



Śrīmad Bhāgavatam - Canto 1

*(This is a written compilation of discourses from
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॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

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- Prelude -

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is very popular. But many times people think Bhāgavatam is nothing but stories. Therefore we don't give enough importance to Bhāgavatam saying it's just stories. But when we enter deep into Bhāgavatam we understand how serious this text is.

The purpose of our study is to go in detail into Bhāgavatam. That is why, in the next one month and almost 17 classes, we will be covering one Canto. Whereas in Bhāgavatam Saptāha, in seven days they finish off the whole Bhāgavatam.

There are 12 cantos in Bhāgavatam.

So we are in no hurry to finish in seven days, we will go slowly, diving deep into the philosophical aspects of these verses and thoroughly enjoying the true message of Bhāgavatam. This is the purpose. Parīkṣit had to listen in seven days because he had to die in seven days. We are in no hurry. We have enough time. So with this, we now begin Bhāgavatam.

The first verse is the essence of the entire Bhāgavatam and it is a very very heavy verse. So we are going to spend some time only on this verse because it contains the essence of all the Upaniṣads, all the purāṇas, all the Vedas. It is in a capsule form. Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa Ṛṣi has put in this verse and big commentaries have been written only on this one verse.

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Session 1

[Verses 1, 2]

Chapter 1 ॥ प्रथमोऽध्यायः ॥

जन्माद्यस्य यतोऽन्वयादितरतश्चार्थेष्वभिज्ञः स्वराट् तेने ब्रह्महृदा य आदिकवये मुह्यन्ति
यत्सूरयः ।

तेजोवारिमृदां यथा विनिमयो यत्र त्रिसर्गोऽमृषा धाम्ना स्वेन सदा निरस्तकुहकं सत्यं परं धीमहि
॥ १ ॥

janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś cārtheṣv abhijñāḥ svarāṭṭ | tene brahma hṛdā
ya ādikavaye muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ | tejo-vāri-mṛdāṃ yathā vinimayo yatra
tri-sargo 'mṛṣā | dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakaṃ satyaṃ paraṃ dhīmahi
॥ 1 ॥

This is the first verse. Generally in Bhāgavatam people think, these are Kṛṣṇa stories. Not even once, the word Kṛṣṇa is mentioned. What is being said here is: सत्यं परं धीमहि: (satyaṃ paraṃ dhīmahi)

धीमहि (dhīmahi) : We meditate upon परं सत्यं: (paraṃ satyaṃ) Supreme truth, supreme reality. This is the first verse. There is no mention of कृष्णम् धीमहि (Kṛṣṇaṃ dhīmahi) or वासुदेवाय धीमहि (Vāsudevāya dhīmahi). We meditate upon the absolute truth, the absolute reality.

स्वेन धाम्ना सदा निरस्तकुहकं सत्यं परं धीमहि (dhāmnā svena sadā nirastakuhakaṃ satyaṃ paraṃ dhīmahi) is the description of that absolute truth. From its own standpoint, the standpoint of the absolute truth निरस्तकुहकं (nirasta-kuhakaṃ) there is no māyā at all.

कुहकं (kuhakaṃ) means māyā निरस्त (nirasta) means absence of.

It is that state where there is no māyā at all. It means there is no jagat, no jīva, no karma, no karma phala, no time, no space, no causation, there is no other. Only Parāṃ Satyaṃ is there. This is the description of Parāṃ Satyaṃ. There is nothing called māyā. Remember there is no Īśvara also. Īśvara means the one who rules over the world. Jīva is not there, jagat is not there, Īśvara is not there. Then what to talk of Guru and Śiṣya. Nobody is there. Only that Truth is there. To that Truth, our prostrations. May we meditate upon that Truth, may we attain that

Truth. This description is Svarūpa Lakṣaṇam (description of that entity as it is) or Parāmārthika Satyam. There is no space, no time, no causation. Nothing is there. This is what is sometimes called as Nirguṇa Brahmān. May we meditate upon that Truth.

Now, is this meditation easy or difficult? Bhagavān, this is going to be very difficult because for such an entity, you cannot have any love. Even if you meditate, that meditation will become a dry meditation. So, O' Vyāsa Bhagavān, please have compassion for us. Come down a little bit to our level.

We now find another description of the truth from a jīva's standpoint.

From our standpoint we see a world, we see ourselves, we see time, space and all those things. So the very same reality is described as though seen from our standpoint.

जन्माद्यस्य यतः (janmādy asya yato): यतः(yato) from whom अस्य जन्म आदिः (asya janmādy) This statement also comes in Brahmā Sūtra. The second Sūtra begins with this. Sūtra means capsule form.

From whom अस्य (asya) of this world, जन्माद्यस्य यतः (janmādy asya yato) beginning with creation, sustenance, and dissolution, beginning with birth and so on. That from whom the creation begins, is sustained and gets dissolved. This is from our standpoint. So remember, from the ultimate standpoint, there is no world. But in my state of ignorance it's hard for me to meditate on such a reality and hence, for me to be able to meditate on that reality, an easier, more relatable version is provided. In this way, the first statement states that reality, that Supreme Truth in whom the universe is created, emerges, sustains and is dissolved.

Bhagavān, how can you say that the whole creation comes from this Parām Satyam, Sat Chit Ānanda? How can the whole creation come from that Parām Satyam? (that which always exists irrespective of time).

The question is how did this world come from that Parām Satyam? So the answer to this is in the next line.

अर्थेषु अन्वयात् इतरतः (arthēṣu anvayād itarata) To understand this, we have to use what is Anvaya-Vyatireka method. It is a very commonly used technique. Anvaya means, in the presence of a thing when the other thing exists. When entity A is

present, entity B is present. Vyatireka is, what is the condition of B when A is absent? Is it still present or is it absent? For example fire and smoke is a very commonly used example. यत्र यत्र वह्निः तत्र तत्र धूमः (yatra yatra vahniḥ tatra tatra dhūmaḥ) When the fire is, smoke is, when the fire is not, smoke is not. So using this Anvaya-Vyatireka method, far away on a mountain, when you see smoke, you can apply the equation. Even if you are not seeing fire and only seeing smoke, you can conclude that there is definitely fire on the top of the mountain. Because, there is a relation between fire and smoke. Smoke cannot exist without fire.

In the same way, the world is seen and the whole world has come from Parām Satyam. How to prove it? By applying Anvaya-Vyatireka method. That is the meaning of अन्वयात् इतरतः अर्थेषु (anvayād itarataśca arthēṣu).

Generally, अर्थम् (artham) means, meaning. But here, it means that which gives meaning to the sense organs. When do sense organs become meaningful? Only when there is a sense object. Otherwise sense organs are useless. Only when there is a sense object, sense organs are meaningful. Therefore, here अर्थम् (artham) means sense objects. That which gives meaning to the sense organs.

अर्थेषु (arthēṣu) means in and through sense objects, अन्वयात् इतरतः (anvayād itarata) means using Anvaya-Vyatireka method it can be proved that whole world came from that truth, remains in that truth, dissolves in that truth. Now how can you apply this method?

When you see any object in this world, what do we say? We say, 'mike is', 'book is', 'watch is', 'hall is'. What is that 'is-ness'? It is Sat, existence. In everything that you see in this world, you add the term 'is'. It exists. Where did that object get its existence from? That existence has come from Parām Satyam. The object has only borrowed existence. Absolute existence belongs only to that entity. The moment you take the 'is-ness' out, (mike is, mike is not) When 'is-ness' is gone, the object is gone. This is called Vyatireka. In its presence, a thing is present, in its absence a thing is absent.

Suppose you take out the existence of this mike, what remains? Nothing remains. In fact you cannot take away the existence of anything. You can only change the form of it. For example you have some wood and you burn it. Wood is not, but ash is. You can never take away the 'is-ness'. You can take away the name and form, but the is-ness cannot be taken away.

When you burn the wood, there is fire, there is smoke, there is vapour, there is ash, something remains. You cannot destroy the 'Is-ness'. So the point is, in this world, everything 'is' and that 'is-ness' is a borrowed existence, borrowed from Parām Satyam. Therefore we can say that the word is born in that truth, remains in that truth and finally dissolves in that truth. Hence the whole world is born in that Supreme Being, in that Supreme Truth. The world has no existence other than that Supreme Truth.

Now the next question comes, Bhagavān, this world is so complex. There are so many entities, inert and sentient. Living beings, trees, insects, birds, animals, human beings. Even every category has so much variety. Among trees, for example, take a mango tree. Each mango tree is different, mangoes are different. In that particular variety of mango, every tree is different, every leaf is different. In that tree there are so many micro organisms. So much variety is there. How is it possible to create this variety? Is there some basis upon which these varieties are created? So the next word answers that question.

अर्थेषु अभिज्ञः (artheṣu abhijñah) That arthesu goes both ways. अन्वयात् इतरतः अर्थेषु (anvayād itarataśca artheṣu) and अर्थेषु अभिज्ञः (artheṣu abhijñah)

अभिज्ञः (abhijñah) means Sarvajña. That Lord who is Sarvajña. Now what are we describing? We are not describing Nirguṇa Brahmān, we are describing Saguṇa Brahmān. The difference is Nirguṇa Brahmān is from its own standpoint and Saguṇa Brahmān is from the standpoint of creation. That standpoint is taken for our sake. So, अभिज्ञः (abhijñah) means sarvajña. Sarvajña means all knowing.

The 'all knowing' who has both sāmānya and viśeṣa jñānam. He knows everything in general, He knows everything in particular. There are infinite things, He knows in general - that is the horizontal way. In-particular means, in the vertical way. Both ways. अर्थेषु (artheṣu) means remaining in every entity, it knows everything. It knows each one of us- what we are, the actions we do, what intention we do them with, with what intensity of intention we do, how long we do, to whom we do, it knows. It knows everything. From the infinite past whatever we have done, it knows. This is the meaning of अभिज्ञः (abhijñah).

So Bhagavān is Sarvavyāpi and also, Sarvajña. We are talking about Saguṇa Brahmān now. These are all the descriptions of the Lord and they are all very very useful at the seat of meditation in order to develop devotion for God, reverence for God.

So the next question comes, Bhagavān, where did you get this ability to know? How are you capable of knowing? Because when we know, we get tired and whatever we know is very little. And whatever we know is biased knowing, partial knowing, colored knowing, imperfect knowing. How are you able to know everything? Just imagine, infinite billion beings, knowing about everyone, everything, remembering their infinite past. Bhagavān, how are you able to know? So the next term answers this स्वराट् (svarāt).

स्वराट् (svarāt): Knowing is its nature. It is self shining - who knows everything. Bhagavān's knowing is effortless, absolute, instrument free, perfect, unbiased, spontaneous knowing. This is called perfect knowing. Knowing is its nature. Just like reflection is the nature of a mirror. Is the mirror getting tired after reflecting? It reflects effortlessly because reflection is its nature. In the same way, what is Bhagavān's nature? It is Chit, which means consciousness. Being conscious and aware. Knowing is its nature. Because He is there everywhere and in every entity in this world, sentient or insentient, naturally He will keep on knowing everything about everything.

What about our 'knowing'? Our knowing is mind based knowing. We know only when the mind functions. And the mind is able to know because it has borrowed the ability from consciousness. Therefore, any borrowed ability will have defects and imperfections. So, in our case, whenever the concepts become difficult, we dose-off. The mind is made this way. Its knowing is defect-full knowing. Consciousness knowing is defect-free knowing. All these terms are very very important at the seat of meditation. Especially when you are meditating upon consciousness.

Meditating about God at the seat of meditation is meditating about consciousness. That Lord from whom the whole creation has come and in whom the whole creation is sustained. The creation may be an illusory creation but the creation is a perfect creation because there is a perfect God behind this creation. And because He knows everything about everyone, He can be rightfully called Karma-Phala-Dātā. The giver of the fruit of action.

To give the fruit of action, He need not consult anyone because He is the sākṣī. Everything has happened in front of him because He is in every entity. He is there, watching. We think nobody is there, but there is somebody who is watching. He knows everything. Things which we also don't know, He knows. The thought passing in my mind, I may not know, but He knows. What thought is

there in my subconscious mind, I may not know, but He knows and knowing is His nature.

Such a perfect, all powerful, omniscient, omnipotent Lord is taking care of this world.

Now the question is, Bhagavān, I have heard that it is Lord Brahmā who has created the world. Now listen to this:

तेने ब्रह्महृदा य आदिकवये: (tene brahmā hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye) To this ādi kavi. Kavi means thinker. Here ādi kavi is Brahmā ji. (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Māheśvara- that Brahmā ji). तेने (tene) means gave, This supreme reality, this Saguna Brahmān, he gave. ब्रह्म तेने (brahmā tene) here ब्रह्म (brahmā) means knowledge of the Vedas. That Supreme Lord gave this Vedic knowledge to आदिकवये (ādi-kavaye), to Lord Brahmā.

So, Lord Brahmā was empowered with the knowledge of creation, with the ability to create. He by himself has no power. It is only a borrowed power, borrowed knowledge given by that Supreme Lord. There is no one higher than Supreme Brahmān which we call Īśvara. Nirguṇa Brahmān is generally called as Brahmān, Saguna Brahmān is generally called Īśvara. Saguna Brahmān means with respect to creation, the name of that truth is called Saguna Brahmān. So, that Supreme Lord gave the power to Lord Brahmā because of which Lord Brahmā came to be known as the creator of this world. Actually he has no power of his own. He is also a jīvatma.

Bhagavān, how was this knowledge given?

हृदा तेने (hṛdā tene) Saṅkalpa-mātreṇa, just by a mere wish, and the knowledge transfer happened. हृदा (hṛdā) also means, by the heart. Brahmā ji did some tapas and with that tapas, Bhagavān's heart melted and out of sheer grace, He gave the entire Vedic teaching to Brahmā ji. That story comes in the second Canto. Lord Brahmā was completely confused, and did not know what to do. He heard a voice 'Tapa Tapa'. So then, he started doing tapas for a long time and then Bhagavān's grace descended and he gained the knowledge.

That Supreme Lord who empowered even Lord Brahmā to gain the knowledge of creation and empowered him in creating this universe.

Now you may ask, Swamiji how is this even possible that just by हृदा ब्रह्म तेने (hṛdā brahma tene), just by a mere wish he gave?

Whenever such concepts are mentioned, try to put it in your own experience. Isn't it true that a lot of the knowledge that we have, is all हृदा तेने (hṛdā tene)?

For example, how do you see? Tell me, how did you gain the knowledge of how to see? Remember, for everything knowledge is necessary. What do you do while seeing? You adjust the lens of your eye- far away things you have to adjust the lens, nearby things you have to adjust the lens. Who gave you this knowledge to adjust the lens? Many times we don't even think, how we are living on this planet. Little things you pay attention to and you will come to know that very many things are just taken for granted. Even to see, you need knowledge.

Even to make use of the sense organs, even to interact with the sense objects, your sense organs must be taught. We don't think because we think that ability is ours. When you start paying attention, you come to know that there are so many things happening. All these abilities are given free. If you want to listen to something, you must know how to use the organ of hearing. Who gave you this knowledge? Have you observed the movement of the tongue while chewing food? Who gave you this knowledge? The only answer we can give is हृदा तेने (hṛdā tene).

That Lord knew that for the jīvatma to interact with this world and these objects, these abilities are necessary. He empowered us with this knowledge. Even for the physiological functions, urination and defecation, knowledge is necessary. The sensation and everything, who gave this knowledge? Pay attention.

The more and more you become spiritual, the more you come nearer and nearer into yourself. This is one sign of a pure mind. This is one sign of spiritual progress. The more impure the mind is, it will be thinking of all international problems and useless things where you can't do anything and the whole discussion will be around how we cannot do anything.

As you become spiritual, your attention starts going into things which are most relevant in your life. As you become more and more spiritual, your wandering of the mind from the past to the future stops and slowly the mind is focussed upon the present. Only when you are in the present, you can observe all these things that are happening at the body level. So many abilities are given to us and we

are not even aware that these abilities have been given because we have taken things for granted.

Anyways, the topic here is हृदा तेने (hrdā tene), so just by the mere wish of the Lord, He gave the entire Vedic teaching to Lord Brahmā. Brahmā ji became a fit recipient of this knowledge. This knowledge is the greatest, subtlest, and the most difficult because even the wisest people in the world, all the divinities are deluded with respect to knowledge. The great philosophers, thinkers, everybody is deluded, including Lord Brahmā. Then what to talk of others?

Who is the ādi Guru? Bhagavān himself. That is why we say

सदाशिवसमारम्भां शङ्कराचार्यमध्यमाम्। अस्मदाचार्यपर्यन्तां वन्दे गुरुपरम्पराम्
(sadāśiva-samārambhāṃ śaṅkarācārya-madhyamām | asmadācārya-paryantāṃ
vande guru-paramparām)

Shiva, Nārāyaṇa, everything is one. That first Guru-Śiṣya is none other than Bhagavān and Lord Brahmā. And how did that knowledge transfer take place? Not in some āśrama, not in some Vedānta class, just by a Saṅkalpa. Here is a right student and Bhagavān's heart melted and the knowledge just came down, he gained it. The whole Bhāgavatam is that knowledge. Remember this, it is the source.

Everybody in this world is deluded because of the absence of that knowledge. It is only by the grace of the Lord that this knowledge can descend in the heart. Otherwise it is just not possible. It is just Grace.

What is this sign of delusion, the sign of ignorance?

तेजोवारिमृदां यथा विनिमयो यत्र त्रिसर्गोऽमृषा (tejo-vāri-mṛdāṃ yathā vinimayo yatra tri-sargo 'mṛṣā)

यत्र त्रिसर्गः अमृषः (yatra tri-sargo 'mṛṣā) सर्गः (sargo) is creation. So creation is based on triguṇas - sattva, rājas, tamas. What is the sign of delusion? The sign of delusion is considering this world as real. So if you are considering this world as real, you are deluded.

Because of this delusion, this world of triguṇas appears very very real.

Now to make us understand how real is taken as unreal and unreal is taken as real, we have the example of a dream world. The dream world doesn't exist. What exists is not seen, what doesn't exist is seen.

One example is given: तेजोवारिमृदां यथा (tejo-vāri-mṛdāṁ yathā) just like तेज (tej) fire, वारि (vāri) water, मृदां (mṛdāṁ) earth or mud. Fire is never equal to water, water is never equal to earth. All three are separate but there are instances where one thing appears as the other. The best example is mirage water. Far away you see a big ocean in the desert and you think this is water. What is there is only earth. In the presence of तेज (teja) fire मृदां (mṛdāṁ) earth appears to be वारि (vāri) water. And now you think this is water and run after it. Actually there is no water. This is called delusion. What is there, you don't see, what is there, you see.

In the same way the whole creation appears to be very real but there is no creation at all, it is all the projection of the mind.

From the standpoint of the ultimate truth, there is nothing. No māyā, no world. There is only pure consciousness. To that consciousness, our prostrations.

Thus, the first verse is over. This is the essence of all the Upaniṣads, all the scriptures. This is the auspicious beginning.

So this is what actual Bhāgavatam is. For that Supreme Lord, from His standpoint, there is nothing other than him. Now that Lord appears to be Saguṇa Brahmān, appears to have created the world, is sustaining the world, destroying the world. He appears to be omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent. He appears to be karma-phala-dātā, sarva-śaktimān, sarva-samarthaḥ. Why is he appearing like that? It is very helpful for deluded people like us. We cannot understand Nirguṇa Brahmān but can to some extent appreciate Saguṇa Brahmān.

For example, when it comes to knowledge, we have little knowledge, He has infinite knowledge. I have little strength, He has infinite strength. I am little vyāpi, He is sarva vyāpi, I understand. I am a part, He is the whole, I understand. Saguṇa Brahmān is very easy to understand compared to nirguṇa Brahmān. When we say Nirguṇa Brahmān, there is nothing, I do not feel attracted to Nirguṇa Brahmān. It is very dry and I am not able to understand. So therefore that very same nirguṇa Brahmān appears to us as Saguṇa Brahmān.

So that reality can take us to that level. Now again Saguṇa Brahmān becomes very difficult to understand. So that Saguṇa Brahmān has to become Saguṇa Saakara Devata or Avatāra. That is again one step lower.

अवतारति इति अवतारः (avatāraati iti avatāraah). Avatāraati means descending, coming down. Conscious, deliberate descendence. Our mind is so gross, we are not able to comprehend. Forget about Nirguṇa Brahmān, we are even struggling with Saguṇa Brahmān. The mind is so extroverted, disturbed and distracted. Therefore, that compassionate Lord felt, I have to do something. So, leaving his abode he comes down to our abode. We are residing in delusion so He will have to come to our delusory world to take us to His real world. That form is called an avatāra. So that Nirguṇa Brahmān appears as Saguṇa Brahmān and takes a form. It is a conscious, deliberate, descendence.

Even when he is born, he knows who He is. For example, in the Kṛṣṇa avatāra, He may appear like an ordinary human being but he is not. He very clearly knows that I am not this body. I am going to make use of this body so that all these embodied beings will get attached to this body and then I will pull all of them. Suppose your pet dog has fallen into some pit and you have a rope, you will throw it down and pull it up, isn't it? In the same way Bhagavān also. The hook is avatāra. Our mind gets latched to it and then He pulls it up. So don't think He has come down to be with us, settle along with us. His job is not to settle here with us, He has come to take us to His abode. That is why in every avatāra when the work is done, what does he do with His body? He does not settle with children, grandchildren etc. He throws it away, job is over. There is only one purpose धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे (dharmā-saṁsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge).

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन्। प्रकृतिं स्वमधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया॥
(ajo'pi sannavyayātmā bhūtānāmīśvaro'pi san | prakṛtiṁ svāmadhiṣṭhāya sambhavāmyātmamāyāyā) Bhagavad Gita 4.6

With my own māyā, I take up a body, at my will, my time. I choose the body depending on the need. The purpose is धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय (dharmā-saṁsthāpanārthāya). To make every being firmly established in their dharmā. The purpose of avatāra is to make us established in our own nature. What is our nature? That Sat Chit Ānanda is our nature. That is the purpose. This way we have to understand avatāra.

So this was the glory of the Lord, next verse talks of the glory of Bhāgavatam.

धर्मः प्रोज्झितकैतवोऽत्र परमो निर्मत्सराणां सतां वेद्यं वास्तवमत्र वस्तु शिवदं तापत्रयोन्मूलनम्

श्रीमद्भागवते महामुनिकृते किं वा परैरीश्वरः सद्यो हृद्यवरुध्यतेऽत्र कृतिभिः
शुश्रूषुभिस्तत्क्षणात् ॥ २॥

dharmāḥ projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇāṃ satām vedyam vāstavam
atra vastu śivadam tāpa-trayonmūlanam | Śrīmad-bhāgavate mahā-muni-kṛte
kiṃ vā parair īśvaraḥ sadyo hr̥dy avarudhyate 'tra kṛtibhiḥ śuśrūṣubhis tat-kṣaṇāt
॥ 2 ॥

The glory of Srimand Bhāgavatam is shared in this verse. The composer is Parām muni Śrī Veda Vyāsa and the composition is called Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

What is the content of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam?

The content is Parāma dharmāha, your dharmā- supreme duty. It makes it very clear that our duty should be single pointed, unwavering, infinite devotion for God.

