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OUR CULTURAL VALUES AND THEIR PRESENT APPLICATION AS PER MAHABHARATA

India is a land of great cultural heritage, ancient wisdom and moral values. Among the various sacred epics of India, the Mahabharata stands as the shining treasure of knowledge, philosophy and life lessons. Composed by the sage Vyasa, the Mahabharata is not just a war of story but it ~~the deep~~ reflection on human nature, righteousness (dharma), justice, truth and the eternal struggle between good and evil. The values taught in the epic of Mahabharata continue to shape our lives, even today thousands of years after it was written. ~~This essay~~ explores the cultural values reflected in the Mahabharata and their application in the modern world.

1. Dharma - The value of righteousness:

The central theme of the Mahabharata is Dharma, which means duty, righteousness and moral responsibility. Every character in the Mahabharata faces a situation where they must choose between right and wrong. Lord Krishna constantly reminds Arjuna to perform his duty without any attachments to the result as mentioned in the Mahabharata (Bhagavad Gita):

"You have the right to perform your prescribed duty; but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions"

In today's world, this message is more relevant than ever. People often face moral dilemmas in their personal and professional lives; Corruption, dishonesty and selfish motives sometimes overcome ethical decisions. The lesson of Dharma teaches us to act with integrity and fulfill our responsibilities honestly whether at home, school or work. Doing one's duty sincerely without expecting any personal gain is the true essence of righteousness.

2. Truth and honesty:-

Another powerful value shown in the Mahabharata is truth or satya. The epic portrays truth as the highest form of virtue. Yudhishthira, the eldest of the Pandavas, is also known as dharmaraja because of his deep commitment to truth and justice. However, the Mahabharata also shows that truth is not always simple. Yudhishthira's moral struggle during the dice game and war teaches us that truth must be guided by wisdom and compassion.

In modern times, honesty remains a vital cultural value. In a world filled with fake news, manipulation and deceit, being truthful builds trust and strengthens relationships. Our society still respects the people those who speak the truth truthfully, even in harder circumstances. The Mahabharata reminds us while lies may be temporary success, only truth leads to lasting peace and respect.

3. Respect for elders and teachers:

The Mahabharata beautifully portrays the traditional Indian cultural values of respecting elders and teachers. The Pandavas show deep respect to the elders like Bhishma and the teachers like Dronacharya, even though they stand on the opposite side in the war. This respect signifies the importance of gratitude and humility.

Today, this value is slowly fading among the younger generation. Modern life has made the people more individualistic, sometimes ignoring the wisdom of elders. However, the Mahabharata teaches us that elders and teachers are the foundation of knowledge, and guidance. Listening to their advice, showing respect and following their teachings helps us make wise decisions and live harmoniously.

4. Equality and justice:

The Mahabharata strongly upholds the principle of equality and justice. Lord Krishna stood by the Pandavas not because they were more powerful but they were on the side of Dharma. The epic emphasizes that justice must be above personal interest, public or power.

In modern society, the idea of equality and social justice reminds us one of the most essential values. Discrimination based on caste, gender or wealth still exists in many places, but the teachings of the Mahabharata remind us that everyone deserves fair treatment.

5. Self-control and discipline:

Throughout the Mahabharata, self-control and discipline are shown as qualities of great heroes. Arjuna's focus, Bhishma's vow of celibacy and Krishna's calmness during chaos demonstrate that self-discipline is the key to success and peace. The lack of control, on the other hand, leads to downfall like Duryodhana's uncontrolled pride and anger.

In today's fast-paced life, where distractions like social media and instant pleasures dominate, the lesson of self-discipline is crucial. Youth can learn from Arjuna's dedication to his goal. Professionals can learn from Krishna's wisdom in handling crisis with calmness. A person who controls their desires and emotions can lead a balanced and happy life.

6. Friendship and loyalty:-

True friendship and loyalty are also important cultural values shown in the Mahabharata. The friendship between Arjuna and Krishna is the most beautiful example. Krishna stands by Arjuna not only as a friend but as a guide and philosopher. Similarly, the bond between them the Pandavas shows unity and trust even during hardships.

In the present world, where relationships often depend on personal benefit, the value of genuine friendship is precious. True friends support each other not only in joy but also in sorrow. Being loyal and trustworthy strengthens the bond between people and makes society more compassionate and caring.

7. Leadership and duty towards society:

The Mahabharata also provides lessons on leadership. Lord Krishna, Bhishma and Yudhishtira shows how true leaders must be and serve the society selflessly. They are not to get power or fame but for the welfare of people and on the protection of dharma.

In modern governance and leadership, these principles are highly important. The leader must have honesty, courage, compassion and responsibility. When leaders follow these principles, society becomes more just, successful and progressive.

Conclusion

The Mahabharata is not merely a tale of war; it is a guide for life. Its teachings on dharma, truth, justice, self-control and compassion form the foundation of Indian culture. Though thousands of years old, these values remain timeless and relevant. In today's fast changing world, the lessons of the Mahabharata remind us of our true response - to live with integrity, respect others and uphold righteousness.

Our cultural values, inspired by the Mahabharata teach us that peace and happiness come not from wealth or power, but from living a life of truth, discipline and compassion.