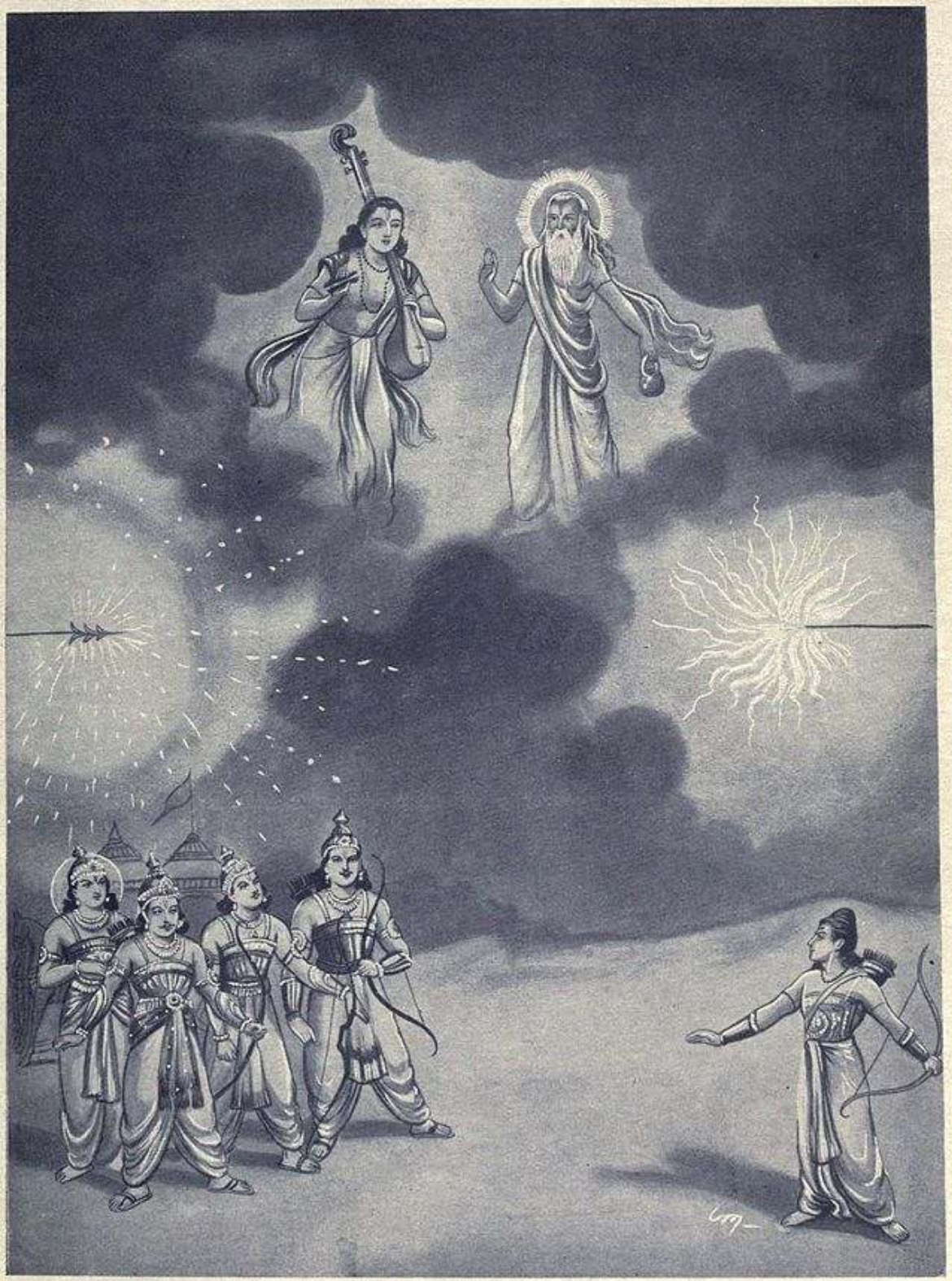


MAHABHARATA – Part 26

(Lord Krishna Curse to Aswatthama)



We learned about the evil plan that Aswatthama put in place to destroy the Pandava camp. Guru Kripacharya and Krithavarma tried their best to advise and convince not to do that. Thus, not listening to any reason, Aswatthama entered the Pandava camp. He started killing everyone while they slept. First he slew Dhrishtadyumna, who had killed his father. Then chaos erupted in the camp. Kripa and Kritavarma set the camp on fire. As men would try and flee through the gates, they would kill them. Because the men were all sleeping, and because Krishna and the Pandavas were not there, the whole camp was destroyed and everyone slain.

As morning broke, Aswatthama and the two others went to see if Duryodhana was still alive. He was in the last throes of death. "Of your army, only we three are alive. Of the Pandava army, only Satyaki, the five Pandavas, and Krishna are alive. Duryodhana stirred himself one last time, happy at the news, and then died.