Bhāgavatam makes it very clear, you are not praying to God to get this or that. Those are secondary in significant by-products. They will come. The main purpose is developing single pointed devotion for God. Bhagavān is my everything, rest everything is secondary. This is called Parāma dharmā.

Bhagavān, who is fit for this knowledge?

निर्मत्सराणां सतां (nirmatsarāṇāṃ satām): Good hearted people will immediately love it. People with pure heart, those with freedom from anger, greed, lust, jealousy, likes and dislikes, rāga dveṣa, ahaṃkāra mama kāra. Such a heart is called a pure heart. This book is meant for such pure hearted people, those who don't have this मत्सर (matsarā) feeling of competition.

That is very interesting about spirituality, matsarā buddhi is not needed. It means competition. No competition is needed in spirituality at all. Whereas, for everything else in this world competition is necessary. Less jobs, more candidates, there is competition. Less food, more eaters, there is competition. As far as spirituality is concerned, no competition. Why? That Lord is there in the

heart of everyone. He is ever available, in full measure and everybody can get Him at the same time.

The path can be practiced by all and results can be experienced by all. God is निर्मत्सरा (nirmatsarā), that is the beauty of spirituality. Absolutely independent is your spiritual journey because the whole spiritual journey is all about dropping the ego. To drop the ego, do you need the help of somebody? That is the beauty of spirituality- the path can be practiced by everyone. The results can be attained by everyone in full measure. Competitive buddhi is nothing but an ugly buddhi, nothing but ego only. For such pure hearted ones, who are very humble, very co-operative, very loving, never competing with anyone, this path is meant for them.

Bhagavān, what will I get from this path?

This path is the most auspicious. Auspicious for not only yourself, but for everybody. As you grow in spirituality, not only you are benefitted, everybody around you is also benefitted.

Bhagavān, in what way will spiritual knowledge help me?

The तापत्रय (tāpatraya) will go away. Adhyātmika tāpa - freedom from tension, worries and anxieties. Ādhibhautika tāpa - as you become a greater devotee of the Lord, you will become such a sweet personality. You will sweeten the world around you. With your inner sweetness, you will create an outer sweetness. Your words are sweet, you are an egoless person, everybody will get attracted to you. Love, respect, reverence everything will come to you. You create a beautiful environment around you. Adhidaivika tāpa - No more birth and death. Liberation. So at all levels you are benefitted and others are benefitted.

Therefore, you must know this reality. And this reality will not change because it is satyam. That which is ever true and imperishable. Therefore once you gain it, it is a permanent gain. So, you must know it.

Bhagavān, when I practice what are the changes I will see?

The one who listens, the one who practices with a pure mind, that very moment as you are listening to this, you will find the Lord gets arrested in your heart अवरुध्यते (avarudhyate) means getting arrested. He can't go anywhere. You will start experiencing His presence in your heart. He has no choice, He can't go.

The moment with all faith, all devotion you start listening, that moment you start feeling His presence in your heart. Because your thoughts are divine, the divine thoughts will make you experience the divinity in your heart.

This scripture has everything. It can give you jñāna, bhakti, vairāgya. It can give you everything.

The essence of the first verse is the essence of all our scriptures. May we meditate upon the ultimate truth which is free from all kinds of effects of māyā, which is ever shining as Sat Chit Ānanda, the self of all beings.

The very same Lord is the cause of the Universe. Creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe happens upon this truth. That Lord who is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent empowered Lord Brahmā in creation of this cosmos. He by mere saṅkalpa gave the entire Vedic knowledge to Lord Brahmā. That Vedic knowledge regarding which all devatas are confused.

May we meditate on that supreme Lord upon which the whole illusory creation appears to be so real.

Nirguṇa Brahmān himself has become Saguṇa Brahmān with respect to this universe and now that supreme Lord takes a form and appears in a human form. So Bhāgavatam is the story of such avatāras.

The purpose of such avatāras is to take our attention from this illusory world to the ultimate truth. The truth that is shining in the heart of each and everyone. This is the purpose of avatāra.

The content of this scripture is Parāma dharmā, the ultimate duty of a human being which is developing single pointed devotion for God. When you listen to this scripture with total faith, you start experiencing the presence of that Supreme Lord in your own heart. This is the purpose of the composition of this scripture.

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Session 2

[Chapter 1 Verse 3-13]

निगमकल्पतरोर्गलितं फलं शुक्मुखादमृतद्रवसंयुतम् । पिबत भागवतं रसमालयं मुहुर्हो रसिका
भुवि भावुकाः ॥ ३ ॥

nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṃ phalaṃ Śuka-mukhād amṛta-drava-saṃyutam ।
pibata Bhāgavatam rasam ālayaṃ muhur aho rasikā bhuvi bhāvukāḥ ॥ 3 ॥

Bhāgavatam is compared with a fruit, a fully ripened fruit from the Kalpataru tree, the wish fulfilling tree. Vedas are the wish fulfilling tree because you can fulfil any desire. It has the means to fulfil worldly or spiritual desires. Therefore, Vedas are compared to the wish fulfilling Kalpataru.

This fruit has ripened remaining upon the tree. A fruit that remains in the tree and gets ripened is extremely sweet and tasty.

Generally such ripened fruit is pecked by a parrot. It is said, whichever fruit has been pecked by the parrot, is extremely sweet. In the same way, this fruit has been pecked by Śuka, which means parrot. Normal fruit is pecked by a parrot and this Bhāgavatam fruit is also pecked by a parrot and here it refers to Sage Śuka Brahmārṣi. So the fruit is filled with the juice of immortality. Anyone who eats this fruit, will become immortal.

पिबत भागवतं रसमालयं (pibata Bhāgavatam rasam ālayaṃ): The fruit is amṛtatva - it is a fruit of immortality. Ordinary fruit has waste material- skin, seed etc but in this fruit, there is nothing to waste. You can eat the whole fruit, there is no seed, there is no skin.

मुहुर्हो रसिका भुवि भावुका (muhur aho rasikā bhuvi bhāvukāḥ) An ordinary fruit when eaten is gone, it cannot be eaten again. But this fruit you can eat again and again. This is the fruit from the tree of Vedas. Fruit is nothing but the essence of a tree. Suppose you eat a piece of a tree, it is very tasteless. Though the fruit has come from a tree, the taste of a tree is very different from the taste of its fruit. In the same way, if you directly go to the Vedas and understand, you will not understand anything. In fact there are statements that are contradicting and sometimes it is very dry and not clear.

But now this fruit has come, taking the essence of the Vedas and presenting it in such a way that it is tasty and edible. The very same message of the Vedas has

been brought out in a beautiful soul stirring way through stories with a message that we are able to understand. See the comparison. Just like ocean water cannot be drunk, that water has to be filtered so we can drink. In the same way, the essence of the Vedas, has been taken out by Veda Vyāsa Ṛṣi for the welfare of the suffering mankind.

Upon the earth the real enjoyers are those who revel in the devotion for God. That bhakti-bhava is there. Such devotees alone truly enjoy life. Real enjoyment is not sense enjoyment, it is the devotion in the heart. That we find in the lives of great devotees. They may be extremely pure but they are the happiest ones in life. Because in such a devotees life there is no tension, anxiety or worry. They constantly experience the presence, solace, inspiration, guidance, company and protection of the divine. This is the way to thoroughly enjoy life. Cultivating that devotion is the main theme of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

नैमिषेऽनिमिषक्षेत्रे ऋषयः शौनकादयः । सत्रं स्वर्गाय लोकाय सहस्रसममासत ॥ ४ ॥
naimiṣe 'nimiṣa-kṣetre ṛṣayaḥ śaunakādayaḥ । satraṁ svargāya lokāya
sahasra-samam āsata ॥ 4 ॥

In the holy forest of Naimiṣāranya. The speciality of this place is, it is a Viṣṇu kṣetra, a very holy sacred place. It is called Animīṣa Kṣetra (the land of the imperishable Lord). Animīṣa means - non blinking Lord - This Lord who is all the time, with opened eyes. It signifies the Lord who is alert, vigilant, paying attention to everything, knowing everything.

That place, which is very sacred, is the abode of Viṣṇu. In this place Śaunakadi Ṛṣis were performing a big Yaga to attain Vaikuṇṭha loka - gain liberation. These Ṛṣis were doing this yāga for one thousand years.

त एकदा तु मुनयः प्रातर्हुतहुताग्नयः । सत्कृतं सूतमासीनं पप्रच्छुरिदमादरात् ॥ ५ ॥
ta ekadā tu munayaḥ prātar huta-hutāgnayaḥ । satkṛtaṁ sūtam āsīnaṁ
papraccchur idam ādarāt ॥ 5 ॥

All these Ṛṣis finished the morning rituals and went to Sūta Ṛṣi, a highly knowledgeable enlightened Sage. They prostrated to him and with great respect and reverence asked a question.

ऋषय ऊचुः ।

त्वया खलु पुराणानि सेतिहासानि चानघ।आख्यातान्यप्यधीतानि धर्मशास्त्राणि यान्युत ॥ ६॥
ṛṣaya ūcuḥ ।

tvayā khalu purāṇa ni sa-itihāsāni cānagha । ākhyātāny apy adhītāni
dharmā-śāstrāṇi yāny uta ॥ 6 ॥

यानि वेदविदां श्रेष्ठो भगवान् बादरायणः । अन्ये च मुनयः सूत परावरविदो विदुः ॥ ७॥
yāni veda-vidāṃ śreṣṭho Bhagavān bādarāyaṇaḥ । anye ca munayaḥ sūta
parāvara-vido viduḥ ॥ 7 ॥

O' Sūta Rṣi you are such a great scholar, you have studied all the purāṇas, all the Itihāsas, all the dharmāśāstras. You have not only learnt it, you have also taught it. Therefore all the great knowledge that great Rṣis like Vyāsa Rṣi have gained, you also know it. By their grace and blessings you have gained all that knowledge. You have not only known it but have also experientially gained this knowledge.

वेत्थ त्वं सौम्य तत्सर्वं तत्त्वतस्तदनुग्रहात् । ब्रूयुः स्निग्धस्य शिष्यस्य गुरवो गुह्यमप्युत ॥ ८॥
vettha tvaṃ saumya tat sarvaṃ tattvatas tad-anugrahāt । brūyuḥ snigdhasya
śiṣyasya guravo guhyam apy uta ॥ 8 ॥

You know because the grace and blessings of all these gurus have always been upon you. You are such a wonderful disciple of these Rṣis. They had love and affection for you therefore have told you even the greatest of the secrets. You know everything.

Therefore, this is our request:

तत्र तत्राञ्जसाऽऽयुष्मन् भवता यद्विनिश्चितम् । पुंसामेकान्ततः श्रेयस्तन्नः शंसितुमर्हसि ॥ ९॥
tatra tatrāñjasā āyuṣman bhavatā yad viniścitam । puṃsām ekāntataḥ śreyas tan
naḥ śaṃsitum arhasi ॥ 9 ॥

Whatever scriptures you have studied and from that, whatever essence you have gathered and conclusions you have derived, please tell us. Tell us that, which can be easily practiced and that which is extremely good for everybody.

प्रायेणाल्पायुषः सभ्य कलावस्मिन् युगे जनाः । मन्दाः सुमन्दमतयो मन्दभाग्या ह्युपद्रुताः ॥
१०॥

prāyeṇālpāyuṣaḥ sabhya kalāv asmin yuge janāḥ । mandāḥ sumanda-matayo
manda-bhāgyā hy upadrutāḥ ॥ 10 ॥

O' R̥ṣi, We are all in Kaliyuga. In this kaliyuga, life span is very less. The body has no physical strength, there is very little immunity and people are lazy.

Superlative degrees of no intelligence, foolish people, dull witted ones, even their prārabdha karmas are unfortunate. They are totally distracted and troubled by Adhyātmika, Ādhibhautika, Adhidaivika tāpa.

You may say, what is this, we are supposed to be the most intelligent. It is the yuga of AI etc. We are called mandamati because, to the extent you are dependent on the outside world, you are weak. Independence is strength.

What are we all dependent upon? Without electricity we cannot run the world, without the internet, without social media, petrol and slowly we are getting into AI. A time will come without AI controlled machines, the world will not run.

So, are we going towards bondage or are we going towards freedom? To the extent I depend on the world, to that extent the entities have the potential to distract me, disturb me. Because I am dependent on that external entity and anything happening to that external entity, I get distracted and disturbed. The more and more you depend on the outer entity, you will become 'manda' only.

Genetically modified fruits and vegetables look very attractive and sweet but there is no nutrition. Because I am interested in the look, the freshness, the juice and I see only that. The real thing is nutrition which I cannot see. What I see, I believe. What cannot be seen I don't trust. So this is the sign of a mandamati.

Outer things are important, the essence is ignored. Superficial things are important, the real, I can't see. The glow of the outer skin is very important, the purity of the internal mind, who cares? In kaliyuga it is said people will be more interested in their hair, their nails, and the texture of their skin. All unimportant things become the most important. The one thing which is the most important is the mind, the thoughts, who cares. This is the sign of mandamati. All this we see, so whatever is said here, is perfect.

The point is, Śaunaka R̥ṣi says these are the kind of people who are in Kaliyuga. So if you ask us to read the purāṇas, Itihāsas, dharmāśāstras, it is just not possible.

भूरीणि भूरिकर्माणि श्रोतव्यानि विभागशः । अतः साधोऽत्र यत्सारं समुद्धृत्य मनीषया ।

ब्रूहि नः श्रद्धानानां येनात्मा सम्प्रसीदति ॥ ११ ॥

bhūrīṇi bhūri-karmāṇi śrotavyāni vibhāgaśaḥ । ataḥ sādho 'tra yat sāraṁ
samuddhṛtya manīṣayā । brūhi naḥ śraddadhānānāṁ yena ātmā samprasīdati ॥

11 ॥

O' Lord there are so many scriptures with various rituals mentioned and so many Gods and Goddesses. So even if we read, we get confused. Therefore, O' Lord, you are wise. For the people of Kaliyuga, give us the essence with your bright intellect. We have total faith in you. Say it in a way that we feel fulfilled. Also, we have heard that there is an avatāra of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Those details also please tell us. What are the līlās which the Lord did, the teachings which the Lord gave, please tell us.

When there is satsang, helplessly you are also thinking of noble divine thoughts.

This is the way we must also spend our time. Nothing is written, it is indicated. That is why with study of Bhāgavatam you come to know the lifestyle of these great Ṛṣis. Silently the message is given. In life, spend your time in noble activities like satsang.

Chapter 2 ॥ द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ॥

इति संप्रश्नसंहृष्टो विप्राणां रोमहर्षणिः । प्रतिपूज्य वचस्तेषां प्रवक्तुमुपचक्रमे ॥ १ ॥

iti saṁpraśna-saṁhr̥ṣṭo viprāṇāṁ roma-harṣaṇiḥ । pratipūjya vacas teṣāṁ
pravaktum upacakrame ॥ 1 ॥

In this way those Ṛṣis with great honor, reverence, humility asked this question. Such an interaction is called Saṁvāda. With great respect, when the student is asking the teacher, that divine conversation in which the discussion is happening is called a Saṁvāda or a dialogue. This way they asked, pleasing the teacher by praising him, revering him with all humility, all faith, literally worshipping the teacher with words.

This way, the son of Romaharṣaṇa Ṛṣi, got ready to speak.

सूत उवाच ।

यं प्रव्रजन्तमनुपेतमपेतकृत्यं द्वैपायनो विरहकातर आजुहाव । पुत्रेति तन्मयतया
तरवोऽभिनेदु-स्तं सर्वभूतहृदयं मुनिमानतोऽस्मि ॥ २ ॥

sūta uvāca ।

yaṁ pravrajan tam anupetam apetakṛtyaṁ dvai-pāyano viraha-kātara ājuhāva ।
putreti tanmāyātayā taravo 'bhinedus taṁ sarva-bhūta-hṛdayaṁ munim ānato
'smi ॥ 2 ॥

This verse had also come in Bhāgavata Māhātmya. He started with worshiping his teacher:

Sūta Ṛṣi prostrated to his guru. Whatever I got is from Guru Parāmpara. This knowledge has benefited me, and now there are some seekers who are interested in this knowledge. So, invoking the grace and blessings of his teacher, he is going to speak. So, what is being said here is, I bow to that muni - my teacher- Śuka Brahmārṣi. He invoked the grace and blessings of Śuka Brahmārṣi from whom he gained this knowledge.

The whole verse is a description of that Śuka Brahmārṣi who is the giver of the entire Bhāgavatam to Parīkṣit. That is how we have Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. Now the glory of the teacher is mentioned in this verse.

सर्वभूतहृदयं (sarva-bhūta-hṛdayaṁ) That Śuka Brahmārṣi who is residing in the hearts of all as the very self in us.

यं प्रव्रजन्तमनुपेतमपेतकृत्यं (yaṁ pravrajan tam anupetam apetakṛtyaṁ) Śuka Brahmārṣi is the son of Vyāsa Ṛṣi. Even at a very young age even before the thread ceremony, he renounced the world. He realised the whole world is essenceless and the only essential thing is Bhagavān. He renounced because there was no identification with the body itself. A person who has become free from all duties and responsibilities.

We have duties and responsibilities when we have identification with the body. As he had no identification with the body, he renounced the world.

द्वैपायनो विरहकातर आजुहाव (dvai-pāyano viraha-kātara ājuhāva) But Vyāsa Ṛṣi was still attached. There was a pang of separation and Vyāsa Ṛṣi could not control and started crying out of the pain of separation and called, "Putra, stop! don't leave us!" Vyāsa Ṛṣi himself was so great and his son was a step ahead of his father.

At that time, the trees replied

स्तं सर्वभूतहृदयं मुनिमानतोऽस्मि (taṁ sarva-bhūta-hṛdayaṁ munim ānato 'smi): Śuka Brahmārṣi is the self in each and every being including the plants and

trees. So the reply came from the trees: 'Your son is the self in all of us'. To that Śuka Brahmārṣi who had no identification with the body, and had taken avatāra only to guide confused worldly people like us. To that Śuka Brahmārṣi who resides in the hearts of all, as the very self, to that Muni, I bow down.

यः स्वानुभावमखिलश्रुतिसारमेक-मध्यात्मदीपमतितृषतां तमोऽन्धम् । संसारिणां
करुणयाऽऽह पुराणगुह्यं तं व्याससूनुमुपयामि गुरुं मुनीनाम् ॥ ३ ॥
yaḥ svānubhāvam akhila-śruti-sāram ekam adhyātma-dīpam atititṛṣatām tamo
'ndham । saṁsārīṇāṁ karuṇayā āha purāṇa -guhyaṁ taṁ Vyāsa-sūnum upayāmi
gurum munīnām ॥ 3 ॥

I take refuge in this great teacher, the Guru of all the saints and sages. The teacher of the teachers. To that Ṛṣi, who is the son of Vyāsa Ṛṣi, I take refuge.

For all of us caught up in this saṁsāra but desirous of coming out. For those stuck in the darkness of ignorance, but want to cross over, for such saṁsārīs like us, with extreme compassion, he spoke the secret knowledge of the purāṇas, a great secret, which is equivalent to the lamp of spirituality, which is the essence of all scriptures.

Whatever is said here, you can directly experience it. Infact, Śuka Brahmārṣi experienced it and gave it. And the glory of this knowledge is, anyone who follows this path can directly experience it. And that is why such scriptures are alive all the time. Thousand of years back these scriptures were written and even today they are alive. Many have followed this, experienced this and passed it on to the next generation. This itself shows that whatever is said here is true, it can be experienced.

To that Ṛṣi, who gave this Bhāgavatam, who gave this knowledge that has been verified experientially, that has been given with extreme compassion, to that munīnām Guru, the teacher of sages we take refuge.

The next verse is remembering all important dignitaries.

नारायणं नमस्कृत्य नरं चैव नरोत्तमम् । देवीं सरस्वतीं व्यासं ततो जयमुदीरयेत् ॥ ४ ॥
nārāyaṇaṁ namaskṛtya naraṁ caiva narottamam । devīm saraśvatīm Vyāsaṁ
tato jayam udīrayet ॥ 4 ॥

तत जयमुदीरयेत् (ato jayam udīrayet) How should we study Bhāgavatam?

The study and teaching of this text should happen after we pray to Nara–Nārāyaṇa. They are the divine sages. It is said they always meditate in the Himalayas in the Badarikāśrama. They are always together. It is said Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are avatāraas of Nara–Nārāyaṇa. Symbolically also it is true, jīvātma and Parāmātma are always together. Nara means human being, Nārāyaṇa means Lord. You cannot separate them. Prostrating onto them.

Also praying to Saraswati devi, the goddess of knowledge and Vyāsa Ṛṣi (Śuka Brahmārṣi got knowledge of Bhāgavatam from Vyāsa Ṛṣi). So prostrating to all these great divinities, Bhāgavatam should be taught and studied.

This scripture is called Jayam as this will help you win over saṁsāra. That is the greatest victory- winning over the birth-death cycle. That is why Bhāgavatam is called Jayam. Mahābhārata is also called Jayam.

So now, bowing down to all of them, Sūta Ṛṣi begins verse 5.

मुनयः साधु पृष्टोऽहं भवद्भिर्लोकमङ्गलम् । यत्कृतः कृष्णसम्प्रश्नो येनात्मा सुप्रसीदति ॥ ५॥
munayaḥ sādhu pṛṣṭo 'haṁ bhavadbhir loka-maṅgalam । yaṁ kṛtaḥ
kṛṣṇa-sampraśno yena ātmā su-prasīdati ॥ 5 ॥

O' Muni's, O' Ṛṣis what a wonderful question you have asked. The question is excellent and it leads to the benefit of the whole world. It is very very useful. The question is, Bhagavān, give us the essence of all scriptures by which there is total fulfilment and give it in such a way that it is easy to practice. Also you have asked about the līlās of Kṛṣṇa. It is a great question so I can revel in the glories of Kṛṣṇa. This way I am benefitted, you are benefitted, the world is benefitted and there is complete fulfillment also.

स वै पुंसां परो धर्मो यतो भक्तिरधोक्षजे । अहैतुक्यप्रतिहता ययाऽऽत्मा सम्प्रसीदति ॥ ६॥
sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje । ahaituky apratihatā yayā
ātmā samprasīdati ॥ 6 ॥

Developing devotion for the Lord is indeed the greatest duty of human beings. Bhakti that is unconditional, causeless, unobstructed, uninterrupted, continuous.

Uninterrupted flow is just like the flow of melted ghee. Constantly, the mind is thinking of the Lord without getting distracted. Effortless, spontaneous, continuous, uninterrupted. It is not like water flow, it is like oil flow. This is the ultimate duty, the flow towards the Lord who is अधोक्षजे (adhokṣaje) Adha aksha ja. Aksha: sense organs ja: born out of sense organs i.e knowledge of sense objects. Adha: not born out of sense organs. This means, the Lord that cannot be perceived by sense organs. That Lord who made the sense organs inferior by not getting caught up, by not becoming an object of perception for the sense organs. Sense organs can catch everything, but they cannot grasp consciousness.

