

RE READING OF MAHABHARATA

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Abstract

This paper highlights the aspects of Mahabharata. This epic shows impact on many generations. Characters in this epic are great ones, reveal about society. Societal aspects influence, show the path to lead in a possible way. Epics like Iliad, Ramayana, Mahabharata speaks about the topographical, social, psychological aspects. These characters may be good or bad but influence is more. There is a great significance of reading, knowing Mahabharata.

Globalization is continuing its impact on human civilizations in a grand destructive way. So there is a great need to recollect the importance of Indian epics. They show some remedy for human beings to lead the life in a comfortable manner. From creation on wards good and bad prevailed. As a human being we need to know the basic life skills. These can be adapted from Mahabharata.

Keywords: Indian epics, Mahabharata, Krishna, etc.

Mahabharatha was a great epic. It portrayed many characters. It inspired many generations. Arjuna's character was a crucial one. Under the guidance of Dronacharya, Arjuna adapted concentration. Arjuna glanced at only branch of the tree observed bird's head and killed the bird. One day Dhrona went to Ganga river to take bath. At that time, a crocodile captured Dhrona. All his disciples, including Thatima were unable to rescue.

They were spell bounded, but Arjuna pierced the crocodile by playing arrows. Arjuna went to protect Godhana of a Brahmin. At that moment Yudishtara and Draupadi were unified. Arjuna protected Godhana of a Brahmin. He entered into the isolated place of Yudishtara and Dhroupadhi to get ammunition. According to the previous rule Arjuna practised vanavasa. He met Krishna at Prabhasa Tirtha. He saw a celebration at Raivathakamountain, glanced at Subhadra. Her beauty enticed him. With the permission of Krishna, he took away Subhadra. This attempt enraged Balarama. Krishna gave an advice to Balarama conducting marriage. Subhadra gave birth to abhimanhu.

Arjuna acted as a charioteer for Uttharudu at the time of North Go Grhana. In that event Durhodhana, Bishma, Karna attended. By seeing the crowd of KauravaSainya, Uttarudu became scared. Arjuna assured him, took part in the war and drove away cows. After all the representative ships becoming vain, war is going to be surged. At that moment sorrowfulness surrounded Arjuna. Arjuna felt that by killing my own clan what benefit I get. Arjuna had mercy towards the whole clan.

“ In the thirty -first verse of the ninth chapter of the Gita, Sri Krishna promises Arjuna that his devotees never perish.”¹

Arjuna had nothing to think and implored Krishna to show the way. Krishna assured Arjuna that perform the karmas with whole heart. But do not depend on the results. We have no rights towards results. In the life we must face conflicts with the smile. At that time you will lose desire fascination. Arjuna listened the words of Krishna and boomed in the war.

Krishna : Kamsa hatches a plot to wipe away the life of the baby Krishna, in Gokula. Puthana dressed up well, appears beautiful. When Putana keeps Krishna to her bosom, he squeezes not only her milk, but her life also. Lord Krishna played a vital role in Mahabharatha. Durhodhan visited Krishna, he did not sit at the feet of Krishna. He sat at the head of Krishna, but Arjuna sat at the feet of Krishna. Durhodhana came earlier, but Krishna saw Arjuna at first. Arjuna is junior to Durhodhana, but Krishna allowed Arjuna to have conversation with him. Arjuna received suggestions from him. Durhodhana became jubilant by getting Arjuna and left the place.

In the Kurukshetra war Bhishma prevented Arjuna's Archery wave. Bhishma dominated with arrows, pierced the chariot of Arjuna. Krishna lifted the chariot's wheel and tossed at Bhishma. Krishna yielded to the devotion of Arjuna. “Koustheyaprathi Jani Hiname, BhakthahaPranasayathi.(Bhagavadgita 9-31)

Sishupala is a son of Krishna paternal aunt's son. Krishna treated reprimand, blessings in the same way. He ignored reprimandship and tolerated it to some extent, showed great reverence towards Maha Chaitanya Nidhi received abuses from Sisupala. It is a disgrace to devotees. For the sake of those people Krishna killed Sisupala. In gambling society (Maya Sabha) Dhushasana caught hold of Draupadhi hair, dragged her and tried to pull her saree. Krishna listened imploration of the devotee remained Dhushasana to have pain in the hands. Lord Krishna is a soft skill manager. In the words of Krishna yogi definition runs thus, “ One who treats happiness, miseries, victory, defeat, disgrace in the same manner.

One who leaves Karmas to the God, with out any wish, pursuing karma is compared to droplets on Lotus leaves. He/ she is not going to be affected by the results. One who practise Akarma in Karma, who visits karma in Akarma is a clever human being. He is called as yogi.

