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224 Florence, Troy, Michigan 48098, U.S.A.

www.aryasamaj.com | info@aryasamaj.com | fb.com/vedicamerica

Class Notes from Bhagvadgita Svadhyaya

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Courtsey, Smt. Pooja Prakash

तस्य सञ्जनयन्द्दुर्ष कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥ 12॥

In this Shloka there are 11 words. Sanjay tells the king Drithrashtira that the eldest and the most courageous Pitamah Bhishma made Duryodhan happy by making a loud noise and playing Shankha (Conch Shell) loudly. In ancient years, it has already been studied that noise and sounds have a very deep effect on the minds of the human being. As per the study, Shankha(conch shell) is used at 2 places, during the bhakti (devotional worship) to bring calmness and peace. And, if the Shankha is used in the war and fused with other musical instruments like Nagara, Dhol etc. - it builds up the emotion of warriors to such a degree that it is capable of manifesting an intensity that is seemingly beyond the normal range of human expression and helps the warrior bear the sufferings of the war. Every troop in the army plays their own music and that creates a huge impact on the minds of the army.

Vyas ji (the writer) only mentioned the Pandavas Shankhas and NOT of Kauravas.

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ 13॥

This Shloka depicts what happened after Pitamah played the Shankha. There is fusion needed with Shankha to make the war level noise. Shankha, Bheri (Nagada), Panav(small drum or Damru), Aanak(large drum), Gomukh (horn) are the 5 types of instruments which are mentioned in the Shloka.

After that, a lot of people played 1000s of instruments of the above-mentioned 5 types. Listening to the pandemonium of all those 1000s of instruments, the desire to fight(war hysteria) became stronger in everybody.

Here is a small story which depicts how the music makes the blood boil not only for humans but also for the animals. A king used to love his elephant, but he was getting old and weak and once the elephant fell into a pit . He was unable to come out even after a lot of people helped him. The king was very sad. He took a suggestion from one of his ex-minister. He suggested bringing a lot of musical instruments like Nagada, Drum etc. and on playing those instruments the elephant's spirit was raised and was able to come out of the pit. The ex-minister explained that not only the army men, but the animals also get provoked on listening to these instruments and are able to achieve the difficult tasks.

We can draw two lessons from the above two shlokas. First, we should analyze what things bring us happiness. A person interested in war becomes happy listening about wars. A person who is religious is happy listening to spiritual topics. If we are getting pleasure out of bad things, we should control ourselves and our thoughts to go in the opposite direction. Second, words, sounds, and sound waves have profound effects on the human mind. Consequently, we should surround ourselves with such words and sounds that make our family environment peaceful and happy.

Bhagvadgita Svadyaya led by Acharya Hari Prasad ji
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