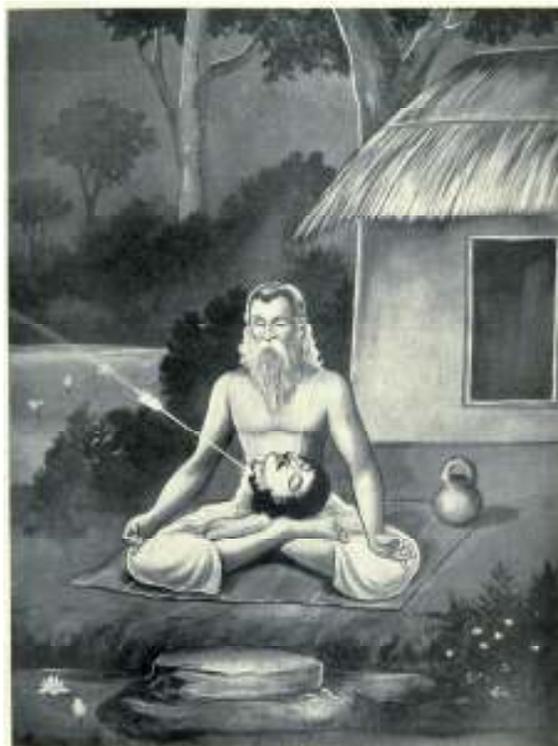


MAHABHARATA – Part 21

(Jayadratha Slain)



As we studied in our earlier class, Jayadratha was granted a boon by Lord Shiva to hold the Pandava brothers at bay for one day in battle, except for Arjuna, who was protected by Lord Krishna. Jayadratha used his boon to stop the Pandavas from entering the nearly impenetrable Chakra Vyuh formed by Dronacharya. When Abhimanyu, Arjuna's son, entered the formation he was trapped inside and brutally killed by the warriors of the Kaurava army working together. Six great warriors dared to commit this dastardly crime on the holy field called Kurukshetra. Drona, the Commander of the Kaurava army, proved himself to be as sinful and treacherous as Duryodhana. Arjuna vowed to kill Jayadratha the very next day. If he failed, he said he would kill himself.

News of Arjuna's oath reached the enemy. Spies informed Duryodhana's friends that Arjuna, having learnt that Jayadratha was the cause of Abhimanyu's death, had vowed to kill the Sindhu king before sunset next day.

Jayadratha's birth. Vriddhakshatra was the illustrious king of the Sindhus. He was blessed with a son, who he named Jayadratha. At the time of his birth, a voice from heaven was heard to say: "This prince will attain great glory and he will attain the happy regions above, slain in battle. (A warrior dying in battle goes to heaven). One who, among the warriors of all ages, ranks among the most illustrious will, in the field of battle, sever his head from the body." Vriddhakshatra was grieved to hear the voice. In his disturbed state of mind, he uttered a curse: "He, who causes my son's head to roll down on the ground, shall have his head burst at that very moment into fragments."

Jayadratha grew up and, when he reached manhood, Vriddhakshatra handed over the care of the State to him. He retired to the forest, where he spent the evening of his days in austerities in an ashram near the Kurukshetra plain, which later became the battlefield.

When Jayadratha came to know about Arjuna's vow, he remembered the prediction about his death and feared his end was near. He wanted to go back to his country immediately. But Duryodhana assured him that all the veterans and warriors would stand between Jayadratha and Arjuna for his protection. He begged him not to leave the battle. Duryodhana instructed Dronacharya and his whole army to defend Jayadratha against Arjuna on this fourteenth day of the battle. Feeling clever as always, Duryodhana thought they could defend Jayadratha. Then Arjuna would have to kill himself. With Arjuna gone, the Pandava army would easily be defeated. Duryodhana was always filled with such scheming. Drona proceeded to marshal the forces for the next day.

Twelve miles to the rear of the main army, Jayadratha and his detachment were placed in a strongly guarded position. Karna, Aswatthama, Salya, Kripa, and many other warriors were there with all their forces. Between them and the Pandava army, Dronacharya arrayed the main Kaurava forces in circular formation. This was backed and supported by a lotus formation which again was supported by a spike-headed force. Beyond this, stood

Jayadratha. Drona stood at the head of the circular army. Duryodhana believed there was no way Arjuna could reach Jayadratha.

A fierce battle ensued. Kaurava forces were scattered and fled in all directions while facing the furious Arjuna. He started moving towards Jayadratha by defeating Durmarshana, Duhsasana, Bhoja, Kritavarma, Sudakshina, Srutayudha, Duryodhana, and many warriors one after one. When Duryodhana was discomfited, Krishna blew his conch and it sent a thrill of fear in Jayadratha's army. The warriors around the Sindhu king were surprised. They at once got ready in their chariots, and arrayed their forces against Arjuna.