Lord Krishna Quoted as

“Karmanya karma yapaseydhakarmanichakarmayaah!

Sabudhimanmanusheysusha Yuktha kruthna says karma kruth.

(Gita- 4-18)

Draupadhi: Draupadhi is a chaste woman. In Aranya parva Draupadi speaks to Krishna,” I am a sister of you, wife of pandavas, sibling of Dhruvadharmna. In Kaurava assembly Dhushasana hold my hair dragged me. This is a great disgrace for me. What about other women in the society.

Dussana continued to drag her and she continued to appeal, the epic describes ,

“With hair dishevelled and half her attire loosened, all the while dragged by Dussasana.” (Sabha Parva section XLVI)2

Krishna my husbands, sons, father, brothers, kin , you did not protect my chastity. Nobody got anger towards Kauravas. At that moment Karna’s boisterous laugh saddened my heart.

“Draupadi was not a dumb follower of her husbands. She had her own individuality. Though soft speaking she used harsh words to her husbands and others when necessary. “3 (Bhawalkar 143)

Krishna assured that . O sister I will understand the agony of your heart. You will see the mental pain, sobbing of Kaurava’s wives after perishing all the enemies in the battle. I will use all my abilities for the welfare of pandavas. You will become queen. My words are not going to become vain.

In Bhagavad Gita A verse speaks :

“Give up everything for God. What will remain then? Pure love. That love doesn’t expect anything, it knows only how to give. When we understand that only renunciation can give us peace, we shall want to surrender completely to God.”4

Draupadi glanced at Arjuna. Arjuna consoled her, stating Krishna words are genuine this will happen. In Aranya parva on oneday Satyabhama approached Draupadi addressed her as Vadina. Your husbands are equal to rulers of the world. They always show happiness toward you, never pronounce any harsh words at you. She enquired that are you practising any vratha. Draupadhiretaliated , uttered these words. I never allow ego, durabhimanam in my heart. I do not speak harsh words with others. I never see any thing by standing unnecessary things in the society. I am a chaste woman and do not talk with every body. I never feel to look at the strangers. In every situation, understanding my husband nature and following the heart of my beloved is a mantra. I am showing the same respect towards them in riches and rags. I pursued the foot steps of Kunti devi. I never spoke a word against my mother in law. I maintain pure heart, in the early morning I get up , fulfil the wishes of them personally.

In Indraprastha, I looked after 8, 000 scholars, 80000 students, guests and provided food to them personally. Those are my responsibilities. I shouldered the expenses, happiness, sorrowfulness of my servants. I maintained treasury affairs in a perfect way. I woke up early in the morning after sleeping all of them. I reach my bed. By this practice I got blessings.

Through happiness we do not get happiness. If you get sorrowfulness , then you will experience happiness.

Draupadi suggested Satyabhama. Do not order your inferiors to serve your husband. Serve him personally. If your husband reveals something to you, maintain it as a secret. Provide hospitality, food to your husband's friends, well wishers. Do not glance at your husband's enemies at all. Do not associate with chatter box women. Wait eagerly by wearing white clothes to serve and oblige him. If you show great respect towards your hubby, you will become queen of Vasu deva. He showers love on you.

“ She became known as pandita and grew up a charming maiden admired by all.”⁵(Bhawalkar⁴)

Bhisma: Bhisma's real name is Deva Vraathudu. He pledged to maintain celibacy and became Bhishma. “Bhisma sings of the grandeur of Krishna and establishes him as Narayana: Duryodhana! The son of Vasudeva is in fact great. He is the god of all the gods. Nobody is greater than the lotus eyed Krishna. Markandeya tells strange things about Govinda. He is the soul of every matter. He had created all three matters , water, air and heat in the beginning of the creation. The Lord of the world created the earth and slept in water. The lustriousgod slept there with the power of his yoga. He created fire out of his mouth, air out of his breath, and Sarasvathi and the vedas out of his heart.”⁶ Bishma supported Durhodhana , participated in the war, revealed a secret to Arjuna on the tenth day, died. His mother Ganga , gods worried it as Dhakshinayanam.

He waited up to Uttarayana for his death. Mahabharatha war began on Tuesday. Bhishma stayed in the battle field only 9 days. On the Tenth day, he reached Ampasaya . He Stayed on Ampasaya for 58 days. After entering into Uttarayana, his soul left the body.

Kuchela: Kuchela is reverend brahmin and bosom friend of Krishna. One day, lord Krishna was sitting in Rukmini Devi Mandir, days passed happily. Kuchela is an individualistic person, great intellectual man. He always focussed his mind on God. He satisfied with his needs. He is a great devotee of Govinda, but never implored anyone for help.

