highlighted in this verse is the scant respect that he had for tradition. Though being a product of traditional schools of learning, little did he learn of the tradition. When one approaches elders or teachers, one should follow certain protocols. None of those protocols he followed, on the other hand, he started exhibiting his arrogance, shallowness, prejudices and contempt. He wanted to impose his dictates even on his teachers. This highlights the 'blind tradition' from which one hails.

One may say it is the right thing that Duryodhana did, for after all Duryodhana was a King also was it not? Can the King discard the protocols that he has to follow, at least in moments of national calamity? Well, did Duryodhana consider himself to be the King and was he aware of the protocols, first? Had he been aware of the protocols, he would have called for Drona, who was after all a commander-in-chief of the Army. He would not have gone all the way to the battlefield, to the front line and spoken to Drona, who was after all a commander. As a King he would have addressed the problem from a totally different dimension, for it was a national calamity. There seems to be no room for concern in his voice, and clarity in his thinking.

There is a saying, as the ruler so the subjects -'yathaa raajaa tathaa prajaa.' As a king or a leader, it is very important that one leads people by setting an example. When the ruler expresses crooked

thinking, the subjects will in time teach the same art in a better form to the king. They will pay back in the same coin. So, the King should never do what is unbecoming, if he wants a healthy kingdom, for the subjects are also going to practice it. Though claiming to be the King of kings, in Duryodhana we can clearly see an immature, arrogant child. He wants to command and expects people to follow him, but has not learnt to take situation under control, but manages to become controlled by them. Inwardly he cries, but outwardly he cannot express it, so puts on a mask of authority. Revelation of all this is clearly being made in the next sloka-verse.

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।

व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

pasyaitaam paanduputraanaam aacaaryaamahatiim camuum .
vyuudhaam drupadaputrena tava sishyena dhiimataa ..3..

Oh! Ye Achaarya, may you behold this mighty Paandava army formation well arrayed by your most brilliant student.

This is a beautiful verse that highlights few issues that make the personality of Duryodhana. Sanjaya narrates that to Dhritaraashtra and through that, reveals the nature and manifestations of immaturity. There is lot we can do through this awakening. We can at the outset stop the manifestation of the immaturity flowing out through our actions, including speech. Later with a cool and composed mind and the assistance of teaching we can grow out of the limitations.

This creation is one of variegated hues, things and beings. In this creation we find varieties like holy persons, sinners, saints, gods, demons. Lord's creation cannot consist of only certain things, for it will exclude the others and thereby limit it, automatically. Then, the

creation of the Lord would not be different from the creation that each of us can do. It may sound strange, but the truth is the creation is a complete one, with the presence of almost all pairs of opposites. Everything is there in it like, good, bad, ugly, noble, ignoble, rich, poor, etc. In fact, the lord has only provided a basis, where each one depending upon the maturity and backlog of results come into this creation. There were times when righteousness prevailed and there are times when the exact opposite of it predominates.

One may wonder why Lord brought in a creation that has vices. He could have brought in a creation where virtues predominate instead of having a mixture, could He not? Well, if there were just one value-system, can we term the creation complete? As long as we consider creation consisting of just inanimate beings or animals definitely, the creation could have been different. When it comes to human beings in it, it assumes a totally different dimension. Human beings enjoy the faculty of choice and unbridled it should be, otherwise it will cease being a faculty of choice, is it not?

Having created beings that do and do not enjoy a faculty of choice, the Creator has left it to those who enjoy the faculty of choice to handle things governed by their faculty of choice. If the world is an unhealthy place, it is not the Creator that should be blamed, but we human beings who have abused the faculty of choice. Well, having said all this, one may ask, then why should one place lot of hurdles in life trying to live a virtuous life, when living otherwise is much easier?

To be continued...