This is the highest duty because when you start developing this devotion for the Lord, you will find absolute, complete fulfillment. Physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual all personalities are satisfied. That is total fulfillment. When Bhakti comes, you feel, yes there is absolute fulfillment. There are no more cravings or desire for anything. Life must be used for that.

वासुदेवे भगवति भक्तियोगः प्रयोजितः । जनयत्याशु वैराग्यं ज्ञानं च यदहैतुकम् ॥ ७ ॥
vāsudeve bhagavati bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ । janayaty āśu vairāgyaṁ jñānaṁ ca
yad ahaitukam ॥ 7 ॥

Is Bhakti important or jñāna important? The moment you start having bhakti towards Bhagavān Vasudeva; jñāna and Vairāgya come with this bhakti. Remember Bhāgavata Māhātmya, Bhakti is mother and jñāna, vairāgya are children and Mukti is daasi.

Without knowledge, can you love anyone? No. In such context you understand it in this way- first you have saṁjñāna that leads to saṁjñāna bhakti and that leads to nirguṇa jñāna.

So the first step is not knowing the highest reality. Develop love for Vasudeva. This is easy because His līlās are full of virtues and then the mind becomes attracted and such a fit mind gets ready to understand the highest reality. Thus dispassion is developed and there is knowledge about the entity which is beyond all cause. Knowledge of the 'causeless cause', knowledge of the substratum is attained. Every knowledge comes with cause and effect. But consciousness is free from all cause and effect. Start from Bhakti, you will start loving Saṁjñāna Brahmān and with that, you become fit to understand Nirguṇa Brahmān.

This knowledge is Ahaitukam jñānam.

धर्मः स्वनुष्ठितः पुंसां विष्वक्सेनकथासु यः । नोत्पादयेद्यदि रतिं श्रम एव हि केवलम् ॥ ८ ॥
dharmāḥ svanuṣṭhitaḥ pūṁsāṁ viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ ।
notpādayed yadi ratiṁ śrama eva hi kevalam ॥ 8 ॥

A person could be doing his duty perfectly well but if your performance of duty does not give devotion for God, it is a waste of effort. In fact, all your actions will only bind you. Kartṛtva and Bhokṛtva (sense of doership) will increase, likes and dislikes will increase, you are binding yourself more. This is even if you are doing your duties and responsibilities properly. This is a shocking statement for many. Duties must be performed in such a way that it must develop devotion for God. Only then you are doing your duty properly. This is the essence of karma yoga.

Now there is a beautiful description of dharmā, artha, kāma, mokṣa in verses 9 & 10

धर्मस्य ह्यापवर्ग्यस्य नार्थोऽर्थोपकल्पते । नार्थस्य धर्मैकान्तस्य कामो लाभाय हि स्मृतः ॥ ९ ॥
dharmāsya hy āpavargyasya nārtho'rthāyopakalpate । nārthasya
dharmāikāntasya kāmo lābhāya hi smṛtaḥ ॥ 9 ॥

कामस्य नेन्द्रियप्रीतिर्लाभो जीवेत यावता । जीवस्य तत्त्वजिज्ञासा नार्थो यश्चेह कर्मभिः ॥ १० ॥

kāma sya nendriya-prītir lābho jīveta yāvatā | jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā nārtho yaś
ceha karmabhiḥ || 10 ||

First, let us discuss the wrong way of living life. What is our understanding of dharmā, artha, kāma, mokṣa? Caturvidha-puruṣārthas, the four goals of life. An ignorant person will say, dharmā is for artha; artha is for kāma ; kāma itself is mokṣa. This is the philosophy of an ignorant person. Why should I be righteous? So that I can earn money. So I can be credible in this world. When you are a credible straightforward person, everybody will give you business. You will win trust and you will gain a lot of money. With money you fulfill all your desires and fulfilling all desires is mokṣa. That is happiness. This is the foolish philosophy of foolish people.

What is said here is, the purpose of dharmā is mokṣa. It is not artha (making money) I am living a clean life, righteous life to purify the mind. The purpose of this purified mind is so that I can attain liberation.

The purpose of artha is dharmā, doing good to everyone. Whatever wealth you have, make use of the wealth to earn puṇya, through dharmā. Convert your laukika sampat into devi sampat. Convert into puṇya karma. When you have wealth, use it for a lot of seva activities. That is the purpose of wealth.

The purpose of wealth is not kāma . Generally the feeling is, when I fulfill worldly desires, I am happy. The purpose of fulfilling kāma is to sustain life. Example: Eating: you can eat to enjoy, to indulge, you can also eat to sustain life. The purpose of sense indulgence is only one, to sustain life. The purpose of life is to know this reality.

Life must be used to attain this ultimate truth.

Artha is for dharmā, dharmā is for mokṣa. kāma is to sustain the body, sustain life and life is for attaining the supreme. Life must be utilised to know that ultimate truth. Then that life is well spent.

वदन्ति तत्तत्त्वविदस्तत्त्वं यज्ज्ञानमद्वयम् । ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्दयते ॥ ११ ॥
vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam | brahmeti paramātmēti
Bhagavān iti śabdyate || 11 ||

That pure consciousness is the non dual self. That non dual knowledge is called the truth. There is nothing other than that consciousness. It is the ultimate reality, it is my own self, The 'I' in myself. You may call it Bhagavān, Parāmatma, Brahṁā, but it is that truth. Life must be utilised to know this truth.

तच्छ्रद्धधाना मुनयो ज्ञानवैराग्ययुक्तया । पश्यन्त्यात्मनि चात्मानं भक्त्या श्रुतगृहीतया ॥ १२॥
tac chraddadhānā munayo jñāna-vairāgya-yuktayā | paśyanty ātmani cātmānaṁ
bhaktyā śruta-grhītayā || 12 ||

What happens to the contemplative ones, the ones full of faith? Listening to these scriptures, thus filling their hearts with devotion for God, developing jñāna and vairāgya पश्यन्त्यात्मनि चात्मानं (paśyanty ātmani cātmānaṁ), the truth about God, he finds in himself by himself. The experience of the Lord happens in the abidance of the Self. When you experience that consciousness within yourself, that experience is called Bhagavad Darśanam - the vision of God.

So, listen to the scriptures and develop devotion for the Lord. With that devotion, the mind becomes prepared with dispassion, knowledge etc. In such a purified heart, the vision of God happens as abidance in the Self.

The purpose of all the Yogas (karma yoga, jñāna yoga, aṣṭāṅga yoga) is abidance of the mind in the heart space. That is the purpose and that is called ईश-दर्शनम् (Īśa darśanam), vision of God.

अतः पुम्भिर्द्विजश्रेष्ठा वर्णाश्रमविभागशः । स्वनुष्ठितस्य धर्मस्य संसिद्धिर्हरितोषणम् ॥ १३॥
ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśaḥ | sva-nuṣṭhitasya dharmāsya
saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam || 13 ||

Therefore, the ultimate goal of fulfilling all duties and responsibilities is pleasing the Lord, developing devotion for God. This is how we must live our life. Whatever duties and responsibilities we have got, must culminate in devotion for God. This is the purpose.

The greatest duty of everyone in this world is अहैतुकी अप्रतिहता भक्ति (ahaitukī apratihatā bhakti). Unconditional, unwavering, single pointed, uninterrupted devotion for the Lord.

धर्मः स्वनुष्ठितः पुंसां विष्वक्सेनकथासु यः । नोत्पादयेद्यदि रतिं श्रम एव हि केवलम् ॥ ८॥
dharmāḥ svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsāṁ viṣṇvakṣena-kathāsu yaḥ |
notpādayed yadi ratim śrama eva hi kevalam

If a person is doing his duties very well, sincerely, honestly, with dedication but if there is no devotion for God, if he is not performing his action as a worship of the Lord, then it is a wasted effort.

Bhagavān's name here is विष्वक्सेन (viṣvaksena) - the one for whom vishvam itself has become his army. When we say army, what are the things that come to mind? 1. Power; 2. Obedience; 3. Discipline.

All the cosmic forces in this universe for Bhagavān are his army personnel. They are very powerful but they behave obediently. They obey their master, the Lord. There is obedience and discipline and that is why the name विष्वक्सेन (viṣvaksena)

The point is, whatever duties we do, the purpose is to develop devotion.

Live a righteous life so you develop a prepared mind. That preparation of the mind leads to Citta-śuddhi, Citta-ekāgratā. Purity of mind, concentration of mind. This way the mind has to be prepared because this mind has to do the final meditation upon the Lord and then alone that mind can merge into the Lord. That is moksha. Knowing our oneness with the Lord. For this the mind has to be prepared. All our righteous living, dharmic life is for moksha. Therefore dharmā is for moksha

Artha is for dharmā. Convert material wealth into righteous activity with charity etc. Thus earn punya through material wealth. Make wealth the means to purify the mind.

kāma - when we live in the world we have to interact with sense objects, Bhoga is unavoidable. Like eating etc. But that kāma is not meant for Indriya preeti that is to gain pleasure for the sense organs but it is meant for sustenance of life.

To live, bhoga is unavoidable. Life is meant for tattva Jijñāsā. Knowing the truth, for God realisation. That is the purpose for which we have all come to this world. To become free from this birth death cycle. To know the reality and become one with God. This is the right way of understanding. This is the way Caturvidha-puruṣārtha has to be understood.

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Session 3

[Chapter 2 verses 14- Chapter 4 verse 13]

तस्मादेकेन मनसा भगवान् सात्वतां पतिः। श्रोतव्यः कीर्तितव्यश्च ध्येयः पूज्यश्च नित्यदा ॥
१४॥

tasmād ekena manasā Bhagavān sātvatām patiḥ |śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca
dhyeyaḥ pūjyaś ca nityādā || 14 ||

With single pointed attention, focus on Bhagavān who is the Lord of sātṭvik people, the Lord of sātṭvik devotees. How does one focus?

श्रोतव्यः कीर्तितव्य ध्येयः पूज्यश्च (śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca dhyeyaḥ pūjyaś ca)
श्रोतव्यः (śrotavyaḥ) Listen to the scriptures, narrating glories of the Lord and the
kathas so that the heart is filled with devotion.

कीर्तितव्य (kīrtitavya) Sincere longing for the Lord. We have studied this in the
ninth chapter of Bhagavad Gita.

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः । नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥
satataṁ kīrtayanto mām yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ | namasyantaś ca mām
bhaktyā nityā-yuktā upāsate || Bhagavad Gita 9.14 ||

When one truly desires Bhagavān, “I also want that state which these Mahātmās and great devotees have attained”. “I will live such a life so that I can attain that”. Because the law of this universe is, whatever you desire, you will get it. So, learn to desire the right thing. ध्येयः (dhyeyaḥ) meditate; पूज्यश्च (pūjyaś ca) worship ; नित्यदा (nityādā) everyday. This should be done everyday.

Now Bhagavān, please tell me how does a person progress in the path of spirituality? From the scratch you must start.

शुश्रूषोः श्रद्धाधानस्य वासुदेवकथारुचिः । स्यान्महत्सेवया विप्राः पुण्यतीर्थनिषेवणात् ॥ १६ ॥
śuśrūṣoḥ śraddadhānasya vāsudeva-kathā-ruciḥ | syān mahat-sevayā viprah
punya-tīrtha-niṣevanāt || 16 ||

Start by visiting places of pilgrimage पुण्यतीर्थनिषेवणात् (punya-tīrtha-niṣevanāt)
This is not done the way we visit places in the modern times where in one day we visit 25 places. A bus is booked and early in the morning you get up and run

because you have to cover a lot of places and the time is limited. Vacation is limited and the main goal is to click photos and prepare an album.

When you visit a place of pilgrimage, you should stay there. Mostly these teerthakṣetras are away from the city. Somewhere deep into the forests or they may be on top of a mountain, in some āśram, near some river. All holy people gather in such places and you will find a lot of Mahātmās staying in such teerthakṣetras.

महत्सेवया (mahat-sevayā): be with them and serve them. When you do physical service and seva, you get a lot of opportunity to be with them, and observe their lifestyle.

And what do you find in these Mahātmās? They are living a very very simple life. They are full of contentment, full of devotion, and dispassion. Even though materially they don't have anything much, they are always cheerful and happy, ever remembering the glory of Bhagavān. They are very humble, very simple, very pure at heart and virtuous. Such people are Mahātmās, those who have realised the Self and ever remain in communion with God. We should be in the company of such people and do seva. With that, naturally śraddhā will come. There is faith in these people because they are living in front of our eyes. There is so much of purity, there is so much of peace. Just by being in their company, you feel peaceful and happy and come to know that to live happily in this world, you don't need so many material things. These people live far away from the city and there is no electricity, nothing. Maybe they eat just some boiled potatoes and that is it.

With such minimum needs, they are still happy and peaceful. By visiting them, our heart becomes filled with love, respect and reverence for these Mahātmās. This is called श्रद्धा (śraddhā) faith. That is necessary.

After that what happens is that you have so much love and respect for them, whatever advice they give, whatever they say, automatically you value it.

Advice may be wonderful but if it is from a person inferior to you in your eyes, you will have no value for it. Is the person giving advice practicing it or not? This is why many times our children don't listen to us. Advice is wonderful and you have quoted some Mahātmā, but when that advice comes from your mouth to the children, they don't have any value. The giver is not practicing, what to do?

The point is this, these Mahātmās live what they preach. Hence one listens to them in all faith. And when these people start narrating the stories of the scriptures, वासुदेवकथारुचिः (vāsudeva-kathā-ruciḥ) you automatically find interest in the scriptures. All the stories in the purāṇas are filled with virtues like humility, kindness, straight-forwardness. They are filled with devotion and tips for righteous living. So, when you listen there is a रुचिः (ruciḥ) a taste. Many times when we read a book we don't find it so interesting but when we listen, it becomes very interesting.

शृण्वतां स्वकथां कृष्णः पुण्यश्रवणकीर्तनः । हृद्यन्तःस्थो ह्यभद्राणि विधुनोति सुहृत्सताम् ॥
१७॥

śṛṇvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ | hr̥dy antaḥ-stho hy
abhadrāṇi vidhunoti suhṛt satām || 17 ||

As we are listening to these kathas, as we are in satsang, one will clearly find that all the inauspiciousness of the mind, disturbances of the mind slowly go away. Who is doing it? It is Kṛṣṇa. The Lord who is seated in the heart. He is सुहृत्सताम् (suhṛt satām), a friend of the good hearted and noble people.

हृद्यन्तःस्थो ह्यभद्राणि विधुनोति (hr̥dy antaḥ-stho hy abhadrāṇi vidhunoti) that Lord seated in the heart starts erasing all the negativities.

How do we know after attending satsang, that the negativity of the heart is erased? After the talk, see the state of the mind and compare it with the state of the mind when you came for satsang, especially if you were coming from office or some hustle-bustle. But after 1-1.5 hrs of listening, what is the state of the mind? That peace, Bhagavān is giving it.

अभद्राणि विधुनोति (abhadrāṇi vidhunoti) all the negativities he erases because he is the friend of devotees and that is why his name is पुण्यश्रवणकीर्तनः (puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ). The one who does śravaṇam and kīrtanam, gains the merit (puṇya) that is experienced as peace of mind.

नष्टप्रायेष्वभद्रेषु नित्यं भागवतसेवया । भगवत्युत्तमश्लोके भक्तिर्भवति नैष्ठिकी ॥ १८॥
naṣṭa-prāyeṣv abhadreṣu nityām bhāgavata-sevayā | bhagavatṛy uttama-śloke
bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī || 18 ||

The mind becomes more and more pure with repeated listening to satsang. One must listen to satsang everyday. It should become a part of our life because in satsang you are taught how to think, and this becomes the most important

thing. Right understanding about life is given. Therefore the immediate result of right thinking is peace of mind. That is what is called नष्टप्रायेष्वभद्रेषु (naṣṭa-prāyeṣv abhadreṣu).

All inauspiciousness, the tension, worries, anxieties, stress, are because of the wrong thinking and understanding about life.

Satsang gives the right understanding. What is the proof that your understanding is improving? Peace of mind.

With that peace of mind and in a heart free from all negativity and abiding devotion you experience नैष्ठिकी भक्तिर्भवति (naiṣṭhikī bhaktir bhavati) - devotion that is not just coming and going. Many times, our devotion is only restricted to our prayer time. This bhakti is naiṣṭhikī bhakti. It remains throughout the day. Throughout the day at the back of the mind there is this emotion of love for God.

तदा रजस्तमोभावाः कामलोभादयश्च ये । चेत एतैरनाविद्धं स्थितं सत्त्वे प्रसीदति ॥ १९॥
tadā rājas-tamo-bhāvāḥ kāma -lobhādayaś ca ye | ceta etair anāviddham sthitam
sattve prasīdati || 19 ||

At that time, as you go on doing this रजस्तमोभावाः कामलोभादय (rājas-tamo-bhāvāḥ kāma -lobhādaya) all the negativities of the mind go away.

All negativities - kāma, krodha, lobha, moha, mada matsarya, rāga, dveṣa are born when the mind is in rājas and tamas. Know for sure that if the mind is occupied with negativity, you are either in tamas or in rājas. With satsang, the root cause of negativity goes away. A mind free from rājas and tamas slowly gets rooted in sattva सत्त्वे स्थितं (sattve sthitam) and therefore, as a result there is a cheerfulness throughout the day.

In Bhagavad Gita, Bhagavān says नित्यं सत्यं वस्तु भव (Nitya sat vasto bhava). This is very important. As a seeker, you should see to it that for most of the time, the mind is in a sattvik state. Never do anything which will make the mind rājasic or tamasic. It's all in the training. How you train the mind, the mind will behave accordingly. You train the mind in tamas, it will be tamasic.

You can train it in rājas by entertaining negative thoughts like anger, greed, jealousy etc. What training you give the mind, it will behave accordingly. If you train the mind in sattva, it will be sattvik.

एवं प्रसन्नमनसो भगवद्भक्तियोगतः ।भगवत्तत्त्वविज्ञानं मुक्तसङ्गस्य जायते ॥ २०॥
evam prasanna-manaso bhagavad-bhakti-yogataḥ |bhagavat-tattva-vijñānam
mukta-saṅgasya jāyate || 20 ||

One sure method to make the mind sattvik is bhakti. Ensure there is love for God. The nature of a mind that is peaceful and cheerful due to bhakti is मुक्तसङ्गस्य (mukta-saṅgasya). There is a natural, spontaneous healthy detachment towards every thing, being and situation. You are not affected much by the happenings around you. This is one sign of spiritual progress. Because your attention is riveted in God, you are not bothered by what is happening around you. You know there is someone who is taking care.

What about the other person? The other person is tossed up and down by the happenings of life. This is the sign of a saṁsārī. The one who is affected by saṁsār is a saṁsārī. But here, his mind is peaceful. In such a peaceful, prepared mind भगवत्तत्त्वविज्ञानं (bhagavat-tattva-vijñānam) knowledge about the reality of God happens. Knowledge of the divine takes place. This knowledge is experiential knowledge. In such a purified prepared heart one experiences the presence of the divine, as pure consciousness.

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि दृष्ट एवात्मनीश्वरे ॥ २१॥
bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ | kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi
dr̥ṣṭa evātmanīśvare || 21 ||

Three fourth of this verse is present in Kaṭhapaniṣad and also in Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad. Very many verses Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa Ṛṣi has taken directly from the Upaniṣads. This is one such verse.

दृष्ट एवात्मनीश्वरे (dr̥ṣṭa evātmanīśvare) when such a person sees that Lord in his heart as his own self, as the very consciousness; भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थि (bhidyate hṛdaya-granthi) the knots of the heart get cut off, they get destroyed.

What is the knot of the heart?

When we say knot - it is like you have two ropes and you tie it and it forms a knot. When you have two ropes, it's intertwined and you are not able to make out which rope belongs to which part of the knot. These are all mystic terms. One mistaken as the other and properties of one superimposed upon the other.

Let us take an example. This is a very famous example. A heated iron ball appears as a red hot iron ball. An iron ball is black in colour but in this case, it has taken up the property of the fire and appears bright and hot. The property of the iron ball is superimposed upon fire and the fire property is superimposed on the iron ball. Brightness and heat are the properties of fire and they get superimposed on the ball making it appear red hot. In the same way, fire is formless but it has taken the form of an iron ball. Each one has taken the property of the other. That is the confusion. Granthi is the confusion, it is a knot. It is a knot of consciousness and matter. Consciousness is sentient, it is free of five elements. Now that consciousness which is formless and infinite, when it gets identified with the body, it appears to have a form. This is the property taken from the matter.

What about the body? The body is actually inert, but now, borrowing the property of consciousness it appears to be sentient. Each one as though has taken up the property of the other. This is a very misleading combination. Consciousness is having a body and the inert body is alive. And now all our attention is upon this entity called body and we give a name to this form and throughout our worldly transactions, with whom are we transacting? It is with this illusory entity.

This is exactly like, if i have a white cloth and cover my thumb and put two eyes and nose and you consider this as a real person. But in reality, there is no person there. This is called Granthi. When we start analyzing, we come to know that two entities are there and these two entities- consciousness and matter can never combine with each other. Their combination is like a combination of light and dark. They can never come together. One is real and one is illusion and there is an entity which is appearing and all our transactions are giving this entity a reality. This is called saṃsāra. I consider myself to be this body and now I have my likes and dislikes, my hopes, expectations and all this mental chattering. All this is for whom? For this ego which is non existent!

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थि (bhidyate hṛdaya-granthi) means you come to know consciousness and the ego as two separate things. That very same moment, granthi is gone. Meaning the ego is dead. There is nothing called ego. One side is consciousness and the other side is observed matter. That is all. Only two things are there. There is nothing called a living entity. It is just a wrong notion in the mind. And it is this wrong notion which is creating all saṃsāra.

And who is the one who has all these doubts - where did I come from, what was the first body etc?

श्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः (chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ) you don't exist. When ego doesn't exist, what about the doubts of the ego? Doubter is gone therefore all the doubts are gone. Exactly like, the moment the dreamer is understood to be unreal, what about the doubts of the dreamer in the dream world? Can it remain? That is why the Mahātmās do not give any importance to the doubts of the ego. They would say find out who is asking this question. That is it. Because the questioner himself is an illusion. Why is it an illusion? That questioner has come because of the combination of consciousness and matter which actually has never taken place.

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि (kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi) all the karmas - sañcita , prārabdha āgāmī belong to whom? They belong to the ego. Now the ego is not there so the karma belongs to whom? To God. All karmas are gone therefore there is nobody to experience karma phala and therefore there is no rebirth. So he becomes free from the birth-death cycle. This is the glory of spiritual knowledge.

The whole point is, once bhakti comes, the mind is purified, it is prepared. In such a prepared mind, knowledge takes place and what is the knowledge? I don't even exist. What exists is only pure consciousness. As far as the body is concerned, it is matter, it is the five elements, over. With this, the identification is gone, Karma is gone, doubts are gone, finished. Matter is over. This is the purpose of life.

