

13 GEETA FOR THE COMMON MAN

May you all remaining in your own designated place and order in the respective battle formation, protect Bhīṣma alone.

The character of Duryodhana is not a very peculiar one, as we are also in that similar frame sometime or the other. The mind of a sinner never has any steadiness & firmness. Duryodhana's mind looks up to Droṇa sometime, then to Bhīṣma and sometimes Karṇa, creating conflicts within, unsure of what the future holds causing a sense of insecurity.

Duryodhana giving this instruction that 'all should protect Bhīṣma alone', can mean that as long as Bhīṣma existed on the field, Kauravas can never be defeated. It can also mean as long as Bhīṣma was alive in the battlefield things would be under control. It is not that Duryodhana questions the capacities and capabilities of Bhīṣma, but knows that Bhīṣma is not in the right mental frame because of his strong attachment to the Pāṇḍavas. The need for protection arises as long as this attachment exists. Once it rolls away and Bhīṣma decides to fight, there can be no equal and none can resist him.

Duryodhana's short sightedness gets highlighted here. Bhīṣma is considered in the tradition as svecchā maraṇi, meaning his death could be only at his wish and that nothing or nobody can kill him. This being so, Duryodhana ordering the entire army to stand as one person to protect Bhīṣma is just meaningless. A pāpi- sinner does not have any confidence in the Śāstra, much less in the words of the wise and will always be a doubting Thomas. Such a person definitely is subject to total and complete destruction.

Though the whole address was to Ācārya Droṇa, he did not utter a single word. He being a traditional Master chose not to respond to the blabbering Duryodhana. This should be an eye opener for majority of people in this world. People tend to lose the sense of decency and decorum and get carried away into gossip. A mature person does not allow oneself getting carried away, although addressed and tempted in ways more than once. Such a person ever remains a silent spectator, without getting drawn into the web, when it amounts to gossip or prattle. A wise or mature person responds only when an address warrants a response. This attitude goes a long way in building a strong and vibrant personality, full of energy.

The short-sighted one tries to sow seeds of dissent by praising one who is in front at the same time try to denounce the other or try inducing the sense of one-up-man-ship, by praising one in front of the other. Both these techniques may work for some time but in the long run their effects would be disastrous. Everyone, who knows this person, is bound to take him or her as shallow or superficial having no depth whatsoever, which is one part of the problem and which is not serious. The real problem starts only when the mind learns this art very fast and starts playing this game with its Master. The mind-game starts ruling and finally devours one.

We find people condemning or passing 'negative criticism' against those that are not right in front or praising the other to the skies just ignoring the one right in front. This happens all the time, where only time, place and persons may change, but not the mental mode. Duryodhana is an example. Standing right in front of Droṇa he starts praising Bhīṣma on one hand and seemingly condemns him too. Duryodhana behaving that way being immature may be okay, but one may wonder why Bhīṣma chose to respond.

The nature of creation is, if we live a Dharmic life, ones that are around will protect us as Dharma orders, but if we chose to live an Adhārmic life, everything around will be drawn only to destroy us. Bhīṣma being around was a blessing to both Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas but they made use of the blessings by interacting at different levels. Adharma had to end which means adharmi (in Duryodhana) had to end. That would not have been possible without a war being fought. Bhīṣma provided the needed motivation and inspiration to keep Duryodhana going, else either he would have collapsed or tried to escape from the battlefield. The path of escapism is wrought with varied options at the outset but meeting the dead-end ultimately.