Kuchela's wife Anuraktha, followed the foot steps of her husband. She gave an advice to her hubby for comfortable life. Approach your beloved friend, to avoid poverty level as well as better life for their children.

Kuchela's conversation with his wife continues: Before approaching friends, patients, teachers we should not go with empty hands. What do we have to offer for Krishna? He asked. She hand overed poha knotted in the cloth. Kuchela started his journey to Dwaraka, wearing ragged clothes filled with dust. He walked so many miles, reached Dwaraka, enquired about Krishna. He reached at his house. Some guards stopped him then intimated his arrival to Krishna. They informed Krishna, a very poor Brahmin has come to meet you and waiting. At that time Krishna was with Rukhmini Devi. Krishna opened cloth, found kuchela. After glancing kuchela he became ecstatic , addressed him and hugged kuchela. In a hurry, Krishna accompanied him to luxurious bed. Krishna kept kuchela's feet in a plate and cleaned kuchela's feet. He sprinkled the holy water on Rukhmini's head. He applied sandal to kuchela's body. Krishna in a happy mood sat beside him, enquired about his life and had a meal. Krishna offered Tambulam (pan) to Kuchela. Krishna asked him, what did you bring for me? He found poha wrapped in Uttariyam, Krishna felt very happy, devoured poha with great eagerness. Krishna conversed with him those who offer whole heart devotion, I will receive it. Other wise, I donot accept the offerings. Krishna blessed kuchela , removed his poverty. He showed amicableness towards his friend. He became a role model of friendship for human beings.

Moral Dilemma: In Mahabharata, moral dilemma plays a crucial role, connects the characters.

Morality is part of our life. If we are immoral, receive unnecessary ones. I would like to emphasise on one aspect.

“ Let us take the case of Yudhisthira. He was coaxed into telling a lie in order to unnerve Dronacharya. He agreed to the deceit, but quietened his conscience by uttering a lie coated as truth. He knew that he was deceiving Drona, and by dressing it up to mean the death of an elephant called Asvatthama he ultimately distorted the very meaning of morality. Since morality is ultimately concerned with a mental framework of doing what is right and not just with verbal correctness, Dharmaputra was guilty of an immoral act when he uttered loudly within the hearing of Drona, ‘Asvatthama is dead’, and added softly whether the man or the elephant.”⁷

Critics Views : Mathew Arnold is a great eighteenth century English critic. “ He postulate that “the subject of the epic poem must be some one great complete action.”⁸

Krishna is a protagonist of the epic, Arjuna is a puppet in the hands of Krishna. Arjuna pursued the words of Krishna and proved himself as a valiant. In every epic protagonist is valiant, restorer of dhrama, having multitalented fellow. It is a combination of various episodes, characters. Durohodhana is an icon of immorality, his father Dhrutharastra is a heartless man as well as jealous minded fellow. As an elder, he has conscience but he never prevented injustice meted out to Pandavas.

A critic named as “G.M. Hopkins dubbed as the “ synthetic theory.” This theory categorically repudiates as utterly fantastic the modern notion that the Great epic is but a haphazard compilation of disjointed and in coherent units. In other words, the Mahabharata is an epic and a law book in one.”⁹

Indian critics also lined up and gave their own opinions about Mahabharata. Sarvepalli Radha Krishnan wrote : “ The pupil, Arjuna is the type of the struggling soul who has not yet received darkness, falsehood, limitation, and mortality which bar the way to the higher world. When his whole being is bewildered, when he does not know the valid law of action, he takes refuge in his higher self, typified as krsna.”¹⁰

Conclusion: Ramayana narrates the relationship between wife and husband as well as kinship. Mahabharata portrays the spirit helping the needy people and do good for all. No one in this world is perfect and nothing is permanent. At last Lord Krishna ends his story i.e., Krishna Avatar. Some of the greatest lessons can be learnt from the past or epics. We can learn leadership lessons, behavioural skills, and life skills from it. During the lockdown period Mahabharata got popularity in the world. Indians showed great interest towards recollecting, the India’s past. It helped a lot to enhance critical thinking skills by examining Indian texts.

By starting Mahabharata School, we can inculcate some lessons among the future generations. We can develop Story telling techniques, speaking skills, moral values, instilling confidence. Bhima is a symbol of bravery, Krishna soft skill manager, Draupadi is an icon of patience, Mahabharata enthral Indians with war of words for ever. It is more voluminous than Greek epics like Iliad, odyssey. It speaks about our Indian culture, traditions, life style, family and food habits. Through this, people living in cities as well as villages get a chance to know. By initiating the Mahabharat project in the school, college levels in India creates a good opportunity to learn some lessons. Do your duty and leave the result to the god. Follow the truth.

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