Meanwhile, Dhrishtadyumna's charioteer came to Yudhisthira and told him the news, that all of Draupadi's five sons, and the others were dead. On hearing the news, Yudhisthira fell down senseless. Recovering himself, he said "Our victory has assumed the form of defeat!" He ordered Nakula to immediately bring Princess Draupadi, who he knew would be heartbroken at the news that all five of her sons had perished.

Draupadi was indeed heartbroken. "Grief burns me as if I am in a fire" she said. Bhima wrapped her in his arms to comfort her. The Pandavas wanted to know how to comfort her. She told them to find Aswatthama. Aswatthama had a curious characteristic. He was born with a jewel in his head, right where the third eye should be. It was very precious to him. Rather than telling her husbands to kill Aswatthama, she asked them to bring her the jewel. If they did not, she said she would die right where she was sitting. In ancient days, pure souls like Draupadi had the ability to withdraw their life force from their body.

Bhima immediately set off in pursuit of Aswatthama, quickly followed by Arjuna, Krishna and the twins. They found him sitting by the banks of the Ganges River, along with Sage Vyasa, Narada, and other Rishis. Bhima shot an arrow at him. Aswatthama had no weapons, but he did have the strongest weapon known, the Brahmastra. This was a celestial weapon, like a nuclear bomb today. It was so powerful that his father Drona had told him that it should never be used against humans. Nevertheless, Aswatthama picked up a blade of grass, invoked the mantras for the weapon, and directed it at Bhima saying "This is meant to kill all the Pandavas."

Immediately a big fire was created. Meteors fell from the sky, and many ominous omens were seen. Krishna said to Arjuna "Quickly Arjuna, send a Brahmastra of your own to counter Aswatthama's. Otherwise we will all be destroyed. Then Arjuna took an arrow, uttered the sacred mantras, and saying "This is to counteract Aswatthama's astra" sent it at the other astra. A big fire welled up. Immediately, sage Narada and sage Vyasa

appeared in the middle of the light. “You two, take your astras back, or the whole universe will be destroyed!” said the sages. Only a very pure person, with perfect self-restraint, could control the astras once released. Arjuna said “I will withdraw my astra. I only sent it to counteract Aswatthama’s Brahmastra. Please take care of his astra.” Aswatthama, who still respected the words of the sages, said “I am sorry, I do not have the power to retrieve the astra once released. I can only modify it. I will change it so that it will enter the wombs of all the Pandava woman and destroy any babies growing there. This will exterminate the line of the Pandavas permanently, just as the line of Kauravas has been destroyed by them.”

Abhimanyu’s wife, Uttara, had a fetus (baby) in her womb. She saw a bright light and heat approaching her womb. Then Krishna told Aswatthama “I am protecting the womb of Uttara. She will have a son named Parikshit. I am the creator of Brahma, whose energy is in the Brahmastra, so it cannot harm those under my protection.” In the womb, the unborn Parikshit saw the four armed Vishnu protecting him from an approaching light.

Krishna then pronounced a curse on Aswatthama: “Because you are wicked and evil, you will have to wander this world for the next 3,000 years. Blood and pus will ooze from your body, and you will have no companion. You will inhabit forests and lonely places only.” Reluctantly, Aswatthama surrendered the jewel in his third eye, which was most dear to him. Then he departed. The Pandavas returned to Draupadi, who agreed not to kill herself. After receiving the jewel, she gave it to Yudhishthira to wear on his crown.

Later, Yudhishthira asked Krishna “How is it that these three warriors could kill our entire camp by themselves, when we had such great warriors?” Krishna said “They were asleep and not ready for battle. Destiny had determined that their time on Earth was up.”

QUESTIONS:

Will an angry person like Aswatthama listen to reason? Why or why not? What did he do?

Was this wrong? Did he feel it was wrong?

How did Yudhishthira react to the news that all of Draupadi’s sons had died?

How did Draupadi react?

Was the Brahmastra meant to be used against other humans?

Arjuna withdrew his astra, what did Aswatthama do?

Did Krishna protect Parikshit? Who is Parikshit?

What was Krishna’s curse against Aswatthama? Why do you think he cursed him?

How was it that Aswatthama could defeat the Pandava camp?

Sri Venkateswara Suprabhatam

Tvad gopuragra sikharani nirikshamanah
Svargapavarga padaveem paramam srayantah
Martya manushya bhuvane matim aasraaynte
Sri Venkatachalapate tava suprabhatam (20)

Sri Bhoomi Nayaka dayadi gunamrutapte
Devadideva jagadeka saranya Moorte
Sriman Anantha Garudadhibhir architangre
Sri Venkatachala pate tava suprabhatam (21)

**Sri Padmanabha Purushottama Vasudeva
Vaikunta Madhava Janardana Chkrapane
Srivatsa chihna saranagata Parijata
Sri Venkatachalapate tava suprabhatam (22)**

**Kandarpa darpahara sundara divya murte
Kanta kuchamburuha kudmala lola dhrishte
kalyana nirmala gunakara divya kirte
Sri Venkatachalapate tava suprabhatam (23)**

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

Jumble Words – All words are from this lesson

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W L S E

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Coloring Exercise: Lord Ganesha

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