Remembering the way Abhimanyu's death happened, by Abhimanyu fighting alone, Yudhishtira in his anxiety first sent Satyaki and then Bhima to join Arjuna. Karna showered his arrows on Bhimasena and stopped him from proceeding to Arjuna. A duel between Bhima and Karna happened that day was very fierce. Bhima did not desire to fight Karna or remain long engaged with him. He was eager to reach where Arjuna was. But, Karna challenged Bhima and wounded him deeply. Bhima was red with bleeding wounds all over his body, but he minded them not. He attacked Karna, cutting Karna's bows in two and smashing his chariot. Bhima brought before his mind all the insults and injuries which he and his brothers and Draupadi had suffered, and fought desperately, caring not for his own life. Karna's bow was shattered and his charioteer reeled and fell. Again and again, Karna lost his chariot after he had replaced it with a new one.

Duryodhana saw Karna's plight and sent one of his brothers, Durjaya, to save Karna's life. In no time, Bhima sent Durjaya's horses and his charioteer to the abode of Yama and Durjaya himself fell mortally wounded. Karna once again had to find a fresh chariot. He sent well aimed shafts and hit Bhima. In a fury, Bhima hurled his mace at Karna. It crashed on Karna's chariot and killed his charioteer and horses and broke the flagstaff. Karna now stood on the ground with bent bow. Duryodhana now sent another brother, Durmukha, to relieve Karna. He fell lifeless in Bhima's hands with in minutes. Thus Bhima relentlessly continued his attack on Karna and the Kaurava princes. More than twenty Kaurava princes lost their lives while protecting Karna that day. Seeing Duryodhana's brothers, who came to help him, slain one after another in this manner, Karna was overwhelmed by anguish. He leant back on the seat in his chariot and closed his eyes, unable to bear the sight. Then recovering control over his emotions he hardened his heart and began attacking Bhima again. In the renewed and fierce battle between Bhima and Karna, Bhima lost his horses and charioteer. Soon his chariot was also smashed to pieces. Slowly, Bhima lost all his weapons, and stood in front of Karna with bear hands at a great disadvantage. Hurling insulting taunts at Bhima, Karna made the helpless Bhima burn with rage, but mindful of his word to Kunti, did not kill him.

As the day passed, Arjuna broke through the Kaurava opposition and came closer to Jayadratha. Inflamed by the thought of the slaughter of Abhimanyu, and all the great

wrongs inflicted on his family by the Kauravas, Arjuna fought with fury. Ashwathama and the other great warriors that protected the king of Sindhu fought fiercely but were all defeated and could not prevent Arjuna from closing in on Jayadratha. The attack on Jayadratha began and the battle raged long. Both sides were constantly looking westwards, for the day was nearing its end. The Sun sank towards the horizon and reddened, but the battle did not cease. Arjuna lost focus and frequently started looking at Sun. Seeing his friend's plight, Lord Krishna sent his Sudarshana Chakra to mask the sun. It appeared to everyone that the sun had set and that Arjuna had failed. The Kaurava warriors rejoiced over Arjuna's defeat and the Pandavas were depressed about his imminent suicide.

Jayadratha turned to the western horizon and thought he was saved. At that moment Krishna said to Arjuna: "Dhananjaya, Jayadratha is looking at the horizon. See the glint on his helmet? Aim there, and you will be victorious. I have caused this darkness. The Sun is still up and has not set. Do your work. This is the moment for it, for Jayadratha is off his guard." Arjuna shot a powerful arrow that cut Jayadratha's head off. Lord Krishna knew of Vriddhakshatra's curse, whereby whoever caused his son's head to fall on the ground would have his head burst into pieces. Lord Krishna was always looking out for Arjuna, so he told him to shoot continuous arrows to carry Jayadratha's severed head in to Vriddhakshatra's lap. Vriddhakshatra was sitting in meditation in his ashram. When he got up after meditation, Vriddhakshatra didn't see his son's head in his lap, causing it to fall on the ground. So it was his head that exploded, not Arjuna's! Krishna, Arjuna, Bhima, and Satyaki all blew their conches. Yudhisthira, hearing the triumphant noise, knew that it meant that Arjuna had redeemed his oath and that Jayadratha had been slain.

Questions:

Why was it wrong for six warriors to gang up on Abhimanyu?

Why did the voice say that Jayadratha would go to heaven?

What curse did Vriddhakshatra make, intending it for the person that would slay his son?