अतो वै कवयो नित्यं भक्तिं परमया मुदा । वासुदेवे भगवति कुर्वन्त्यात्मप्रसादनीम् ॥ २२ ॥
ato vai kavayo nityāṁ bhaktiṁ paramāyā mudā | vāsudeve bhagavati kurvanty
ātma-prasādanīm || 22 ||

Therefore, the wise people everyday with supreme devotion happily practice this because it purifies the mind, prepares the mind and knowledge comes. First, saguṇa jñāna gives saguṇa bhakti. saguṇa bhakti will give nirguṇa jñāna. What about nirguṇa bhakti? There is nothing called nirguṇa bhakti because the moment you say nirguṇa, it is I am God- that experience is called nirguṇa. Can there be a love for that? The lover and the beloved merge so who will love whom then? That is why nirguṇa bhakti is never told. It is always saguṇa bhakti. Lover and beloved are separate.

Saguṇa jñāna will lead to saguṇa bhakti. There is love for God who is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent. I am a jīvatma. With that love, I purify the mind. That purified mind is a prepared mind. In that prepared mind knowledge takes place. What is that knowledge? That God is me. Over. Now there is no world, there is

no māyā. There is nothing. Only I am. There is no bhakti needed. There is jñāna. Therefore the wise people give a lot of importance to bhakti. While practicing also bhakti is joy giving only because it is all about loving. Love is always joy giving.

Now around twenty two avatāraas are briefly described in the third chapter and finally Ṛṣi says how many will I describe there are so many avatāras. Just like the waves keep coming in the ocean in the same way avatāraas also come. Then he talks about Bhāgavatam.

Chapter 3 ॥ तृतीयोऽध्यायः ॥

इदं भागवतं नाम पुराणं ब्रह्मसम्मितम् । उत्तमश्लोकचरितं चकार भगवान् ऋषिः ॥ ४० ॥
idaṁ Bhāgavatam nāma purāṇa ṁ brahma-sammitam | uttamaśloka-caritaṁ
cakāra Bhagavān ṛṣiḥ ॥ 40 ॥

This Bhagavata purāṇam is equivalent to Vedas. In no way it is inferior. The content is as auspicious and beneficial as the content of the Vedas. It is because the whole Bhāgavatam is about the avatāra līlās of the Lord and is composed by Veda Vyāsa Ṛṣi.

निःश्रेयसाय लोकस्य धन्यं स्वस्त्ययनं महत् । तदिदं ग्राहयामास सुतमात्मवतां वरम् ॥ ४१ ॥
niḥśreyasāya lokasya dhanyaṁ svastyayanaṁ mahat | tad idaṁ grāhayām āsa
sutam ātmavatām varam ॥ 41 ॥

This scripture is स्वस्त्ययनं (svastyayanaṁ), an abode of auspiciousness. Very holy and sacred. He composed it for the welfare of the whole world. After composing it, he taught it to his own son- Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi. The best amongst all his sons.

Who are the other sons of Vyāsa Ṛṣi? Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pandu, Vidura (from Ambika, Ambalika and the maid servant). Ambika's son is Dhṛtarāṣṭra; Ambalika is Pandu; Servant maid's is Vidura) but his official son is Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi. The others were because of the situation. Vichitra Veerya died so Satyavati called her son Vyāsa Ṛṣi. All these are Mahābhārata stories.

But the point is, he gave the knowledge to the best of his sons.

सर्ववेदेतिहासानां सारं सारं समुद्धृतम् । स तु संश्रावयामास महाराजं परीक्षितम् ॥ ४२ ॥
Sarva-vedetihāsānāṁ sāraṁ sāraṁ samuddhṛtaṁ | sa tu saṁśrāvayām āsa
mahārājaṁ Parīkṣitaṁ ॥ 42 ॥

This Bhāgavatam is the essence of Vedas. Just like ghee is taken from milk, in the same way, Bhāgavatam is the essence of all scriptures. Śuka got it from his father, he gave it to Raja Parīkṣit.

प्रायोपविष्टं गङ्गायां परीतं परमर्षिभिः । कृष्णे स्वधामोपगते धर्मज्ञानादिभिः सह ॥ ४३ ॥
Prāyopaviṣṭaṁ Gaṅgāyāṁ parītaṁ paramarṣibhiḥ । Kṛṣṇe svadhāmopagate
dharmā-jñānadibhiḥ saha ॥ 43 ॥

Parīkṣit was sitting on the banks of Ganga, fasting unto death. At that time, Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi surrounded by great sages, gave this knowledge to Parīkṣit. This is narrated by Sūta Ṛṣi. So Sūta Ṛṣi said, by God's grace I was also there and I could hear all that Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi taught. I was there and that is how I learnt the whole thing and now let me tell you the whole Bhāgavatam according to my understanding.

At that time Śaunaka Ṛṣi stops him.

Chapter 4 ॥ चतुर्थोऽध्यायः ॥

शौनक उवाच ।

सूत सूत महाभाग वद नो वदतां वर । कथां भागवतीं पुण्यां यदाह भगवान्छुकः ॥ २ ॥
Śaunaka uvāca ।
Sūta sūta mahābhāga vada no vadatāṁ vara । Kathāṁ bhāgavatīṁ puṇyaṁ
yadāha Bhagavān Śukaḥ ॥ 2 ॥

कस्मिन् युगे प्रवृत्तेयं स्थाने वा केन हेतुना । कुतः सञ्चोदितः कृष्णः कृतवान् संहितां मुनिः ॥ ३ ॥
Kasmin yuge pravṛtteyaṁ sthāne vā kena hetunā । Kutah sañcoditaḥ Kṛṣṇaḥ
kṛtavān saṁhitāṁ muniḥ ॥ 3 ॥

Śaunaka Ṛṣi gives a series of questions. O' most fortunate one, the best amongst the Ṛṣis, you said, this Bhagavata katha was given by Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi to Parīkṣit but in which yuga was this given, in which place was it given, for what purpose was it given? Prompted by whom was it given? All these questions need to be answered. And, I am amazed that Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi gave it to Parīkṣit because it is almost impossible.

तस्य पुत्रो महायोगी समदृङ्निर्विकल्पकः । एकान्तमतिरुन्निद्रो गूढो मूढ इवेयते ॥ ४ ॥
tasya putro mahā-yogī samadr̥ṇ nirvikalpakaḥ । ekānta-matir unnidro gūḍho
mūḍha iveyate ॥ 4 ॥

The glory of Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi is mentioned in this verse. Veda Vyāsa Ṛṣi's son was a Maha Yogi, who attained the vision of oneness and firmly abided in that state of non-duality. For him, there was no vikalpa and no division between the se-er and the seen. Meaning, everything was that one, non-dual, pure consciousness.

उन्निद्र (unnidra) means the one who doesn't sleep. Sanskrit words are very mystic depending on the context you have to take the meaning. The one who has woken up from the sleep of ignorance. Ignorance is also a kind of sleep only. He moves around like a mentally retarded person, but actually, he has kept his greatness hidden.

Because we judge people based on their external appearance and externally he appears like a मूढ (mūḍha), a fool as if he doesn't know anything. But actually, he is gūḍha. This is the meaning of the phrase गूढो मूढ इवेयते (gūḍho mūḍha iveyate)

दृष्ट्वानुयान्तमृषिमात्मजमप्यनग्नं देव्यो ह्रिया परिदधुर्न सुतस्य चित्रम् ।
तद्वीक्ष्य पृच्छति मुनौ जगदुस्तवास्ति स्त्रीपुम्भिदा न तु सुतस्य विविक्तदृष्टेः ॥ ५॥
dr̥ṣṭvānu yāntam ṛṣim ātmajam apy anagnam devyo hriyā paridadhur na sutasya
citram । tad vīkṣya pr̥cchati munau jagadur tavāsti strī-pumbhidā na tu sutasya
vivikta-dr̥ṣṭeḥ ॥ 5 ॥

He narrates the incident when Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi was leaving his house, renouncing everything and Veda Vyāsa Ṛṣi ran behind. Vyāsa Ṛṣi was saying. "O' Putra, my dear son, don't leave.

Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi was moving ahead and Vyāsa Ṛṣi running behind into the forest. At that time Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi was completely naked. They were passing by a river where the Apsaras were taking a bath. This boy passed and they did not care. But the moment Vyāsa Ṛṣi came, all of them put on their clothes. Naturally Vyāsa Ṛṣi found it very strange. So he asked, when this boy came, you did not do anything. Why is it that you saw me and you are covering? At that time these ladies said O' Ṛṣi in your mind there is still a difference between man and woman but your son sees no difference.

Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi was a step ahead of his father also- He was beyond the body. That is the glory of Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi. So this is the question of Śaunaka Ṛṣi, how is such a person sitting and giving knowledge to Parīkṣit?

कथमालक्षितः पौरैः सम्प्राप्तः कुरुजाङ्गलान् । उन्मत्तमूकजडवद्विचरन् गजसाहवये ॥ ६ ॥
katham ālakṣitaḥ pauraiḥ samprāptaḥ kuru-jāṅgalān | unmatta-mūka-jaḍa-vad
vicharan gaja-sāhvaye ॥ 6 ॥

How did the people recognise that this person is an enlightened Mahātmā? He just wandered in the land of कुरु (kuru) , the land of जाङ्गलान् (jāṅgalān) and finally he reached गजसाहवये (gaja-sāhvaye) Hastinapura. The question is how did people recognise him? Because he moves like an intoxicated person, he doesn't speak to anyone. He has no interaction with anyone, like a mentally challenged person. So if this is the way he moves around, how did they recognise his glory? Because you can only ask a question if you know the glory.

There is no way you will recognise the glory of a person unless the other person is equally great. How did they find him out? Therefore, I have a lot of questions to ask. It was literally impossible for Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi to be sitting and giving knowledge to Parīkṣit.

कथं वा पाण्डवेयस्य राजर्षेर्मुनिना सह । संवादः समभूतात यत्रैषा सात्वती श्रुतिः ॥ ७ ॥
katham vā pāṇḍaveyasya rājarṣer muninā saha | saṁvādaḥ samabhūt tāta
yatraiṣā sātvasī śrutiḥ ॥ 7 ॥

How did this conversation happen?

स गोदोहनमात्रं हि गृहेषु गृहमेधिनाम् । अवेक्षते महाभागस्तीर्थीकुर्वस्तदाश्रमम् ॥ ८ ॥
sa go-dohana-mātraṁ hi grheṣu grhamedhinām | avekṣate mahābhāgas tīrthī
kurvaṁs tad-āśramam ॥ 8 ॥

It is said that Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi would not stay in a place more than the time taken to milk a cow - about 15-20 mins. He didn't stay in one place and didn't want to stay attached to anything or anyone. Such was the detachment, that he would never stay at a place for more than fifteen minutes, and for this particular event he stayed seven days? This was a wonder!

Actually, why does he stay in one place for 15 minutes?

तीर्थीकुर्वन् तदाश्रमम् (tīrthī kurvaṁs tad-āśramam) in order to bless those people who served him. When you serve a Mahātmā, you get some puṇya. For that he remained in a place. After that he just moved on.

So, Śuka Brahmā Ṛṣi giving this knowledge was unbelievable. First of all it is difficult to recognise such a person. How did they recognise that this is a wise

Mahātmā and secondly even if they recognised, he does not stay in a place for more than 15 minutes. How did he stay?

अभिमन्युसूतं सूत प्राहुर्भागवतोत्तमम् । तस्य जन्म महाश्चर्यं कर्माणि च गृणीहि नः ॥ ९ ॥
abhimanyu-sutaṁ sūta prāhur bhāgavatottamam । tasya janma mahāścaryaṁ
karmāṇi ca gṛṇīhi naḥ ॥ 9 ॥

For Parīkṣit also, it is a wonder! (Parīkṣit was Abhimanyu's son, his mother is Uttara, grandmother is Subhadra and grandfather, Arjuna).

I am told he is a great devotee of the Lord. His birth itself is a wonder. (that story will come later). When he was in the womb, Aśvatthāmā sent a Brahmāstra to kill Parīkṣit because he was the only surviving Pāṇḍava child. So, Bhagavān himself diffused the Brahmāstra.

It is said that when Parīkṣit was in the womb, he could see this missile coming towards him and he was getting scorched! Then suddenly he saw a śaṅkha chakra gadā padma dhāri coming and whirling his gadā and the missile just got diffused. But he was not very clear who this person was. That is why after coming out of the womb, he wanted to find out who was the person that saved him? He was doing parīkṣā, that is why his name is Parīkṣit.

His birth itself is a wonder. So therefore O' Sūta Ṛṣi you must tell the stories of the great devotee Parīkṣit also when he became the king. His actions were also very noble. That story also you must tell us.

स सम्राट् कस्य वा हेतोः पाण्डूनां मानवर्धनः । प्रायोपविष्टो गङ्गायामनादृत्याधिराट् श्रियम् ॥
१० ॥

sa samrāt kasya vā hetoḥ pāṇḍūnāṁ māna-varadhanah । prāyopaviṣṭo
Gaṅgāyām anādr̥tya adhirāt śriyam ॥ 10 ॥

But my question still remains. He was a samrath, the emperor. There was no enemy for him, he was so powerful. He was the pride of Pāṇḍavas. Why should he go to the banks of Ganga and that too fast unto death?

He had everything, position power, see the next verse..

नमन्ति यत्पादनिकेतमात्मनः शिवाय हानीय धनानि शत्रवः । कथं स वीरः श्रियमङ्ग दुस्त्यजां
युवैषतोत्स्रष्टुमहो सहासुभिः ॥ ११ ॥
namanti yat-pāda-niketam ātmanah śivāya hānīya dhanāni śatravaḥ ।

katham sa vīraḥ śriyam aṅga dustyajām yuvaiṣa totsraṣṭum aho sahāsubhiḥ ॥11॥

Even his enemies would come to him, bow down and prostrate to that foot stool. They would bring all wealth, keep that in front of him in humility and would bow down. Literally there was no enemy for him. He had conquered the whole world. For such a veera, who has so much power, comforts, name and fame, authority, why did he leave everything?

This power, comfort, authority etc are very difficult to drop. When you are in power you want to hold on to power. But he gave up everything. He was still young and giving up at such an age is very difficult.

He not only gave up his kingdom but he was now giving up his life also by fasting unto death. Why should he give up his life? This is also impossible. Why?

शिवाय लोकस्य भवाय भूतये य उत्तमश्लोकपरायणा जनाः । जीवन्ति नात्मार्थमसौ पराश्रयं
मुमोच निर्विद्य कुतः कलेवरम् ॥ १२॥

śivāya lokasya bhavāya bhūtaye ya uttama-śloka-parāyaṇā janāḥ ।
jīvanti nātmārtham asau parāśrayaṁ mumoca nirvidyā kutaḥ kalevaram ॥ 12 ॥

Also these great devotees of the Lord, live in the world for the benefit of the world and for doing good to all beings. They live for others. In the case of Parīkṣit, very many people were dependent on him. He was a support, and a great relief and comfort for all the subjects because he was a very efficient king. The Prajā must do a lot of puṇya to get an efficient king who is a devotee and who is righteous.

Actually, the ability to get such a king is because of our puṇyas that fructify. He was such a great king and a devotee who was righteous, powerful and everyone was dependent on him. Why should he leave his body in a spirit of renunciation? So I have so many questions, Sūta Ṛṣi. Hence, before getting into Bhāgavatam, please answer my questions.

तत्सर्वं नः समाचक्ष्व पृष्टो यदिह किञ्चन । मन्ये त्वां विषये वाचां स्नातमन्यत्र छान्दसात् ॥
१३॥

tat sarvaṁ naḥ samācakṣva prṣṭo yad iha kiñcana । manye tvāṁ viṣaye vācāṁ
snātam anyatra chāndasāt ॥ 13 ॥

O' Sūta Ṛṣi please answer all these questions. I am asking because you are the authority and I can get the best answer from you so please answer.

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Session 4

[Chapter 4 verses 14- Chapter 5 Verse 11]

सूत उवाच ।

द्वापरे समनुप्राप्ते तृतीये युगपर्यये । जातः पराशराद्योगी वासव्यां कलया हरेः ॥ १४ ॥

sūta uvāca ।

dvāpare samanuprāpte tṛtīye yuga-paryaye | jātaḥ parāśarād yogī vāsavyāṁ
kalayā hareḥ || 14 ||

This great yogi, Veda Vyāsa Ṛṣi was born at the arrival of Dvāpara-yuga. In the order of yuga it is the 3rd yuga (Satyuga, Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga). He was the son of Parāśara Ṛṣi and Vasu Putri (Satyavati) and a partial incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu.

स कदाचित्सरस्वत्या उपस्पृश्य जलं शुचिः । विविक्तदेश आसीन उदिते रविमण्डले ॥ १५ ॥

sa kadācit sarasvatyā upaspr̥śya jalaṁ śuciḥ | vivikta-deśa āsīna uditē
ravi-maṇḍale || 15 ||

One day, he was seated on the banks of Saraswati. The sun had risen and after taking bath and offering his prayers, he sat all alone in solitude near his āśram.

परावरजः स ऋषिः कालेनाव्यक्तरंहसा । युगधर्मव्यतिकरं प्राप्तं भुवि युगे युगे ॥ १६ ॥
parāvara-jñāḥ sa ṛṣiḥ kālenāvyakta-raṁhasā | yuga-dharmā-vyatikaraṁ prāptaṁ
bhuvi yuge yuge || 16 ||

This Ṛṣi, was the knower of parā and aparā (the higher and lower), the gross and the subtle, the past and the future as he was the *amśa* avatāra of Bhagavān. He knew this is dvāpara-yuga and now Kaliyuga will come. The time will go with imperceptible speed. This Ṛṣi could see युगधर्मव्यतिकरं (yuga-dharmā-vyatikaraṁ) the decline of dharmā as yugas go from satya to dvāpara to tretā to kali.

भौतिकानां च भावानां शक्तिहासं च तत्कृतम् । अश्रद्धानान् निःसत्त्वान् दुर्मेधान् हसितायुषः ॥
१७ ॥

bhautikānāṁ ca bhāvanāṁ śakti-hāsaṁ ca tat-kṛtaṁ | aśraddadhānān niḥsattvān
durmedhān hrasitāyusaḥ || 17 ||

दुर्भगांश्च जनान् वीक्ष्य मुनिर्दिव्येन चक्षुषा । सर्ववर्णाश्रमाणां यद्दध्यौ हितममोघदृक् ॥ १८ ॥
durbhagāṁś ca janān vīkṣya munir divyena cakṣuṣā |sarva-varṇāśramāṇāṁ yad
dadhyau hitam amogha-dṛk || 18 ||

With passing time, there is a decline of dharmā and everything in this world will experience a decline in its effectiveness, purity, strength and quality. Every entity in this world will become less and less pure and effective. The quality comes down. We can also very clearly see that, isn't it?

Water is no longer as pure as it used to be. Once upon a time you could just drink water from any river. Air has become polluted, water has become polluted, even the food has become polluted. As we go on, the impurities will increase. This is not only with respect to the inert things, it is with respect to the quality of human beings also. Faith in God will decrease, strength of the body will decrease. Similarly, purity of mind, ability of intellect, memory power, life span will all decrease. Therefore these people are the very unfortunate ones. Seeing these types of people with his divine foresight, Vyāsa Ṛṣi's heart melted in compassion and he felt, I should do something for these people. This great Ṛṣi with unclouded insight felt that I should do something which will be helpful for everyone. It should be सर्ववर्णाश्रमाणां (sarva-varṇāśramāṇāṁ) - useful for all the 4 varṇāś (Brahmān, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudhra), and āśramas (brahmacharya, gr̥hastha, vānaprastha, sannyāsa). I should do something which is beneficial for everyone. See the compassion of this teacher- he is thinking of those who will be born in the next yuga. That is why Vyāsa Purnima is celebrated as Guru Purnima. What a great Ṛṣi! All our scriptures are from Vyāsa Ṛṣi only.

ऋग्यजुःसामाथर्वाख्या वेदाश्चत्वार उद्धृताः । इतिहासपुराणं च पञ्चमो वेद उच्यते ॥ २० ॥
ṛg-yajuḥ-sāmātharvākhyā vedāś catur udāhṛtāḥ | itihāsa-purāṇa ṁ ca pañcamo
veda ucyate || 20 ||

He compiled all the Vedas and divided them into four - Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda. As the fifth veda he composed Itihāsas and purāṇas. Like Mahābhārata, there are 18 purāṇas including Bhagavata purāṇa. These are called पञ्चम वेद (pañcamo veda).

तत्रगर्वेदधरः पैलः सामगो जैमिनिः कविः । वैशम्पायन एवैको निष्णातो यजुषामुत ॥ २१ ॥
tatrar-vedadharahḥ pailahḥ sāmago jaiminiḥ kaviḥ | vaiśampāyana evaiko niṣṇāto
yajuṣām uta || 21 ||

So Ṛgveda was given to Paila Ṛṣi. You master it and spread it amongst your disciples. Take care of only that Veda, because the future generation may not be

able to remember all this. So just one fourth is enough. Sāmaveda was given to to Jaimini Ṛṣi; Yajurveda was given to Vaiśampāyana Ṛṣi

अथर्वाङ्गिरसामासीत्सुमन्तुर्दारुणो मुनिः । इतिहासपुराणानां पिता मे रोमहर्षणः ॥ २२ ॥
atharvāṅgirasām āsīt sumantur dāruṇo muniḥ | itihāsa-purāṇa nām pitā me
romaharṣaṇaḥ || 22 ||

Atharvaveda was given to Sumantu Ṛṣi and Itihāsas purāṇas were given to my father, (Sūta Ṛṣi's father) Romaharṣaṇa Ṛṣi.

But even then, Vyāsa Ṛṣi was not happy.

स्त्रीशूद्रद्विजबन्धनां त्रयी न श्रुतिगोचरा । कर्मश्रेयसि मूढानां श्रेय एवं भवेदिह ।
इति भारतमाख्यानं कृपया मुनिना कृतम् ॥ २५ ॥
strī-śūdra-dvija-bandhūnām trayī na śruti-gocarā | karma-śreyasi mūḍhānām
śreya evaṁ bhaved iha | iti bhāratam ākhyānam kṛpayā muninā kṛtam || 25 ||

In those times, everyone was not eligible to study the Vedas. Women, śūdras, people with any kind of degeneration. Even though they may be brahmānas, but if they had any defect, if they were inferior, they were not allowed. Therefore, Vyāsa Ṛṣi thought this is not fair, I should do something by which all the essence of the Vedas can be taken up. I must compose something else so that everybody is benefitted. Out of great compassion for everyone, he composed Mahābhārata.

एवं प्रवृत्तस्य सदा भूतानां श्रेयसि द्विजाः । सर्वात्मकेनापि यदा नातुष्यद्धृदयं ततः ॥ २६ ॥
evaṁ pravṛttasya sadā bhūtānām śreyasi dvijāḥ | sarvātmanā api yadā na tūṣyad
hṛdayam tataḥ || 26 ||

नातिप्रसीदद्धृदयः सरस्वत्यास्तटे शुचौ । वितर्कयन् विविक्तस्थ इदं चोवाच धर्मवित् ॥ २७ ॥
nātiprasīdaddhṛdayaḥ sarasvatyās taṭe śucau | vitarkayan vivikta-stha idaṁ
covāca dharmā-vit || 27 ||

In this way, all the time this Ṛṣi was always thinking about how to bring peace, prosperity and spiritual evolution amongst the masses. Even after he composed Mahābhārata, he was not feeling a sense of fulfilment. So thus, he was seated on the banks of Saraswati thinking where did I go wrong? I have tried everything.

धृतव्रतेन हि मया छन्दांसि गुरवोऽग्नयः । मानिता निर्व्यलीकेन गृहीतं चानुशासनम् ॥ २८ ॥
dhṛta-vratena hi māyā chandāṁsi guravo 'gnayaḥ | mānitā nirvyalīkena grhītaṁ
cānuśāsanam || 28 ||

Vyāsa Ṛṣi was thinking, I don't know where have I gone wrong. Whatever I was supposed to do, I have done everything. I have been firm in my vows, I have studied the scripture thoroughly, I have earned the grace and blessings of all my teachers, I have never disobeyed them. I have done all the rituals and my duties perfectly. Whatever I have done I have done with pure intention, without any selfishness, and as a worship of the Lord. I have been very disciplined throughout my life.

See how beautifully this discusses how we must live our life and what is the secret of success:

- Always be firm in your vows : whatever is right, strictly do it, whatever is wrong, strictly refrain from it.
- Study the scriptures thoroughly, understand the scriptures thoroughly. Scriptures show us the way of life. Mastery over the scriptures and understanding the import of the scriptures will alone provide the direction to an intelligent way of living
- Never disobey elders (father, mother, teachers) and never hurt their feelings. Their guidance, blessings, and affection should always be with us.
- Perform your duties well without wrong or selfish intention. The intention behind an action should always be kept in mind. Action should be selfless and should be done to please the Lord and as a worship of God. Intention should be for the welfare of all.
- Throughout life, there should be general discipline. Live a disciplined life.

If you take care of these aspects in life, success is guaranteed.

Vyāsa Ṛṣi says I have done everything. There is nowhere that I have slipped so why is it that I am feeling a sense of dissatisfaction?

भारतव्यपदेशेन ह्याम्नायार्थश्च दर्शितः । दृश्यते यत्र धर्मादि स्त्रीशूद्रादिभिरप्युत ॥ २९ ॥
bhārata-vyapadeśena hy āmnāyārthaś ca darśitaḥ | dṛśyate yatra dharmādi
strī-śūdrādibhir apy uta || 29 ||

I have taken the essence of the Vedas, and have composed Mahābhārata. I have taken the Caturvidhāḥ Puruṣārthāḥ (dharmā, artha, kāma, mokṣa) and have expounded and put in Mahābhārata so everyone can be benefitted and they can all read this.

तथापि बत मे दैह्यो ह्यात्मा चैवात्मना विभुः । असम्पन्न इवाभाति ब्रह्मवर्चस्यसत्तमः ॥ ३० ॥
tathāpi bata me daihyo hy ātmā caivātmanā vibhuḥ | asampanna ivābhāti
brahma-varcasy asattamaḥ || 30 ||

Even though I haven't left any stone unturned, in bringing welfare for the whole world, Alas! It is strange that the Supreme Self, that all pervading Lord, who is right here in me as the very self appears to be displeased with me. This is a very important verse.

This is how we must live our life. Everyone has that Lord seated in their heart and everyone is guided by that Lord. As you evolve more and more, your life will be guided by that inner voice, the voice of conscience, the voice of God.

I don't know what I have done, that the voice is not pleased. The more and more we evolve in spirituality, there is less and less freedom. You have no choice but to obey His will. The will becomes very clear.

When you are not listening to His will, you will be listening to your will, which is the language of likes and dislikes, ahaṁkāra mama kāra, kāma krodha. The more you evolve on the spiritual path, there is no free will. There is only God's will and God's will is always the best will. The right will. The will of dharmā, the path of dharmā. There are so many things in this one verse.

That Lord is not pleased with me. Who am I? The best among those who have the tejas of Brahmā jñānam. Even though the knowledge of the scriptures is so much there, experience is there, still how did this happen?

For a devotee this is the greatest misery. Somewhere I am displeasing the Lord. Where did I go wrong?

किं वा भागवता धर्मा न प्रायेण निरूपिताः । प्रियाः परमहंसानां त एव ह्यच्युतप्रियाः ॥ ३१ ॥
kiṁ vā bhāgavatā dharmā na prāyeṇa nirūpitāḥ | priyāḥ paramahaṁsānāṁ ta
eva hy acyuta-priyāḥ || 31 ||

Did I make this mistake? I think I made the mistake of not properly explaining Bhāgavatā dharmā.

What is Bhāgavatā?

Anything that belongs to Bhagavān is Bhāgavatā.

Scriptures are associated with Bhagavān, that is why it is called Bhāgavatā purāṇa - that which belongs to God, talks about God and is associated with God. Bhāgavatā can also mean a great devotee because he belongs to Bhagavān.

Bhāgavatā is also that which takes us to Bhagavān. So Bhāgavatā dharmā means that path which takes us to Bhagavān.

Actually all paths are Bhāgavatā dharmā only. Here Vyāsa Ṛṣi is indicating the path of devotion. Because that is something that is loved by the enlightened ones and that alone is loved by Bhagavān also. The one thing that all the enlightened ones also love is devotion. Did I make a mistake here? Did I not expound the path of devotion sufficiently? Is that the reason? I am not sure. Thus, Vyāsa Ṛṣi was confused.

Whenever a devotee is confused you will always find something will happen. This is because he has surrendered. No ego is functioning. Who else will guide? This way Vyāsa Ṛṣi was sitting on the banks of the river unfulfilled.

At that time what happened...

तस्यैवं खिलमात्मानं मन्यमानस्य खिद्यतः । कृष्णस्य नारदोऽभ्यागादाश्रमं प्रागुदाहृतम् ॥
३२॥

tasyaivam khilam ātmānam manyamānasya khidyataḥ | kṛṣṇasya nārado
'bhyāgad āśramam prāg udāhṛtam || 32 ||

Exactly at that time when Vyāsa Ṛṣi was sad and unfulfilled, Nārada appeared suddenly to his āśram.

तमभिजाय सहसा प्रत्युत्थायागतं मुनिः । पूजयामास विधिवन्नारदं सुरपूजितम् ॥ ३३॥
tam abhijāya sahasā pratyutthāyāgataṁ muniḥ | pūjayām āsa vidhivat nāradaṁ
sura-pūjitam || 33 ||

Nārad ji is worshiped by Gods. When he came, Vyāsa Ṛṣi got up and respectfully greeted him, honored him, worshiped him and respectfully seated him.

Chapter 5॥ पञ्चमोऽध्यायः ॥

सूत उवाच ।

अथ तं सुखमासीन उपासीनं बृहच्छ्रुवाः । देवर्षिः प्राह विप्रर्षि वीणापाणिः स्मयन्निव ॥ १॥

sūta uvāca |

atha taṁ sukham āsīna upāsīnaṁ br̥hac-chravāḥ | devarṣiḥ prāha viprarṣiṁ
vīṇā-pāṇiḥ smāyānn iva || 1 ||

Thus, when Nārada ji was seated properly, Vyāsa Ṛṣi also sat with him. Nārada ji looked at Vyaas Ṛṣi and smiled.

नारद उवाच ।

पाराशर्य महाभाग भवतः कच्चिदात्मना । परितुष्यति शरीर आत्मा मानस एव वा ॥ २॥

nārada uvāca |

pārāśarya mahābhāga bhavataḥ kaccid ātmanā | parituṣyati śārīra ātmā mānasa
eva vā || 2 ||

O' महाभाग (mahābhāga) the most fortunate one, son of Parāśarya Ṛṣi are you alright? Is your physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual health fine? (when all these four aspects are taken care of only then we can call a person truly healthy.)

Physical health we all know. Emotional health is when we are cheerful with noble emotions. Intellectual health is when there are no doubts or confusions, no problem in decision making. Spiritual health is being in tune with God. When we are centered and feel connected to the divine, that is spiritual health.

When all these four are there, one is healthy.

जिज्ञासितं सुसम्पन्नमपि ते महददभुतम् । कृतवान् भारतं यस्त्वं सर्वार्थपरिबृंहितम् ॥ ३॥
jijñāsitaṁ susampannam api te mahad adbhutam | kṛtavān bhārataṁ yas tvam
sarvārtha-paribr̥hitaṁ || 3 ||

जिज्ञासितमधीतं च यत्तद्ब्रह्म सनातनम् । अथापि शोचस्यात्मानमकृतार्थ इव प्रभो ॥ ४॥
jijñāsitam adhītaṁ ca yat tad brahma sanātanam | athāpi śocasy ātmānam
akṛtārtha iva prabho || 4 ||

O Ṛṣi, what happened to you? You look like you are not fulfilled, not happy. There is some kind of sorrow in you. This is not the Vyāsa Ṛṣi I know. But there is no reason why you should be sad. Whatever you had desired, everything is going on well. Mahābhārata is a great wonder in the world of scriptures. You have expounded it beautifully well. That work is complete from all aspects - dharmā, artha, kāma, mokṣha and you have so beautifully expounded on it. Not only that, as far as the Vedas are concerned, you have compiled, edited and

taught your disciples and they are spreading them. That work is also going on very well. So whatever you wanted, you have done it. Why are you sad?

व्यास उवाच ।

अस्त्येव मे सर्वमिदं त्वयोक्तं तथापि नात्मा परितुष्यते मे । तन्मूलमव्यक्तमगाधबोधं पृच्छामहे
त्वाऽऽत्मभवात्मभूतम् ॥ ५॥

Vyāsa uvāca |

asty eva me sarvam idaṁ tvayoktaṁ tathāpi nātmā parituṣyate me |
tan mūlam avyaktam agādha-bodhaṁ pṛcchāmahe tvā ātma-bhavātma-bhūtam ||
5 ||

O' Nārada Ṛṣi, this is the same question I want to ask you. Why am I sad? You are ātma-bhava ātma-bhūtam - the mind born son of the self born. (Referring to the mind born son of Brahmā ji. Brahmā ji is self born- born from Bhagavān's kāmala Nabhi)

Whatever you have said is right. I have composed Mahābhārata, I have compiled the Vedas, even then I am not finding fulfillment. The cause of this misery is not clear to me. But Nārada Ṛṣi your insight is infallible. You are a man of deep insight because you are none other than the mind born son of Lord Brahmā. I am asking you.

स वै भवान् वेद समस्तगुह्य- मुपासितो यत्पुरुषः पुराणः । परावरेषो मनसैव विश्वं
सृजत्यवत्यति गुणैरसङ्गः ॥ ६॥

sa vai bhavān veda samasta-guhyam upāsito yat puruṣaḥ purāṇa ḥ |
parāvareṣo manasaiva viśvaṁ sṛjaty avaty atti guṇair asaṅgaḥ || 6 ||

O' Nārada Ṛṣi you are not an ordinary person. You can definitely help me because you know all the secrets in this world because of your worship of the supreme Lord. You have gained everything through the worship of the Supreme Lord. This again is the message for all of us. If you want to know all the secrets of this world, surrender to the creator of this world, you will know all secrets.

You know everything because you have worshiped that Lord and who is that Lord? He is Supreme Lord of parā and aparā- the higher and the lower. The sentient and the insentient, the moving and the non moving. The higher and the lower world. With a mere saṅkalpa, just a thought - the whole creation has begun. He creates, maintains and destroys just by a mere saṅkalpa. No effort is

there. Just like I create and destroy things in my mind in the same way the Supreme Lord, the total cosmic mind also does this, effortlessly.

He is doing everything in this world, but is he attached to the world? He does everything but is totally unattached. He does but is unaffected by anything. Such a Lord for whom the creation of the world is nothing, you are a worshiper of such a Lord and with that worship you have attained everything.

त्वं पर्यटन्नर्क इव त्रिलोकी- मन्तश्चरो वायुरिवात्मसाक्षी ।
परावरे ब्रह्मणि धर्मतो व्रतैः स्नातस्य मे न्यूनमलं विचक्ष्व ॥ ७ ॥
tvaṁ paryaṭann arka iva tri-lokīm antaś-carō vāyur ivātma-sākṣī |
parāvare brahmaṇi dharmāto vrataiḥ snātasya me nyūnam alaṁ vicakṣva || 7 ||

O' Nārada Ṛṣi such is your greatness that in the worlds you move around, unobstructed just like the wind, like the sun. See how the Sun rises and covers the entire Earth. Everywhere the sunlight falls. The sun is unobstructed and in the same way you travel all around the world, unobstructed. You are able to go into the hearts of anyone like vāyu. Air is there inside and outside. There is no place where air is not there. In the same way you can enter into the hearts of anyone. You are atma-sākṣī and can witness the thoughts of each and everyone.

All great devotees are directly or indirectly guided by Nārada ji only. Vālmikī ji wrote Ramāyān because of Nārada Ṛṣi. Vyāsa Ṛṣi wrote Bhāgavatam because of Nārada ji. Dhruva, Prahalāda were guided by Nārad ji.

When Prahalāda was in the womb, it was Nārad ji who was teaching him everything. He learnt everything in the womb. So everywhere you find Nārad ji. This is his real greatness. You not only know what is in the conscious mind but also the subconscious mind. The person himself doesn't know what he is thinking, but Nārad ji can get into that subconscious mind and know it. How did he achieve that greatness? Through worship of the Lord. A person like me who is rooted in all these vows, established in saṁguṇa and nirguṇa Brahmān, even I am helpless. Please get into my heart and find out what is the sin of omission I have committed? Something I have left. Get into my subconscious mind and correct me. See the greatness of Vyāsa Ṛṣi. No ego at all. He says I am completely helpless, Bhagavān's māyā has completely overpowered me. Please guide me.

You will see how Nārad ji will guide Vyāsa Ṛṣi without any ego of knowledge. These are all things we learn. See how two great people are talking. One person

has absolutely no hesitation in admitting his faults and the other has absolutely no feeling of 'holier than thou'. This is how great people are, absolutely humble.

If Nārada ji is guiding he feels I am only an instrument in the hands of Bhagavān. Bhagavān is guiding Vyāsa Ṛṣi. That's all. This is called egolessness.

श्रीनारद उवाच ।

भवतानुदितप्रायं यशो भगवतोऽमलम् । येनैवासौ न तुष्येत मन्ये तद्दर्शनं खिलम् ॥ ८॥
śrī-nārada uvāca |

bhavatā nudita-prāyaṁ yaśo bhagavato 'malam | yenaivāsau na tuṣyeta manye
tad darśanaṁ khilam || 8 ||

O Ṛṣi, yes there is one mistake which you have done. You haven't sung Bhagavān's fame and his pristine pure glory in a way it should be sung. Any philosophy where Bhagavān's glory is not sung is inferior.

यथा धर्मादयश्चार्था मुनिवर्यानुकीर्तिताः । न तथा वासुदेवस्य महिमा ह्यनुवर्णिताः ॥ ९॥
yathā dharmādayaś cārthā munivar yānukīrtitāḥ | na tathā vāsudevasya mahimā
hy anuvarṇitāḥ || 9 ||

O' Ṛṣi, you have expounded dharmā, artha, kāma mokṣha, giving so much of time, and going into great detail. Books after books, verses after verses you have written on them. But about bhakti, about glory of the Lord, Bhagavān's mahima you have not written much. You have just sidelined it. I don't say you haven't described it but the amount of attention you should have given, you haven't given it at all. All these logical arguments have been given too much importance. That is the reason.

न यद्वचश्चित्रपदं हरेर्यशो जगत्पवित्रं प्रगृणीत कर्हिचित् । तद्वायसं तीर्थमुशन्ति मानसा न यत्र
हंसा निरमन्त्युशिक्षयाः ॥ १०॥

na yad vacaś citra-padaṁ harer yaśo jagat-pavitraṁ praguṇīta karhicit |
tad vāyasaṁ tīrtham uśanti mānasā na yatra haṁsā niramanty uśik-kṣayāḥ ||10 ||

The whole world is sanctified when you glorify the Lord. If there is a composition that is perfect with respect to grammar and all literary aspects but misses glorification of God, enlightened sages consider the composition a dirty puddle of muddy water fit only for the crows to take a bath not swans. The wise holy sages will never take a dip in that. Haṁsāpakṣis take a dip in the mānasā sarovara.

A Haṁsāpakṣi can separate milk from water. In the same way, the wise people can separate nityā and anityā vastu. Sat and asat. This is one comparison.

Secondly, a Haṁsāpakṣi flies very high. The wise ones' think at a very high level. They can get to the essence of a thing and therefore can see Bhagavān in the whole creation. They are not stuck up by the things beings and situations, they are not stuck up because of their likes and dislikes. The more you are filled with likes and dislikes, the more you are stuck up with a person and the behaviour of a person. You are not able to penetrate and see God in the person. This is called blunt vision or faulty vision. Whereas, these Mahātmās have the ability to raise the thinking at a very high level and to such an extent that they see only the truth.

They also see names and forms but the names and forms do not distract their vision. This is the second comparison.

The third comparison is, where do you refresh yourself? Tamasic people will refresh in a tamasic way - drink and drugs, clubs and pubs etc. For the rājasic, refreshment is in competition. I must win, I must defeat. Things like junk food, news channels and sports are what they usually indulge in.

Sattvik refreshments are satsangs, bhajans and anything that takes the mind to God.

Ask yourself, what is my source of refreshment? Sometimes it can be mixed also. Sometimes you feel sattva, sometimes rājas. But these Haṁsāpakṣi's, go for their refreshment only in mānasā sarovara. They will not take a bath anywhere else. This is the comparison between Haṁsāpakṣi and crow. Haṁsāpakṣi is compared with enlightened people.

What is said here is, compositions which may be perfect by all means from the literary standards but don't contain anything related to God are rejected by the wise people. Such compositions are like mud puddles, where only crows take a bath. This is very true. As you grow in spirituality you lose interest in anything which doesn't talk about God. There is no sense of fulfillment. The story may be nice, but there may be no enjoyment. That is a sign of spiritual progress. Slowly there is dispassion towards anything that is non spiritual.

तद्वाग्विसर्गो जनताघविप्लवो यस्मिन् प्रतिश्लोकमबद्धवत्यपि ।
नामान्यनन्तस्य यशोऽङ्कितानि य-च्छृण्वन्ति गायन्ति गृणन्ति साधवः ॥ ११ ॥
tad vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavat yapi |

nāmāny anantasya yaśo 'ñkitāni yaḥ śṛṇvanti gāyanti gṛṇanti sādhaveḥ || 11 ||

On the other hand, a composition in which every verse may have grammatical mistakes; but if it glorifies Bhagavān, and destroys the sins in the hearts of people, it will be listened to and sung by the wise ones.

See the attitude of the wise people towards compositions. A grammatically correct composition that has no glorification of the Lord is rejected by the wise people. But a composition that is rich in Bhagavān's glory even if it has a lot of grammatical errors is loved. Wise ones don't care about grammatical errors.

They don't care because if this composition has the ability to take my mind to higher, the composition is a nectarian one. This is another greatness of Mahātmās. They don't see the defects and get stuck there. There is a composition, but where is your mind going? Is your mind going to the defects or is your mind soaring high making proper use of the divine content? It's a great ability. A person may be singing a terrible bhajan. Where is your attention? Is it in the terrible voice or in the Lord that He is singing about?

If you are able to reject all the non essentials and go high with the name, hats off to you. It's a great ability. If you are getting stuck with a little music here and there that is not greatness, it is a defect. So here we are not talking just about compositions, but about everything. Even with a person also. A highly spiritual person may have some defects. If my attention is on the defects of the spiritual person, and not on the spirituality of the person, who is the loser? I am the loser. That is why we say, it is our own spiritual mind that brings us to spirituality, and it is our own impure mind which blocks our spiritual progress.

No matter how great the Guru may be, if my mind is impure, it is like a rusted iron which doesn't feel any attraction to the magnet. In the same way, an impure mind will never feel attraction to the spiritual path and scriptures, spiritual talks and sadhanas. My own impure mind will become an obstacle.

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः (ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanah) Bhagavad Gita 6.5. My own mind is my best friend, that alone is my worst enemy.

नैष्कर्म्यमप्यच्युतभाववर्जितं न शोभते ज्ञानमलं निरञ्जनम् ।
कुतः पुनः शश्वदभद्रमीश्वरे न चार्पितं कर्म यदप्यकारणम् ॥ १२ ॥
naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam na śobhate jñānam alam nirañjanam |

kutaḥ punaḥ śaśvad abhadram īśvare na cārpitaṁ karma yad apy akāraṇam||12||

Nārada Ṛṣi talks about the glory of devotion and says, O' Vyāsa Ṛṣi, the highest knowledge is नैष्कर्म्यम् निरञ्जनम् (naiṣkarmyam nirañjanam). The highest knowledge means, consciousness alone is truth, everything else is an illusion. There is only this observing, witnessing consciousness. Triputi doesn't exist. Only the observer exists. So naturally, if the world is not there, there is no interaction, no karma - naiṣkarmya. That state is the state of actionlessness.

Nirañjanam means pure. When only one thing exists, it is pure. When two things exist, it is impure. Nirañjanam means pure knowledge. A person who practices this knowledge will not progress. A person who doesn't bother to develop devotion for God; If he doesn't care about bhakti and only stays at that higher level, just practicing this highest knowledge based on Upaniṣads, he will get stuck. Without bhakti, no progress is possible. Many people are stuck here.

Unless the heart is pure, the practice of meditation is impossible. Purity of heart is devotion, humility, and gratitude. With all these noble emotions when the heart is rich, then as grace of the Lord, comes that highest experience. You just cannot bypass this. Bhakti is unavoidable. Become a nobody and be very very humble. All that is not possible with consciousness meditation. If the heart has to be pure thoughts have to be noble. Negative thoughts can be replaced only by good thoughts, noble thoughts and not by witnessing thoughts. So the initial stages are all this. That is why bhakti is called Mother. From bhakti should come jñānam.

Jñāna and karma are ineffective without Bhakti. That is the next topic.

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Session 5

[Chapter 5 Verse 12-24]

नैष्कर्म्यमप्यच्युतभाववर्जितं न शोभते ज्ञानमलं निरञ्जनम् । कुतः पुनः शश्वदभद्रमीश्वरे
न चार्पितं कर्म यदप्यकारणम् ॥ १२॥

naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitaṁ na śobhate jñānam alaṁ nirañjanam |
kutaḥ punaḥ śaśvad abhadram īśvare na cārpitaṁ karma yad apy akāraṇam||12||

O' Vyāsa Ṛṣi, even karma and jñāna do not shine without bhakti. Only bhakti makes jñāna and karma truly fruitful. Jñāna without bhakti is not very auspicious, it will not give any results. Many times we find this amongst seekers. They say I don't want bhakti, I want jñāna. What is jñāna? Remaining a witness. Witnessing, where there is no love and there is only dry intellectualism, is where seekers get stuck.

The first obstacle is laya, sleep. The second obstacle is vikṣepa, wandering mind. Then there is even a higher obstacle called kaṣāya, where the person is not sleeping, the mind is not wandering but there is no joy. There is dry peace. That state is called kaṣāyāvasthā.

The mind is peaceful, not wandering, not sleeping but there is no joy. There is no disturbance but there is no cheerful peace also. Peace also has so many flavors. There is a dry peace, a dull peace. This is called kaṣāya. It is because the heart is not involved, only the head is involved. The heart is not filled with the noble emotions of devotion, love, surrender, humility and kindness. So what is said here is absolutely true न शोभते (na śobhate). So this is with respect to jñāna.

What about karma?