What is the abode of Yama?

How did Duryodhana think the Kauravas would win the war?

Which do you think is better, clever scheming or following dharma? What is dharma?

Why did Yudhisthira send Satyaki and then Bhima after Arjuna?

How many brothers did Duryodhana have? How many lost their lives to Bhima on the fourteenth day?

What did Karna promise Kunti, the Pandavas mother?

Was it right for Karna to taunt Bhima with mean words?

Who saved Arjuna from trouble when he slew Jayadratha?

How did Krishna set the Kaurava army and Jayadratha off their guard?

Why do you think Krishna protected Arjuna?

What happened to Jayadratha's father? Did his curse work as he had expected?

Sri Venkateswara Suprabhatam

Kousalya supraja Rama poorva sandhya pravarthathe; Uttishta Narasardula karthavyamdhaivamanhikam(1)
Uthishtothishta Govinda Uthishta Garuda dwaja; Uthishta Kamalakantha trilokyam mangalam kuru (2)
Matahassamastha jagatham MaduKaitabareh; Vaksho viharini manohara divya murthe
Sriswamini sritha jana priya dana seele; Sree Venkatesa dayite tava suprabhatham (3)
Tava Suprabhatamaravindalochane; Bhavatu prasanna mukha chandramandale
Vidhi Sankarendra vanithabhirarchite; Vrisha saila natha Dayite Dayanidhe! (4)
Atryadi sapta rishayah samupasya sandhyam; Akasa sindhu kamalani manoharani
Aadaya Padayugam archayitum prapannah; Seshadri sekhara vibho tava suprabhatham (5)
Panchananabja Bhava Shanmukha Vasavadyah; Trivikramadi charitam Vibhudas stuvanti
Bhashapathih Patathi vasara suddhimaarat; Seshadri sekhara vibho thava Suprabhatham (6)
Eeshatprapulla saraseeruha narikela; Poogadrumadi sumanohara palikanam
Aavati mandam Anilassaha divyagandhaih; Seshadri Sekhara Vibho tava suprabhatham (7)
Unmeelya netrayugam uttama Panjarasthah; Pathrava sishta kadaleephala payasani
Bhuktva saleelamatah Keli sukah patanthi; Seshadri sekhara Vibho tava Suprabhatham (8)
Tantree prakarsha madurasswanaya Vipanchya; Gayatyanantha charitham tava Naradopi
Bhasha samagram asakrit kara chara ramyam; Seshadri Sekhara Vibho tava Suprabhatham (9)
Bringavali cha makharanda rasaani viddah; Jangara geetha ninadhais saha sevanaya
Niryatyupanta sarasee kamalodharebhayah; Seshadri sekahra Vibho tava Suprabhatam (10)
Yosha ganena varadadni vimatyamane; Goshalayeshu dadi manthana teevra goshah
Roshat kalim vidadate kakhubhascha kumbah; Seshadri sekhara Vibho tava suprabhatham (11)
Padmesa mitra satha pathragathali vargah; harthum sriyam kuvalayasya nijanga Lakshmya
Bherininadhamivabibhrati teevranadham; Seshadri sekhara vibho tava Suprabhatham (12)
Srimannabhishta varadakhila lokhabando; Sri Srinivasa dayaika sindho
Sri devata griha bhujantara divyamurte; Sri Venkatachalapathe tava suprabhatham (13)

***Sriswami pushkarinikaplava nirmalan kah
sreyorthino Hara Virincha Sanandanadyah
Dvare vasanthi vara vetrahatottamangah
Sri Venkatachalapathe tava suprabhatam (14)***

O Lord of Lords! Having taken their holy dip in the Swami pushkarini, Gods like Brahma and Siva and sages such as Sanandana are waiting at the door for your Dharsan with their hands raised holding the cane (for controlling the crowds). Good morning to you.

***Sri Seshasaila Garudachala Venkatadri
Narayanadri Vrishabhadri Vrishadri mukhyam
Aakhyam tvadiya vasateranisham vadanti
Sri Venkatachalapathe tava suprabhatam (15)***

Glory to you O Lord of Seven Hills! Whose abode is described incessantly in the Holy books, variously as Seshachala, Garudachala, Venkatadri, Narayanadri, Vrishabhadri and Vrishadri as the important seven hills in which You reside.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ucSm8aB_Mz0

Jumble Words – All words are from this lesson

K I S E P

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S B R T U

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E E R S V

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C R E I E F

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L B T R A U

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M C E S E H

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R F Y U

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G T I H L P

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H O N C C

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T L S U O

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Coloring Exercise: Lori