कुतः पुनः शश्वदभद्रमीश्वरे: (kutaḥ punaḥ śaśvad abhadram īśvare) these are actions which are performed selflessly, without expecting any results but not offered as a worship of the Lord. Such actions done maybe with egoism, are always inauspicious only. This is because there is a sense of doership. Surrender of the ego is the most important thing. Bhagavān, I am only an instrument, you are the doer. There is no bhakti, surrender, or gratitude. This is also a major obstacle in the path of spirituality. So, whether you are practicing jñāna or karma yoga,

without bhakti you will not get any result. You will be stuck. Therefore O' Vyāsa Ṛṣi, bhakti is very important.

अथो महाभाग भवानमोघदृक्- शुचिश्रवाःसत्यरतो धृतव्रतः ।
उरुक्रमस्याखिलबन्धमुक्तये समाधिनानुस्मर तद्विचेष्टितम् ॥ १३ ॥
atho mahābhāga bhavān amogha-dr̥k śuci-śravāḥ satya-rato dhṛta-vrataḥ |
Urukramasyākhila-bandha-muktaye samādhinānusmara tad viceṣṭitam || 13 ||

O' Vyāsa Ṛṣi, you are the most capable person to compose something that can bring bhakti. O' high souled one, you are bestowed with unerring insight, famed for your holiness. You are devoted to truth and firm in your vows. Therefore, for the salvation of mankind, bring out all the līlās of the Lord. All His līlās are such that they will bring devotion. So bring them out.

But Vyāsa Ṛṣi was not there when Bhagavān was doing līlās. For example he was not there when Bhagavān was doing bala līlā etc. So how can he compose such things?

See the term used here समाधिनानुस्मर (samādhinānusmara). Get into samādhi. Merge your individual mind with the cosmic mind. Because whatever is happening in this world is registered. Everything done by every jīva is stored in the cosmic mind. Nothing gets effaced. From the infinite past, whatever has happened, everything is stored. In fact, it is because of that, Bhagavān is able to give karma phala. That means everything is stored. Vyāsa Ṛṣi, access that universal library and you can do it because you are an avatāra.

Go to the cosmic mind, that hiranyāgarbha and access the cosmic womb and bring it out. This is the way the entire Bhagavad Gita was also written. Because he had that freedom. This way, O' Ṛṣi, bring it out.

ततोऽन्यथा किञ्चन यद्विवक्षतः पृथग्दृशस्तत्कृतरूपनामभिः ।
न कुत्रचित्क्वापि च दुःस्थिता मति- लभेत वाताहतनौरिवास्पदम् ॥ १४ ॥
tato 'nyathā kiñcana yad vivakṣataḥ pṛthag-dṛśas tat-kṛta-rūpa-nāmabhiḥ |
na kutracit kvāpi ca duḥsthitā matiḥ labheta vātāhata-naur ivāspadam || 14 ||

If you don't bring out this composition where Bhagavān is glorified, people will suffer. With our sense organs we live in this world and perceive this world. We see names and forms. There is a vision of plurality. Everything is different in this world. Each one is independent. We don't see any one thing that is supporting

everything. So we may come to the conclusion that each and every entity is independent, they have their own powers. So the mind is completely distracted with thousands of thoughts because there is no single thing that is controlling everything. This is the tragedy of an atheist. What will happen if you don't believe in God?

Everything becomes important and the mind will never be able to attain peace anywhere. What is the nature of this world? Everything is uncertain and everything is perishable. What will you hold on to? Worries, stress, anxiety? Where will you take refuge? Anything which you are holding on to will slip. There is no guarantee that what you are chasing, you will get. In such an uncertain perishable world, when we have to live without faith in God, what will be the state of the mind? Most miserable. The condition of an intellect that is sad, miserable is like an anchorless boat tossed by the wind. Wind will go anywhere and the boat will also go anywhere. Such a person will be a very moody person. When good things are happening, he will be happy and when bad things are happening he will be miserable. His key to happiness is in everybody's pocket.

Vyāsa Ṛṣi this is what is going to happen if you don't compose this. On the other hand, suppose if you compose a scripture that focuses on the presence of one God, surrender on to Him, take refuge in Him, that's it. He will protect you, that will give you peace. You see the importance? If the concept of God is taken away, what will happen! So Vyāsa Ṛṣi this is very important. Because it is directly associated with the peace of mind of a person. Otherwise the mind will be tossed up and down in the uncertainties of life.

विचक्षणोऽस्यार्हति वेदितुं विभो- रनन्तपारस्य निवृत्तिः सुखम् ।
प्रवर्तमानस्य गुणैरनात्मन- स्ततो भवान् दर्शय चेष्टितं विभोः ॥ १६ ॥

vicakṣaṇo 'syārhati vedituṁ vibho- rananta-pārasya nivṛttauḥ sukham |
pravartamānasya guṇair-anātman- tato bhavān darśaya ceṣṭitam vibhoḥ || 16 ||

O' Ṛṣi there are very few people who can meditate on the highest and achieve liberation. They are men of discrimination and have the ability to see what is real, what is unreal and therefore they are dispassionate to the unreal and devoted to the real. They can fix their mind on the real and realise the truth. Thus they are able to abide in the truth and experience the infinite bliss of the self. But how many such people are there? Very very few. Most of the people have their mind on the guṇas of prakṛti. Their mind is completely in the world. All the time the mind is thinking about the things beings and situations and is full of likes and dislikes, full of kāma, krodha. The mind is in the guṇas of the prakṛiti - sattva,

rājas, tamas. Mostly rājas and tamas and very little sattva. The mind is in the elementals and is not at all in atma. Hence it is equivalent to saying they have anātmā.

Because the law is, you get what you pay attention to. If you don't pay attention, it is equivalent to saying it is not there for you. Bhagavān himself is residing as the atma in them but since they don't pay attention, nothing wrong in saying they are anātmā. Most people belong to this category and their entire attention is upon the world because for them the world is the source of happiness. Therefore O' R̥ṣi, it is for this purpose that Bhagavān has taken an avatāra. So that He can become an object of their perception. Because that is where their attention is.

Therefore Bhagavān has to take a physical form and when he takes a physical form my attention which is in the physical world will automatically go to this physical Lord in the physical world. So actually it is a bait. How do you catch fish? Fish is in the water. If the bait is hanging above water, will you get the fish? No. So the bait is something which should be in the water because the fish is in the water. Merely some bait will not do. It has to be something that the fish is interested in. Tempting the fish is also very important. Something that the fish can feel and taste, possess, chase and catch. Such a bait is necessary and when that fish catches it, what do you do? You pull out the bait. And when you pull out the bait the fish also has to helplessly come out. Fish will never leave the bait when you are pulling out because the fish doesn't know what is happening. And thus you take out the fish. In the case of fish, the fish dies, in the case of jīvatma, jīvabhava dies and Brahmābhava appears.

This is the reason why the infinite Lord who is beyond all sense perceptions comes with a form so that the form will do such līlās and all these extroverted, indulgent people will get attracted to His līlās. This is the nature of the mind. It gets attracted towards goodness because the essential nature of the mind is goodness. So when a person is extremely good, then the mind cannot ignore that person. The mind starts revering that person. Loving that person, because the essential nature of the mind is goodness. So Bhagavān, you do such līlās so that everybody's mind gets attracted and a time must come when they are miserable when not remembering you. Then withdraw that form. Then naturally to come of that misery they will take refuge in this knowledge and realise that God is not outside, He is right here.

Create mumukṣutvam and then divert the attention. That is it. This is the whole purpose of avatāra līlās. Here the point is, O' R̥ṣi, this bhakti is so easy to practice. Bhakti is a saṁguṇa sakara form. Unlike meditating upon consciousness

which is very difficult, meditating upon a form is very easy. Meditating on the līlās of the Lord is very easy. Bhakti is very easy. This is the third reason.

Therefore O' Ṛṣi, compose. Bring out all the līlās of the Lord so people will automatically get gravitated towards bhakti, towards Bhagavān and this is very easy because their mind is already in the world and Bhagavān has become an object in the world. It becomes very easy.

त्यक्त्वा स्वधर्मं चरणाम्बुजं हरे- भजन्नपक्वोऽथ पतेततो यदि ।
यत्र क्व वाभद्रमभूदमुष्य किं को वार्थ आप्तोऽभजतां स्वधर्मतः ॥ १७ ॥
tyaktvā sva-dharmāṁ caraṇāmbujam hareḥ bhajann apakvo 'tha patet tato yadi |
yatra kva vā bhadram abhūd amuṣya kiṁ ko vārtha āpto 'bhajatāṁ
sva-dharmātaḥ || 17 ||

O Ṛṣi, what happens to a person who has given up his svadharmā in doing devotion to the Lord? So, here is a person who has given importance to worshipping the lotus feet of the Lord, developing devotion for the Lord and in the process he has not done his svadharmā properly. He gave so much importance to bhakti that his duties he did not do properly. What will happen to that person? And let us say, he died. Can there be any inauspiciousness for him?

No. If a person gives importance to bhakti and in the process has not done his svadharmā properly even then there is nothing for him to lose. These are certain concepts which have to be very clear.

On the other hand there is a person doing his duty properly but there is no devotion. What is he going to get?

Let us first discuss about a person who is doing his svadharmā very well but there is no bhakti. What is the defect in that philosophy? Many people say I am a karma yogi. I don't do bhakti and all. I do my duty. The problem is, he will definitely do his action with ego, with a sense of doership, desiring the results and therefore this karma will bring karma phala that unconsciously svadharmā is dropped. He is not a lazy person. There are so many such stories which validate this statement.

There is a very famous story of Tukārāma mahārāj. So Tukārāma mahārāj used to compose abhaṅgas. He had children and he had a wife and she used to say you are not doing anything, how are we going to feed the children if you don't work? But he would not bother. So finally, the wife contacted some person and

one landlord said he need not do anything, just sit on the field and ensure that cows come to graze it. So he is also happy and I will also give him some money and food etc. Then finally Tukārāma ji was given this responsibility of taking care of the crops and then he started singing bhajans and abhaṅgas and everywhere he was seeing Bhagavān. Cloud is Bhagavān, birds are Bhagavān. So he would say Bhagavān, you yourself have come! Then cows also started coming and in cows also he saw only Bhagavān. In front of him cows were grazing, birds were grazing and he was singing, it seemed a total mess and he was enjoying. The crop keeper is in front of crops and in front of him everything is being destroyed and he is in bliss. He was seeing only Bhagavān everywhere.

A passer by saw this and he went and informed the landlord. So naturally the issue went to the panchayat mukhiya and all the people gathered. How to punish this man because he doesn't have any money either. Finally it was decided that whatever loss is incurred because of his carelessness he has to pay that amount even if it meant selling his house. That was the only thing he had. He agreed.

In that season the crop was so much, it was ten times the normal crop and this landlord was stunned! He went and prostrated onto Tukārāma mahārāj and said please forgive me for what I have done. In fact I only want what I usually get and the rest everything is yours. And then Tukārāma mahārāj takes everything and distributes amongst the poor. That is the story. This is true. Even the ability to perform our Svadharmā comes from the Lord.

Performing svadharmā is not a great thing. All abilities belong to the Lord only. But doing svadharmā with the feeling that Bhagavān, these talents and abilities belong to you, my life belongs to you. Let what I do be a worship to you. This is the right attitude. Bhagavān is happy with them because everything belongs to Him only. Our job is to just be grateful and thankful because everything belongs to Him. So doing with an understanding that whatever is happening is because of your grace.

There is another story of a barber. This barber was a barber of the king and one day during his pooja time he became so immersed in devotion that he lost the sense of time. That was the time he had to attend to the king to do his cutting and shaving etc. So then after the devotional mood was over and when he came down and saw the time he was so scared. He rushed to the king and the king asked what happened, you have come again! The Lord himself had become the barber and did everything. So many such stories are there where Bhagavān himself takes up the role. You are doing what you are supposed to do. The

purpose of life is to develop devotion. All the other things are insignificant, I will take care.

Many times this also happens, when your devotion grows all your duties and responsibilities also reduce. He sees to it that there is nothing much and if it all there is something he will provide the means and resources to take care of everything. As Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa used to say beautifully well, when the daughter-in-law is pregnant and ready to deliver the baby the mother-in-law slowly reduces the workload of the daughter-in-law so that in the final days, she does not have to work much.

The whole point is, this bhakti is the most important thing. Not karma. Karma is only for developing bhakti. All our duties that we are performing are not for doing something for the world, or to help the world. Keep away all such notions that I can help the world, serve the world. You are performing duty only to develop devotion for God. Therefore this is the fourth point, there are no evil consequences.

The one who has bhakti even if he gives up svadharmā, no problem, there are no evil consequences, therefore bhakti has to be practiced.

तस्यैव हेतोः प्रयतेत कोविदो न लभ्यते यद्भ्रमतामुपर्यधः ।
तल्लभ्यते दुःखवदन्यतः सुखं कालेन सर्वत्र गभीररंहसा ॥ १८ ॥
tasyaiva hetoḥ prayateta kovido na labhyate yad bhramatām upary adhaḥ |
tal labhyate duḥkhavad anyataḥ sukhaṁ kālena sarvatra gabhīra-ramhasā || 18 ||

One must strive for that which is not available otherwise. For that alone a wise man should strive. Strive for that which is not available in any higher or lower world.

Sukham and duḥkham will come to you unasked. You don't have to strive for sukham. Just like duḥkham comes to you unasked, just like sorrows come unasked because of pāpa karmas, joys of life also come because of your puṇya karmas. You don't have to work for it. You should work for that which will not come unasked. This is bhakti. Unless you strive for it, you will not get it.

Whenever you go to a foreign country, what will you buy? You bring something which is not there in your country. Will you bring the same thing which is already available in your country? It is meaningless.

I know of one person who was bringing a mat. He went to a place and saw a beautiful mat and with great difficulty he packed it. Transportation was very difficult and he paid a lot of money and was bringing it in a train. So a co-passenger asked him what are you bringing etc and then the co-passenger explained, this mat is made in your village! He did not know that the mat was actually made in his village and exported and with great difficulty he was bringing that. He felt ashamed and miserable. Something that is already there, for that so much money and effort got spent! In the same way, just like duḥkham comes to you, sukham also will also come unasked.

So what should life be used for? Use it for something which you will not get till you work for it and what is that? It is bhakti. It is a rare thing. Therefore O' Rṣi, give importance to bhakti. This is reason number five.

न वै जनो जातु कथञ्चनाव्रजे- न्मुकुन्दसेव्यन्यवदङ्ग संसृतिम् ।
स्मरन् मुकुन्दाङ्घ्र्युपगूहनं पुन- विहातुमिच्छेन्न रसग्रहो यतः ॥ १९ ॥

na vai jano jātu kathañcanāvrajen mukunda-sevy anyavad aṅga saṁsṛtim |
smaran mukundāṅghry-upagūhanam punaḥ vihātum icchen na rasa-graho yataḥ
|| 19 ||

Reason six is that bhakti is addictive. Once you have a taste of it, you will like nothing else.

Once a person tastes the joy of devotion, he is not going to leave it. A person who is worshipping the lotus feet of the Lord, will not come back to this saṁsāra. The joy of devotion is highly fulfilling. This is how devotion helps a person to come out of saṁsāra. Everything we do is for happiness, for joy. So once you are exposed to this higher joy of devotion, every other joy will feel inferior. Slowly slowly as the person is on this path, so many things start happening.

The pain of indulgence becomes more than the joy of indulgence. Suppose the pain of indulgence is more intense and more long lasting, than the joy of indulgence, will you indulge? No.

Second, the joy of devotion is more intense than the joy of indulgence

When these two happen, you will drop indulging. This is what is called रसग्रह (rasa-graho). Bhakti is addictive. There is an addiction in this path also. There is an intoxication in bhakti. And the addiction becomes so strong that you can't leave it. The joy of devotion, the joy of meditation, the joy of selfless service, the

joy of a sattvik mind. They are all higher joys. The joy of rājas is greater than the joy of tamas. The joy of sattva is greater than the joy of rājas and tamas. This is how Bhagavān takes us out of the world. It is more fulfilling and once you get the taste of it, you crave for more and more. You become addicted to it and you are ready to pay any price to get it.

As you practice more, the intensity also goes higher and higher. Then you are ready to pay any price for it and the greatest price is you have to drop the sense objects. You have to withdraw from the world. You have to stop indulging in the outer sense-pleasures. This is the price you have to pay and you are ready to pay because when I go within there is a deeper sense of satisfaction and fulfilment so I don't mind giving up the pleasures of the world. This is how progress happens.

So O' R̥ṣi, this bhakti is like that. It is very addictive. Once you taste it you cannot say I don't want it. You can't. Rāmākṛṣṇa Paramahansa used to say, once a person gave a little opium to one peacock. The next day the peacock came again. Everytime at the right time the peacock would come. In the same way, there is a spiritual opium, it's called bhakti and once you get the taste for it you can't leave it. You become miserable when it is not there. You become like a fish out of water. Greater the devotion, greater your misery when it is lacking. So this is a hundred percent true. This is reason number six.

That first exposure, that is all what is needed- that is what the R̥ṣi says, then it will automatically come.

Summarising the benefits of bhakti:

Reason 1: jñāna and karma are effective only with bhakti

Reason 2: If there has to be peace there has to be a vision of oneness.

Reason 3: Bhakti is easy to follow. Meditating on the līlās of the Lord is easy so R̥ṣi compose it so people will get gravitated towards Bhagavān.

Reason 4: There are no side-effects for someone who chooses bhakti over karma. This is because the purpose of karma is to develop bhakti. So even if he dies, he will be born in a place where he can continue his bhakti.

Reason 5: Make use of this life to strive for something which is rare and good. Which will not come otherwise.

Reason 6: Once you get the taste of it you will never leave it. It is addictive.

Therefore, because of all these reasons, O' Vyāsa Ṛṣi you must compose a scripture which will bring devotion and what should be the direction in which the scripture should be written?

इदं हि विश्वं भगवानिवेतरो यतो जगत्स्थाननिरोधसम्भवाः । तद्धि स्वयं वेद भवांस्तथापि वै
प्रादेशमात्रं भवतः प्रदर्शितम् ॥ २० ॥

idaṁ hi viśvaṁ Bhagavān ivetaro yato jagat-sthāna-nirodha-sambhavāḥ |
tad dhi svayaṁ veda bhavāṁs tathāpi vai prādeśa-mātraṁ bhavataḥ pradarśitam
॥ 20 ॥

The content of this scripture should be, there is one Lord upon whom the whole world resides. He is the one who is जगत्स्थाननिरोधसम्भवाः (jagat-sthāna-nirodha-sambhavāḥ). The whole world appears in Him, remains in Him and dissolves in Him. There is one such entity who is none other than the Self in us. There is a Supreme Lord, you have to hold on to that Lord and all your problems will be solved. Worldly problems and your spiritual evolution. Everything is taken care of by holding on to this God. This should be the direction in which the scripture should be written. So naturally we will love God, we will value God, with our whole personality, whole heartedly we will give importance to God.

Why should I seek God? This question should be answered in that composition. I have my problems, all these problems can be solved beautifully well, most effectively through that God. In this way the whole scripture should move.

O' Vyāsa Ṛṣi I don't have to say much. You know it. I just indicated what could be done. You know better and I know you are the right person for this.

त्वमात्मनाऽऽत्मानमवेह्यमोघदृक्- परस्यपुंसः परमात्मनः कलाम् । अजं प्रजातं जगतः शिवाय
तन्- महानुभावाभ्युदयोऽधिगण्यताम् ॥ २१ ॥

tvam ātmanātmānam avehy amogha-dr̥k parasya puṁsaḥ paramātmānaḥ kalām
| ajaṁ prajātaṁ jagataḥ śivāya tan mahānubhāvābhyudayo 'dhigaṇyatām ॥ 21 ॥

O' Ṛṣi, 'you know yourself by yourself'. You know the glory of the Self. I don't have to tell you. You are a person with true, unfailing insight. You are the kālā avatāraa of that Supreme Lord. You are a manifestation of His, you are an

amshaavatāra. Though unborn, for the welfare of the world you have taken this incarnation. So, therefore, glorify the Lord, His līlās. This is what you have to do,

इदं हि पुंसस्तपसः श्रुतस्य वा स्विष्टस्य सूक्तस्य च बुद्धिदत्तयोः । अविच्युतोऽर्थः
कविभिर्निरूपितो यदुत्तमश्लोकगुणानुवर्णनम् ॥ २२ ॥

idaṁ hi puṁsas tapasaḥ śrutasya vā sviṣṭasya sūktasya ca buddhi-dattayoḥ |
avicyuto 'rthaḥ kavibhir nirūpito yad uttama-śloka-guṇānuvarṇanam || 22 ||

This is the purpose of life. The ultimate purpose of all sadhanas you do is to develop devotion for the Lord. Get attracted to the Lord and walk the path shown by Him. Glorify Him and then just follow His path. This is the purpose of all the sadhanas.

Austerity, study of scriptures, performing rituals, chanting stotrams, bhajans etc, studying the scriptures, charity. The wise people have said that all these sadhanas are only for one thing - developing devotion for the Lord.

Therefore Yukti says that Bhakti has to be developed. Yukti means logic. The six reasons we have given are the logic. Shruti also says bhakti has to be developed. And now, to talk about the experience, Nārada Ṛṣi shares His story. Look at me where I was, and with devotion what have I become.

What is the Glory of Nārada ji? Uninterrupted he can go to any world. He can enter the hearts of anyone, he can know anything. How did he become that? Nārada Ṛṣi says it is all because of devotion.

अहं पुरातीतभवेऽभवं मुने दास्यास्तु कस्याश्चन वेदवादिनाम् । निरूपितो बालक एव योगिनां
शुश्रूषणे प्रावृषि निर्विविक्षताम् ॥ २३ ॥

ahaṁ purātīta-bhave 'bhavaṁ mune dāsyās tu kasyāścana veda-vādinām |
nirūpito bālaka eva yogināṁ śuśrūṣaṇe prāvṛṣi nirvivikṣatām || 23 ||

In the previous kalpa, in my previous birth, O' Muni, I was born to a daasi of some community of Vedic ritualistics. In that community I was born to this servant maid. I was given the responsibility of serving them. These vedic ritualists, these saintly people would come during Cāturmāsya - the four months of the rainy season. They would come and camp in my village so my job was to attend to their needs, to serve them.

ते मय्यपेताखिलचापलेऽर्भके दान्तेऽधृतक्रीडनकेऽनुवर्तिनि । चक्रुः कृपां यद्यपि तुल्यदर्शनाः
शुश्रूषमाणे मुनयोऽल्पभाषिणि ॥ २४ ॥

te mayy apetākhila-cāpale 'rbhake dānte dhṛta-kṛḍanake 'nuvartini |
cakruḥ kṛpām yady api tulya-darśanāḥ śuśrūṣamāṇe munayo 'lpa-bhāṣiṇi || 24 ||

I was just a boy of five years. At that age, I was not boyish or playful. There was no fickleness. I was self controlled. I had control of sense organs. Even when there were toys, I was not interested in toys. I was very obedient, I used to serve them with all dedication. I would never talk too much.

So naturally who will not love a child who is very obedient, silent, disciplined, and sitting quietly in a place. Whenever some work is asked he would do it with a lot of faith. Those sages who came there were so touched by this boy.

In the presence of Mahātmās how should we be? If you go on talking in front of Mahātmās, they will become silent. Talking is an amazing thing. At the seat of meditation you have to be in silence only. Because you are in the presence of a Mahan atma. What is consciousness, it is Bhagavān.

So in the outer world if you train yourself to be silent in the presence of Mahātmās, that itself will train you to be silent in the presence of that consciousness. Otherwise you will be chattering. Chattering at the seat of meditation means you are disrespecting the presence of the Lord. A chattering mind is disrespectful to that presence. There is this Bhagavān who is trying to communicate something to you but you are full of yourself. You are full of your likes and dislikes, you are full of noise. How will you get connected to Him then? So whatever outer disciplines are there, these outer disciplines are directly or indirectly connected to the highest meditation. Learn to remain silent in the presence of wise people then a time will come you will learn to be silent in the presence of the Lord. Which is the ultimate silence. Chattering during meditation means O' God, you remain silent, I know better. Chattering is an indication of ignorance.

The point here is the boy would sit and this way he just earned their love and affection. We generally say, God's grace is not there that is why I am like this. Guru's grace is not there. But Guru's grace, God's grace comes this way. Your behaviour should be such that grace just descends. So that grace also is dependent on our own purity of mind only. You purify your mind, grace will come.

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Session 6

[Chapter 5 verse 24 - Chapter 6 verse 18]

ते मय्यपेताखिलचापलेऽर्भके दान्तेऽधृत्क्रीडनकेऽनुवर्तिनि । चक्रुः कृपां यद्यपि तुल्यदर्शनाः
शुश्रूषमाणे मुनयोऽल्पभाषिणि ॥ २४॥

te mayy apetaḥkhila-cāpale 'rbhake dānte dhṛta-kṛīḍanake 'nuvartini |
cakruḥ kṛpāṁ yady api tulya-darśanāḥ śuśrūṣamāṇe munayo 'lpa-bhāṣiṇi || 24 ||

I was a very obedient child. I would wholeheartedly serve them, I would listen and not talk too much. Though these saintly people were तुल्यदर्शनाः (tulya-darśanāḥ) all were equal in their vision, yet there was a difference.

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः । ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥
९.२९ ॥ samo'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveṣyo'sti na priyaḥ | ye bhajanti tu mā
bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpy aham || Bhagavad Gita 9.29 ||

Bhagavān's nature and the nature of these saintly people are the same. What is Bhagavān's nature? I am the same to everybody. I am not partial to anyone, all are equal to me. But, those people who worship me, I am in them, they are in me. They experience my presence, guidance, solace, strength and inspiration.

So is Bhagavān partial or not? From Bhagavān's standpoint, He is impartial but from a devotees standpoint, He appears to be partial. One example is that of the sun rising and the lotus blooming. From the sun's standpoint, he is equal to everyone. But from the standpoint of the lotus, he says O' Sun, it is because of you that I blossomed. Without you, I wouldn't have blossomed. Both the lotus and the Sun are right from their own standpoint. Devotees very clearly feel God has been partial to them. The moment I turn to Him, I start receiving His blessings. Those who are not turned to God, they don't receive the blessing. So it very much feels that Bhagavān is partial from a devotees standpoint. Anyone who turns to God gets His guidance and blessings. Those who don't turn, they suffer. Saints are also like that, they are equal to all. But, they saw this little boy with all these virtues and they blessed him.

उच्छिष्टलेपाननुमोदितो द्विजैः सकृत्सम भुञ्जे तदपास्तकिल्बिषः । एवं प्रवृत्तस्य विशुद्धचेतस-
स्तद्धर्म एवात्मरुचिः प्रजायते ॥ २५॥

ucchiṣṭa-lepān anumodito dvijaiḥ sakṛt sma bhuñje tad-apāsta-kilbiṣaḥ |

evam pravṛttasya viśuddha-cetasas tad-dharmā evātma-ruciḥ prajāyate || 25 ||

This boy was Nārada Ṛṣi. He would serve them and after serving everybody he would eat the remnants as prasād.

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः । भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥
३.१३ ॥
yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ | bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā ye
pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt || 3.13 ||

Whatever is in Bhagavad Gita the same in the story form is written here. Those who eat the remnants of a yajña, become free from all the sinful tendencies and impurities. This boy would serve everyone. Generally all these things are not seen in children. They start becoming restless. But this boy had absolute control. After they had all finished and only after getting their permission, he would eat.

This way by serving the mahātmās, all impurities of the mind started getting destroyed. The mind started becoming purer day by day. The more the mind is impure the more there is no interest. This we see in our lives and in others lives also. Being in their company, slowly his faith in them started increasing and then he started showing interest in what they were saying.

तत्रान्वहं कृष्णकथाः प्रगायता-मनुग्रहेणाशृणवं मनोहराः । ताः श्रद्धया मेऽनुपदं विशृण्वतः
प्रियश्रवस्यङ्गममाभवदुचिः ॥ २६ ॥
tatrānvaham kṛṣṇa-kathāḥ prāgayatām anugraheṇāśṛṇavaṁ manoharāḥ |
tāḥ śraddhayā me 'nupadam viśṛṇvataḥ priya-śravasy aṅga mamābhavad ruciḥ ||
26 ||

The whole day in the three sandhyās, kathas would happen.

Sandhyā means meeting points. There are three meeting points in a day. Night and morning is the first sandhya; morning and noon is the second sandhya and evening and night is the third sandhya.

During these three sandhyas, constantly kathas would happen, satsang would happen. Glories of the Lord would be sung, stories would be narrated. This way little Nārada started listening to the stories with all faith.

Firstly, he is a small child and the mind of small children is extremely pure. Moreover with the service the mind had become even more pure. He would listen

to every word with great faith. The mind would not wander here and there. With single pointed attention, he would listen to every word they spoke.

प्रियश्रवस्यङ्ग ममाभवद्रुचिः (priya-śravasy aṅga mamābhavad ruciḥ) by listening to these beautiful stories of the Lord, the love and devotion for the Lord started increasing in my heart day by day.

तस्मिंस्तदा लब्धरुचेर्महामुने प्रियश्रवस्यास्खलिता मतिर्मम । ययाहमेतत्सदसत्स्वमायया पश्ये
मयि ब्रह्मणि कल्पितं परे ॥ २७ ॥

tasmims tadā labdha-rucer mahā-mune priya-śravasya skhalitā matir mama |
yayāham etat sad-asat sva-māyāyā paśye mayi brahmaṇi kalpitaṁ pare || 27 ||

Now he got the taste of satsang, the taste of Kṛṣṇa katha and his mind became non wavering and single pointed. With that pure, concentrated mind, he experienced that highest state of knowledge.

What is that highest state? The whole world is nothing but a projection upon me and I am that supreme Brahman upon which the whole world is just a projection due to the māyā of the Lord.

So what is real now is not the projection of the world but the substratum on which the whole projection is happening. This is the highest state. Aham Brahmā Asmi. I alone am real, the whole world is a projection, projected by my mind due to the power of māyā. This way I started experiencing that truth.

इत्थं शरत्प्रावृषिकावृतू हरे- विंशृण्वतो मेऽनुसवं यशोऽमलम् । सङ्कीर्त्यमानं मुनिभिर्महात्मभि-
र्भक्तिः प्रवृत्ताऽऽत्मरजस्तमोऽपहा ॥ २८ ॥

itthaṁ śarat-prāvṛṣikāv ṛtū hareḥ viśṛṇvato me 'nusa-varṇ yaśo 'malam |
saṅkīrtiyamānaṁ munibhir Mahātmābhiḥ bhaktiḥ pravṛttā 'tma-rājas-tamo-pahā ||
28 ||

In this way, during the spring and rainy seasons, continuously listening to the kathas in all the three sandhyas, the heart became filled with devotion and all the impurities of rājas and tamas went away.

तस्यैवं मेऽनुरक्तस्य प्रश्रितस्य हतैनसः । श्रद्धधानस्य बालस्य दान्तस्यानुचरस्य च ॥ २९ ॥
tasyaivaṁ me 'nuraktasya praśritasya hatainasah | śraddadhānasya bālasya
dāntasyānucarasyaca || 29 ||

ज्ञानं गुह्यतमं यत्तत्साक्षाद्भगवतोदितम् । अन्ववोचन् गमिष्यन्तः कृपया दीनवत्सलाः ॥ ३० ॥
jñānaṁ guhyatamaṁ yat tat sāksād bhagavatoditam | anvavocan gamiṣyantaḥ
kṛpayā dīna-vatsalāḥ || 30 ||

After four months of Cāturmāsya, these Ṛṣis were leaving to the place where they had come from. They had become very attached to the boy. They saw him listening with great attention and devotion, full of humility and free from all impurities of the mind. They saw him full of faith and self control and so obedient.

When they were leaving they were so full of love and affection for this boy that they decided to bless him.

They blessed him with the highest knowledge of the Vedas, which is very sacred. Many times kathas are told but not much time is spent in its sacred message. Because most people are interested only in kathas. So the really deep truth of the scriptures is not mentioned. They specifically called him, spent some time with him and gave instructions of spiritual sadhana to him while leaving. They did so, because they knew that this boy can practice the highest truth.

Though he was just a child of a maid servant, probably born in a śūdra family, they were full of compassion for him and gave him this highest knowledge.

येनैवाहं भगवतो वासुदेवस्य वेधसः । मायानुभावमविदं येन गच्छन्ति तत्पदम् ॥ ३१ ॥
yenaivāhaṁ bhagavato vāsudevasya vedhasaḥ | māyānubhāvam avidaṁ yena
gacchanti tat padam || 31 ||

It is only because of this I obtained मायानुभावमविदं (māyānubhāvam) the grace of māyā of that Lord by which a person attains the highest state.

This is an interesting construction. What is said here is, not by the grace of the Lord instead it says by the grace of the māyā of the Lord. This is a very interesting construction.

Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa used to say, this māyā has 2 aspects- vidyā māyā and avidyā māyā. Avidyā māyā traps a person into this world and makes him bound. Whereas vidyā māyā helps the person to come out of this māyā. So, what is actually this vidyā and avidyā māyā? Tamas and rājas are avidyā māyā and sattva is vidyā māyā. In this regard, Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahaṁsa used to tell a beautiful story. A person was walking through a forest and he was caught by three robbers and they took away all his money. Then they asked, what to do with this person. The first robber said, let us kill him then there will be no problem. Otherwise, who knows, he may go and tell others. Let us finish him off.

The second was a little more compassionate. He said, no let us just tie him down to the tree and leave him. Killing may be too much. So they tied him to the tree and the three left. After sometime the third one came back. He came alone and then untied him. He said come with me, I will tell you how to come out of this forest. So then he showed him the way and finally they reached the main road. And he said now go this way and you will reach the bus stop and from there you can go. So this person felt so grateful to the robber and he said why don't you come to my home? I am so thankful that you came and saved me. The robber said, no I will not come there. The police will catch me. So who are these robbers? The first one who said - kill him was tamas, the second one who said tie him to the tree is rājas. The third who took him out of the forest and showed him the way till his home was sattva. But he could not come to the home of the man because sattva is also a guna. It is also a part of māyā and it doesn't have an entry into consciousness. It is matter, and matter has no entry into consciousness.

Sattva guna takes us to the doorstep of liberation and leaves us there. Put in a language of meditation, we keep purifying the mind and finally when the mind becomes sattvik, you drop the mind. You don't use the mind, you drop the mind. In the beginning you use the mind. Tamas is conquered by rājas. Rājas is conquered by sattva. It is just like the pole vault. When the pole is straightening up you are climbing the pole, you are making use of the pole and finally you drop the pole. In the same way, in the initial stages it is making use of the mind, purifying the mind through various sadhanas. Not watching the mind.

What will happen if you watch the mind without purifying the mind? You cannot watch the mind. To watch the mind you have to make the mind an object. Distancing is not possible if the mind is impure because you will stick to the mind. The sticking glue is rāga dveṣa. The more intense the rāga dveṣa, the more intensely you will get stuck with it. When you are stuck with it you cannot separate yourself from it. So the final stage is dropping the mind. After making the mind sattvik, you have to drop that sattvik mind. I am only a witness and witnessing is possible only through sattva.

So the point here is, grace of māyā is necessary to reach the Lord. Make use of this world, before even thinking of transcending this world. Learn to live intelligently in this world and only such a person can transcend the world. The first step is not transcending the world. The first step is intelligently making use of this world. Be a good person. Sweet words, beneficial actions, selfless actions, serving everyone, loving everyone, being kind, cultivating forgiveness. Such a

pure hearted person can alone progress in spirituality. This is called invoking the grace of māyā.

Never make this mistake- the world is an illusion, I am Brahmān. You are in भ्रम (bhrama) - delusion. Many people get stuck here only. They don't come down from Aṣṭāvakra-gītā. Aṣṭāvakra-gītā is full of this only- the whole world is māyā, illusion, pure Brahmān and only that. That is good and we are not criticising that knowledge. But first find out where you are? For most of us, the mind is very impure and for purifying the mind, the world is essential, responsibilities are essential, seva is essential. All these are essential. As the mind becomes pure, automatically you will find great joy at the seat of meditation. Because the mind to a great extent is controlled, disciplined, purified. Humility should become natural. So this term is beautiful मायानुभावमविदं (māyānubhāvam avidaṁ) by the grace of the māyā of the Lord.

It is only by the grace of the māyā that we can transcend māyā. It is not fighting against māyā. If you fight against māyā you will get into more and more māyā. Māyā is also a creation of the Lord only. The māyā power is the power of the Lord. So whatever is happening in this world, everything is happening by the will of the Lord, command of the Lord and under the supervision of the Lord.

एतत्संसूचितं ब्रह्मंस्तापत्रयचिकित्सितम् । यदीश्वरे भगवति कर्म ब्रह्मणि भावितम् ॥ ३२ ॥
etat saṁsūcitaṁ brahman tāpa-traya-cikitsitam | yad īśvare bhagavati karma
brahmaṇi bhāvitaṁ || 32 ||

O Ṛṣi, I have told all this just only for making this point clear- when actions are performed as a worship of Lord, such actions purify the mind and gradually the person becomes free from māyā. He becomes liberated and this becomes the cure for all the sufferings of this world- adyatmika, ādhibhautika, adhidevika level. The cure for all the suffering is this- perform actions as a worship of the Lord. For this, I have told you all this.

Naturally one may question, if action is the cause of bondage, how can action be the cause of liberation? So a beautiful example is given:

आमयो यश्च भूतानां जायते येन सुव्रत । तदेव ह्यामयं द्रव्यं न पुनाति चिकित्सितम् ॥ ३३ ॥
āmayo yaś ca bhūtānāṁ jāyate yena suvrata | tad eva hy āmāyaṁ dravyaṁ na
punāti cikitsitam || 33 ||

O' Ṛṣi, that which is causing the disease, isn't it true that the same entity becomes the cure also? This is true especially in the modern times. How do you

make vaccines? How did they make Covid vaccine? The very same disease causing microbes were taken and vaccines were produced. There is a saying in Ayurveda - विषस्य विषमौषधम् (viṣasya viṣam auśadham). How do you make the medicine for snake poison/ venom? They take the poison and from that poison only they made its antidote. The medicine for the poison is from the poison only. In homeopathy also they do the same thing. Isn't it true, that which causes the disease, from the same entity medicine is made?

एवं नृणां क्रियायोगाः सर्वे संसृतिहेतवः । त एवात्मविनाशाय कल्पन्ते कल्पिताः परे ॥ ३४ ॥
evaṁ nr̥ṇāṁ kriyā-yogāḥ sarve saṁsṛti-hetavaḥ । ta evātma-vināśāya kalpante
kalpitāḥ pare ॥ 34 ॥

In the same way, when actions are done selfishly, egoistically with a sense of doership, the action becomes the cause of bondage. But the very same action, when done egolessly liberates. So the only change is the understanding behind which the action is performed.

O' Lord, I am only an instrument, you are the doer, may this performance of action be a worship unto you. This is karma yoga. The moment the attitude changes, the very same action becomes the cause of liberation. So, O' Ṛṣi, action done with bhakti becomes a liberating force.

यदत्र क्रियते कर्म भगवत्परितोषणम् । ज्ञानं यत्तदधीनं हि भक्तियोगसमन्वितम् ॥ ३५ ॥
yad atra kriyate karma bhagavat-paritoṣaṇam । jñānaṁ yat tad adhīnaṁ hi
bhakti-yoga-samanvitam ॥ 35 ॥

A person who performs actions with devotion and for pleasing the Lord easily gains the highest knowledge. When actions are performed with devotion, that person gains that highest Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi knowledge.

इमं स्वनिगमं ब्रह्मन्नवेत्य मदनुष्ठितम् । अदान्मे ज्ञानमैश्वर्यं स्वस्मिन् भावं च केशवः ॥ ३९ ॥
imaṁ sva-nigamaṁ brahman navetya mad-anuṣṭhitam । adān me jñānam
aiśvaryaṁ svasmin bhāvaṁ ca keśavaḥ ॥ 39 ॥

So this is all that I have done, O' Ṛṣi. This teaching of the Lord I put into practice and therefore Bhagavān blessed me with jñānam and aiśvaryam. He blessed me with that highest knowledge and this power to go to all worlds unhindered, all these powers are because of this devoted worship unto the Lord.

Bhagavān gave himself to me. His own true nature, He gave me. We come to realise that this consciousness is Bhagavān. Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi. Bhagavan gave his nature to me, he gave me everything because of this performance of action as a worship of the Lord. So, O' Ṛṣi, this is what the content of your composition should be.

त्वमप्यदभ्रश्रुतविश्रुतं विभोः समाप्यते येन विदां बुभुत्सितम् ।आख्याहि/प्रख्याहि
दुःखैर्मुहुर्दितात्मना
सङ्क्लेशनिर्वाणमुशन्ति नान्यथा ॥ ४०॥

tvam apy adabhra-śruta-viśrutaṁ vibhoḥ samāpyate yena vidāṁ bubhutsitam |
ākhyāhi duḥkhair muhur arditātmanāṁnsaṅkleśa-nirvāṇam uśanti nānyathā||40 ||

O' Vyāsa Ṛṣi, the master of all scriptures, this is what you should do: glorify that Lord, expound glories of the Lord and develop devotion in the hearts of everyone. By this all confusions of the seekers of spirituality will go away. They will be satisfied, freed from all doubts and for those people who are suffering in this world, afflicted by suffering in this world, they also will become free from all sufferings. There is no other way.

With this the fifth chapter is over. Now Vyāsa Ṛṣi says, Nārada Ṛṣi your biography was really brief. You did not say anything much. I have so many questions.

Chapter 6 ॥ षष्ठोऽध्यायः ॥

सूत उवाच ।

एवं निशम्य भगवान् देवर्षेर्जन्म कर्म च । भूयः पप्रच्छ तं ब्रह्मन् व्यासः सत्यवतीसुतः ॥ १॥
sūta uvāca |

evaṁ niśamya Bhagavān devarṣer janma karma ca | bhūyaḥ papraccha taṁ
brahman Vyāsaḥ satyavatī-sutaḥ || 1 ||

Vyāsa Ṛṣi, the son of Satyavati, again asked so many questions. Actually Nārada Ṛṣi did not say much, earlier. He had just spoken of serving mahātmās and attributed this as the reason for him becoming a deva Ṛṣi from the son of a maid servant.

Now Vyāsa Ṛṣi asks:

व्यास उवाच ।

भिक्षुभिर्विप्रवसिते विज्ञानादेष्टुमिष्टव । वर्तमानो वयस्याद्ये ततः किमकरोद्भवान् ॥ २॥

Vyāsa uvāca |

bhikṣubhir vipravasite vijñānadeṣṭṛbhis tava | vartamāno vayaśy ādye tataḥ kim
akarod bhavān || 2 ||

O Ṛṣi, please tell what happened after the Ṛṣis gave all the knowledge to you? You were a very young boy. What did you do after that?

स्वायम्भुव कया वृत्त्या वर्तितं ते परं वयः । कथं चेदमुदस्राक्षीः काले प्राप्ते कलेवरम् ॥ ३ ॥
svāyambhuva kayā vṛttyā vartitaṁ te paraṁ vayah | kathaṁ cedam udasrākṣīḥ
kāle prāpte kalevaram || 3 ||

O' स्वायम्भुव (svāyambhuva), son of Brahmā ji, after that what did you do for the rest of your life? Because you were a small boy, and your whole life was in front of you. How did you drop this body when the time came to drop the body?

प्राक्कल्पविषयामेतां स्मृतिं ते सुरसत्तम । न ह्येष व्यवधात्काल एष सर्वनिराकृतिः ॥ ४ ॥
prāk-kalpa-viṣayām etāṁ smṛtiṁ te sura-sattama | na hy eṣa vyavadhāt kāla eṣa
sarva-nirākṛtiḥ || 4 ||

And my greatest question is, how do you remember all this? Because this happened in the previous कल्प (kalpa). Kalpa is 1000 caturyugas. How do you remember this? How did this not get erased from your memory? Because the nature of kāla is, it is an entity that effaces everything. No one can stand in front of the spirit of time. That is true. Everything, everybeing, every cosmic entity will be wiped away. The sun, moon, earth and cosmos are all wiped away. Such is the kāla. Everything other than Bhagavān is wiped off. How is it that you still remember all this?

That is the greatness of Nārada ji. Very very humble. Only answers what is asked. He does not show off. If you ask, I'll tell you otherwise I am silent.

नारद उवाच ।

भिक्षुभिर्विप्रवसिते विज्ञानादेष्टृभिर्मम । वर्तमानो वयस्याद्ये तत एतदकार्षम् ॥ ५ ॥
nārada uvāca |
bhikṣubhir vipravasite vijñānadeṣṭṛbhir mama | vartamāno vayaśy ādye tata etad
akāraṣam || 5 ||

एकात्मजा मे जननी योषिन्मूढा च किङ्करी । मय्यात्मजेऽनन्यगतौ चक्रे स्नेहानुबन्धनम् ॥ ६ ॥
ekātmajā me janānī yoṣin-mūḍhā ca kiṅkarī | mayy ātmaje 'nanya-gatau cakre
sneha-anubandhanam || 6 ||

My mother had only one son. I was the only child of hers and I was also her only relationship. I was her only hope and the only future. Therefore, she was extremely attached to me. The cord of attachment was very strong.

सास्वतन्त्रा न कल्पास्सीद्योगक्षेमं ममेच्छती । ईशस्य हि वशे लोको योषा दारुमयी यथा ॥ ७ ॥
sāsvatantrā na kalpā āsīd yoga-kṣemaṁ mamecchatī | īśasya hi vaśe loko yoṣā
dārumayī yathā || 7 ||

Though she intensely desired my welfare and wellbeing, she was not free. Firstly there was a lot of poverty. Secondly, she was an ordinary maid servant. What could she do? She was helpless. Here Nārada Ṛṣi says, this is not only true with my mother, it is true with everybody.

The whole world is under the control of the Lord. Just like the wooden puppets we jump around. We think we are beating our hands and legs. No, there is someone else who is pulling. This is the condition of this world. We think we have 'free will' but actually there is no free will. This is from the highest standpoint.

From the highest standpoint ego itself doesn't exist. All the concept of free will comes when there is ego. To the extent there is ego, to that extent we have to use the language of free will. But as we go higher and higher and very very Sattvik, you will come to know there is no free will.

Look at the condition of Vyāsa Ṛṣi.. He composed Mahābhārata, but was still unfulfilled. Now see how God's will forces him to compose Bhāgavatam. This is the meaning, we don't have free will. To the extent you are tuned to the Lord, to that extent Bhagavān's will starts functioning on to you. There is nothing called individual will. This is a fact but if you want to inspire somebody, don't tell this. This is the highest truth that the two great sages are discussing. For ordinary people you say - 'You must! You can!' That language is also there in the Bhagavad Gita. Language for the mediocre, for the inferior.

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः (ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanah) || Bhagavad Gita 6.5 ||

Your own mind is your best friend, your own mind is your worst enemy. This is what you have to quote. There is another one too निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् (nimitta-mātraṁ bhava savya-sācin) || Bhagavad Gita 11.33 ||

You just be my instrument, I will kill all of them, Arjuna. This Bhīṣma, Drona, Karna don't get scared, I will kill them. You just stand there. That is what is meant by absence of free will.

You see two contradictory philosophies in the same text. Why are two contradictory philosophies needed? Because there are different types of seekers. For a highly egoistic seeker which language will you use? The language of free will. For the most evolved ones, what language will you use? The language of God's will. So two different languages depending upon which grade the seeker is.

अहं च तद्ब्रह्मकुले ऋषिवांस्तदपेक्षया । दिग्देशकालाव्युत्पन्नो बालकः पञ्चहायनः ॥ ८ ॥
aham ca tad-brahma-kule ṛṣivāṁs tad-apekṣayā | dig-deśa-kālāvyutpanno
bālakaḥ pañca-hāyanaḥ || 8 ||

In this verse he clearly mentions his age as 5 years.

So, I was also like that- mother was fully attached to me and I was also fully attached to my mother. Naturally at that age I did not know the working of the world, the place, the time, I also stayed in the community of Vedic ritualistics, fully attached to my mother because I was a small boy.

One day what happened..

एकदा निर्गतां गेहाददुहन्तीं निशि गां पथि । सर्पोऽदशत्पदा स्पृष्टः कृपणां कालचोदितः ॥ ९ ॥
ekadā nirgataṁ gehād duhantīm niśi gāṁ pathi | sarpo 'daśat padā sprṣṭaḥ
krpaṇāṁ kāla-coditaḥ || 9 ||

My mother used to milk the cows. (Generally the milking is in the morning and evenings). One day she went to milk the cows at night, and when she was walking, unknowingly, she stepped upon a snake. And, by the snake bite she died. Her time had come therefore she died. When your time has come there has to be some reason. Once your time has come, something will happen.

तदा तदहमीशस्य भक्तानां शमभीप्सतः । अनुग्रहं मन्यमानः प्रातिष्ठं दिशमुत्तराम् ॥ १० ॥
tadā tad aham īśasya bhaktānāṁ śama-bhīpsataḥ | anugrahaṁ manyamānaḥ
prātiṣṭhaṁ diśam uttarām || 10 ||

Look at the greatness of Nārada Ṛṣi. Though just a child, he could say this. Anyone else going through this, how would he have taken this incident? One would usually say, O' Lord I have been listening to your katha and this is what you have done? Only one mother was there, I was attached to her and you took her away also!

But see how this boy at that age took it. He said, I considered it as a blessing from the Lord. No complaining, no grumbling. Because Bhagavān will never do anything which is not good for us. He is our well wisher.

See, through all the satsangs how his understanding changed completely.

This is how we must interpret the happenings in our life and this is the effect of satsang. A person without satsang can never make this statement. One would usually say, I am such a good person, this shouldn't have happened to me. Complaining and grumbling.

But here you see how the incident has been taken - Bhagavān, what you have done is the right thing. I don't know why it is the right thing but it is the right thing because you cannot do anything bad. Because you are the well wisher of everyone. You see the maturity? The moment you have this kind of thought, in your mind, know for sure, no situation can disturb you. The mind will be at peace.

The moment you have the other thought of 'why me', the mind will be disturbed. Disturbance of mind is the indication of how much faith I lack. Peace of mind is the indication of faith. Hopelessness is the indication of faithlessness. So we can grade ourselves, how good a devotee I am and how much my mind is fluttering, agitated when something unexpected, something bitter happens.

As you grow in spirituality you will find, the mind becomes more and more peaceful. This is called समत्वम् (samatvaṁ).

समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥ (samatvaṁ yoga ucyate) ॥ Bhagavad Gita 2.48.

Equanimity of mind is yoga. Where is this equanimity coming from? It is coming from the understanding that everything good or bad is happening by the grace of God. Nothing to complain about. If He is doing it, that is the right thing. Full stop. For many things I am not in a position to know and I don't have the ability to know. But one thing is for sure, if something is happening, it is the right thing. When this understanding is there, the mind is peaceful.

This was that boy's understanding. So, considering this as a blessing of the Lord, I started off. I left my home and started walking. I heard the Himalayas are in the northern direction, so I started walking. Blind faith in these mahātmās.

स्फीताञ्जनपदांस्तत्र पुरग्रामव्रजाकरान् । खेटखर्वटवाटीश्च वनान्युपवनानि च ॥ ११ ॥
sphītāñ janapadāms tatra pura-grāma-vrajākarān | kheṭa-kharvaṭa-vāṭīś ca
vanāny upavanāni ca || 11 ||

चित्रधातुविचित्राद्रीनिभभग्नभुजद्रुमान् । जलाशयाञ्छिवजलान्नलिनीः सुरसेविताः ॥ १२ ॥
citra-dhātu-vicitrādrīn nibhagna-bhuja-drumān | jalāśayān śiva-jalān nalinīḥ
sura-sevitāḥ || 12 ||

He started walking. First in cities then villages, agricultural land. Then the mountains and then into the mining fields. In those times also mining fields were there. Then he slowly entered the forest and in that forest he could see very many branches broken because of the wild elephants. He continued walking and found lakes with pure water and a lot of cooing of the birds and humming of the bees. Slowly he started going deep and deep into the forest.

चित्रस्वनैः पत्ररथैर्विभ्रमद्भ्रमरश्रियः । नलवेणुशरस्तम्बकुशकीचकगहवरम् ॥ १३ ॥
citra-svanaiḥ patra-rathair
vibhramad-bhramara-śriyaḥ nala-veṇu-śara-stambha-kuśa-kīcaka-gahvaram || 13 ||

एक एवातियातोऽहमद्राक्षं विपिनं महत् । घोरं प्रतिभयाकारं व्यालोलूकशिवाजिरम् ॥ १४ ॥
eka evātiyāto 'ham adrākṣaṁ vipinaṁ mahat | ghoraṁ pratibhayākāraṁ
vyāla-lūka-śivā-jiram || 14 ||

As he was going deeper and deeper into the forest, there were bamboos and reeds and huge wild grass. He was entering into the depth of the forest and he was all alone. Soon he entered into a thick dense forest which was a playground of wild animals- snakes, owls, jackals. He entered into that forest.

परिश्रान्तेन्द्रियात्माहं तृट्परीतो बुभुक्षितः । स्नात्वा पीत्वा हृदे नद्या उपस्पृष्टो गतश्रमः ॥ १५ ॥
pariśrānta-indriyātmāhaṁ tṛṭ-parīto bubhukṣitaḥ | snātvā pītvā hradena nadya
upasprṣṭo gata-śramah || 15 ||

Finally he found a river there. He was extremely tired and exhausted. He was hungry and thirsty. So he went to that river, took a dip, freshened himself, drank that pure water and thus all his tiredness was gone.

तस्मिन्निर्मनुजेऽरण्ये पिप्पलोपस्थ आस्थितः । आत्मनाऽऽत्मानमात्मस्थं यथाश्रुतमचिन्तयम् ॥ १६ ॥

tasmin nirmanuje 'raṇye pippalopastha āsthitaḥ | ātmanātmānam ātma-sthaṁ
yathā-śrutam acintayam || 16 ||

After taking a bath, he was refreshed and sat under a peepal tree, all alone in that deep forest. And when he sat there, all the teachings that were given to him by those Ṛṣis, came into his mind. He started meditating upon all the teachings given by those Ṛṣis. What was the teaching - the Lord is in your own heart. Tat Tvam Asi. So he started practicing that आत्मनाऽऽत्मानमात्मस्थं (ātmanātmānam ātma-sthaṁ). He started meditating upon the Self by himself. He started meditating upon the Lord seated in his heart.

ध्यायतश्चरणाम्भोजं भावनिर्जितचेतसा । औत्कण्ठ्याश्रुकलाक्षस्य हृद्यासीन्मे शनैर्हरिः ॥ १७ ॥
dhyāyataś caraṇāmbhojaṁ bhāva-nirjita-cetasā | autkaṇṭhyāśru-kalākṣasya hr̥dyā
āsīn me śanair hariḥ || 17 ||

How did he meditate? He meditated upon the Lotus feet of the Lord. The mind, filled with emotion of devotion, of surrender. Imagine the condition of the child. There is nobody now in the whole world. One of the beautiful names of the Lord is अकिञ्चनवित्तः (akiñcana-vitta) that comes later in Bhāgavatam only. It means the one who is the only wealth of those who don't have any wealth. So who is the one who becomes the wealth of those who don't have any wealth? It is Bhagavān.

See, his condition- absolutely nobody in this world. No money, no power, no influence, nothing. In fact his life itself is at stake now as it's a dense forest. That is when you completely surrender. Ego cannot hang on to anything, anyone.

The mind was filled with emotion of devotion and surrender. Bhagavān, I have nobody other than you.

Thus, I was meditating upon the lotus feet of the Lord in utter helplessness, in utter surrender, completely devoted. Eyes were filled with tears and the tears were rolling with intense longing for the Lord. Bhagavān, I want only you. These are very very important terms. If you want to truly succeed in meditation, there should be absolute egolessness, single pointed longing and single pointed meditation. At that time slowly, gradually I started experiencing the presence of the Lord in my heart.

प्रेमातिभरनिर्भिन्नपुलकाङ्गोऽतिनिर्वृतः । आनन्दसम्प्लवे लीनो नापश्यमुभयं मुने ॥ १८ ॥

premāti-bhara-nirbhinna-pulakāṅgo 'tinirvṛtaḥ | ānanda-samplave līno nāpaśyam
ubhayaṁ mune || 18 ||

O Ṛṣi, in that moment my heart was filled with devotion for God. All the hair was standing on end. I was totally indifferent to everything in this world, free from all suffering, all that anguish, disturbance, everything was gone. I was merged in the flood of bliss. Completely submerged. I no longer saw two entities. There were no two. This is Nirvikalpaka samādhi. Nirvikalpa is not there, division is not there. The observer/observed division. Drig, Drishya is the division. They also call it Triputi - the experiencer, the experiencing and the experienced.

If you want to reduce it to two, it is the observer and the observed. That state where this division is gone is called Nirvikalpaka samādhi. He entered Nirvikalpaka samādhi.

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Session 7

[Chapter 6 verse 19- Chapter 7 verse 5]

रूपं भगवतो यत्तन्मनःकान्तं शुचापहम् । अपश्यन् सहसोत्तस्थे वैक्लव्यादुर्मना इव ॥ १९ ॥
rūpaṁ bhagavato yat tan manah-kāntaṁ śucāpaham | apaśyan sahasottasthau
vaiklavyād durmanā iva || 19 ||

In that state of Nirvikalpaka samādhi he was seeing that extremely attractive form of the Lord, which removed all sorrow. He was in that state but suddenly, something happened. When he was in that firm abidance, clear vision of the Lord and extreme bliss, in that union with God, suddenly that vision disappeared. He lost contact with the divine. He just got up. That meditation became miserable for him. Just like for a person who is a दुर्मना (durmanā), someone with a bad/ impure mind. He was miserable.

Because of the misery वैक्लव्याद् (vaiklavyād), just see the comparison given here- the term दुर्मना (durmanā) means someone with an impure mind. How a person with an impure mind cannot sit quietly, cannot turn his attention within, cannot even close his eyes. And it is true, when the mind is impure and extroverted, that person cannot even sit for one minute in meditation. दुर्मना (durmanā) is the term used here. How an extroverted, sensuous, impure minded person can't even sit for a minute in meditation, in the same way, Nārada Ṛṣi felt. Of course at that time he was not a Ṛṣi, was just a boy from the previous kalpa. He just got up, he was miserable. When there is no joy in the heart you can't sit. When there is joy, you can sit for hours together.

दिदृक्षुस्तदहं भूयः प्रणिधाय मनो हृदि । वीक्षमाणोऽपि नापश्यमवितृप्त इवातुरः ॥ २० ॥
didṛkṣuḥ tad ahaṁ bhūyaḥ praṇidhāya mano hṛdi | vīkṣamaṇo 'pi nāpaśyam
avitṛpta ivāturaḥ || 20 ||

Again and again he strived in order to get that vision again. He concentrated his mind again, concentrated his mind upon the heart for that vision of the Lord which he was experiencing blissfully. But he just could not connect back. His condition was अवितृप्तः आतुर इव (avitṛpta āturaḥ ivā). It was miserable. It's something like you are flying high and suddenly you fall down.

एवं यतन्तं विजने मामाहागोचरो गिराम् । गम्भीरश्लक्ष्णया वाचा शुचः प्रशमयन्निव ॥ २१ ॥

evam yatantaṁ vijane mām āhāgocarō girām | gambhīra-ślakṣṇayā vācā śucaḥ
praśamāyān iva || 21 ||

In this way he was striving, all alone. As he was striving, he heard a voice. The voice of the Lord who cannot be perceived by sense organs. He heard the words of the supreme Lord. The words were powerful, very serious and at the same time very sweet. They were divine words, sacred words and very clear, very sweet. You will not mistake these words. At the same time he is āgocara. So it was to him alone.

When he heard these sweet powerful words, all his misery went away. He felt great solace. He was consoled by those words.

हन्तास्मिञ्जन्मनि भवान् न मां द्रष्टुमिहार्हति । अविपक्वकषायाणां दुर्दर्शोऽहं कुयोगिनाम् ॥
२२॥

hantāsmiṁ janmani bhavān na mām draṣṭum ihārhati | avipakva-kaṣāyāṇām
durdarśo 'haṁ ku-yoginām || 22 ||

The Lord said, Alas! In this birth, just like how you see me now, you will not see me again. Bhagavān, why is it so?

For those whose vasanas are unripened, I cannot be seen. Those कुयोगिनाम् (ku-yoginām) unprepared/ immature ones. It is shocking how God describes Nārada as अविपक्वकषायाणां दुर्दर्शो (avipakva-kaṣāyāṇām durdarśo) immature one. Such people don't see me.

In this world, everything goes through certain stages. If you see a fruit, what are the stages? First it is a small fruit and then it slowly grows and becomes ripe. Then it falls. A boil in the body also has the same process. Grows and grows and then dries up and goes away. The leaf of a tree grows and grows then matures and falls. What about the body? Asti, jāyate, vardhate, vipariṇamate (matures and the hair becomes white), apakṣīyate and vinaśyati, it falls. So everywhere in nature we see stages. In the same way, the vasanas also have stages. First we have a desire for a sense object and then we work hard to get it and you indulge in it. When you indulge in the sense object, in the beginning it is joyful, but after continued indulgence slowly the wisdom comes that this sense object is विषम् (viṣam). आग्नेऽमृतोपमं परिणामे विषम् (āgre 'mṛtopamaṁ pariṇāme viṣam) This is with every sense object.

First, there was a desire. Then you work hard for it and you get it. Then you indulge in it and after a series of indulgences there comes an understanding that this is not joy giving. It is only pain giving. After that, the desire falls. That stage is called पक्व (pakva). Ripened. After going through the worldly experiences, there is a ripening stage. Such a person is also called a mature person. He has become पक्व (pakva). What is the definition of maturity? He is not interested in the external glitz and glamour of the world, pleasures of the world. Finally this desire falls. Desirelessness is the end result. In the same way, the desires and vasanas of the mind have to become पक्व (pakva). The presence or the absence of a sense object makes no difference to you. This is the proof.

The presence of a sense object doesn't tempt you to indulge in it and its absence doesn't make you crave for it. Then we say this is the state of maturity and perfection. So what is said here is, when there are still impurities and desires in the mind such a person is called a कुयोगि (ku-yogi). He may be engaged in yoga, but he will not succeed. Maybe he will find some peace here and there. But as long as there is some desire for the world, his mind will not single pointedly seek the divine. The desire of the world will distract the mind again and again. That is why such a yogi is called कुयोगि (ku-yogi). His chintanam will not be सरलचिन्तनम् (saraḷa-cintanam) it will be विरलचिन्तनम् (virala-cintanam). In the language of Upadesha Sara, it will be interrupted meditation not uninterrupted meditation.

Uninterrupted means, the mind is there in the Lord and it just doesn't waver. All the desires of the world make the mind waver from the Lord. This is the meaning. So Bhagavān says, Nārada दुर्दर्शोऽहं कुयोगिनाम् (ku-yoginām durdarśo). Now this should be a shocking statement to us because till now according to the explanation given, he was already literally abiding in Brahman because of the statements and now only he came out of nirvikalpaka samādhi and Bhagavān calls him कुयोगि (ku-yogi) which means till he has some desire.

सकृद्यद्दर्शितं रूपमेतत्कामाय तेऽनघ । मत्कामः शनकैः साधु सर्वान् मुञ्चति हृच्छयान् ॥ २३ ॥
sakṛd yad darśitaṁ rūpam etat kāma yā te 'nagha | mat-kāma ḥ śanakaiḥ sādhu
sarvān muñcati hṛc-chayān || 23 ||

Nārada, O' sinless one, I have given my vision once to you. That intimate divine non-dual experience you had, where you became one with me, I gave you deliberately so that there is a longing in you.

These are all psychological truths when you walk this path of divine.

To create that longing in you, I by my grace, by my compassion for you, have given you that experience. Not because you deserve it, but out of my grace I gave you.

Once a person gets this higher taste of bliss, of devotion, slowly desiring for me he leaves all the desires of the mind, all the worldly desires. This is what happens on the path of sadhana. You come to know you can't have this and that. It is not possible. It may appear you can have it in the beginning, but slowly, the Lord will start tightening the nuts and bolts. Do you want worldly pleasure? Fine you can have it, but the bliss of the self will not be there for you. To the extent you indulge there to that extent you will miss this. To the extent you discipline yourself there, to that extent I will give you.

Just like how we train our dogs. How do you train dogs- Pinku, sit down then you give one biscuit. Pinku stand-up and another biscuit is given. So for this biscuit, the dog will do anything. The dog knows I am doing the right thing which my master wants. In the same way, we are all like Pinku's only. The only thing is that the biscuit is the bliss of the Self. To the extent you listen to Him, you are obedient, you are disciplined, you do what He wants, to the extent you please Him, to that extent that bliss will be there. The key to happiness is in His hands only. And he has different-different grades of 'biscuits' also. It is not the same - it can be ten units, hundred units, thousand units, million units. They are all the units of bliss. That's how he tempts us. And that joy is an unearthly divine blissful sacred joy and you cannot refuse it because that bliss is not available in this world. Whatever pleasure available here is all third rate. That is pure.

मत्कामः शनकैः साधु (mat-kāma ḥ śanakaiḥ sādhu) A good hearted person is called sādhu. For that bliss, that person goes on making his heart good by cultivating noble virtues. If you have divine thoughts you get access to that bliss. If you have impure thoughts you are cut off from that bliss. And getting cut off from the bliss is like fish out of water. It is misery. To the extent that you are experiencing that bliss, to that extent when the bliss goes away you become miserable. That is exactly what happened to Nārada Ṛṣi.

These are all stories of every seeker. Not just Nārada. Mental disturbance is intense to a person whose mental peace is intense. Both go intensely. There is intense peace but with a small mistake the intense peace becomes intense misery. The higher you go, the greater the fall will be. For a person who has never gone higher, where is the question of fall? Alert vigilant living is what an

indulgent person will never know. An indulgent person will also never know what is fall.

So, this sadhu when he is walking the path understands what Bhagavān actually wants. Because every time he does something wrong, selfish and self-centered; everytime he tries to fulfill some worldly non spiritual desire, the disturbance is intense.

A time comes where you don't see the joy of indulgence, you only see the pain of guilt. Pain of conscience prick. It is at that time you become free from all worldly addictions, worldly desires. This is a gradual process. The more and more you become sensitive and centered in the self, the more the importance is given to the Lord within than the world outside.

At present our entire attention is upon the outer world. As you grow spiritually slowly your attention, your importance, your priority, everything shifts from the outer world to the inner Lord. So even though you are living in the world, your attention is upon the Lord inside. Because of that, the moment there is some danger, you become like a turtle. Turtle is a mahātmā, he can quickly withdraw. Why is he quickly able to withdraw? Because in the first place he was not attached to anything. Once you are attached you cannot withdraw. Here the attachment is inside, detachment is outside so withdrawal is very easy. So this way Bhagavān trains us to give up our worldly desires one by one. This is spiritual progress.

सत्सेवयादीर्घया ते जाता मयि दृढा मतिः । हित्वावद्यमिमं लोकं गन्ता मज्जनतामसि ॥ २४ ॥
sat-sevayā dīrghayā te jātā mayi dṛḍhā matiḥ | hitvā 'dyam imam lokam gantā
maj-janatām asi || 24 ||

Nārada, for a long time you served these mahātmās. Because of this, your mind has become firmly rooted in me. This service of the mahātmās, this satsang and seva have purified your mind. Therefore, I bless you. Giving up this physical, inferior body, you will become one of my attendants.

मतिर्मयि निबद्धेयं न विपद्येत कर्हिचित् । प्रजासर्गनिरोधेऽपि स्मृतिश्च मदनुग्रहात् ॥ २५ ॥
matir mayi nibaddheyam na vipadyeta karhicit | prajā-sarga-nirodhe 'pi smṛtiś ca
mad-anugrahāt || 25 ||

This mind which is firmly rooted in me, this will never go away. This is my blessing to you. Even when there is pralaya, it will not go away. Even when there

is creation, it will not go away. During sṛṣṭisthīlaya, this memory that you have will not go away. Smṛiti also will remain. This is my special blessing.

This was one of Vyāsa's questions- Nārada Ṛṣi how is it that you remember your past? This is the reason. There is a special blessing because of which he is able to remember everything.

एतावदुक्तोपरराम तन्मह- द्भूतं नभोलिङ्गमलिङ्गमीश्वरम् । अहं च तस्मै महतां महीयसे
शीर्ष्णावनामं विदधेऽनुकम्पितः ॥ २६ ॥
etāvad uktvopararāma tan mahat- bhūtaṁ nabho-liṅgam aliṅgam īśvaram | ahaṁ
ca tasmai mahatāṁ mahīyase śīrṣṇāvanāmaṁ vidadhe 'nukampitaḥ ॥ 26 ॥

That divine voice which spoke all this, that great being became silent.
That Lord, the one who cannot be perceived by the senses, came as a divine sound in the space which he heard. That Lord who is greater than the greatest, I just bowed to that Bhagavān, that supreme Lord who showered his compassion upon me with his blessings.

The blessing was that once this physical body is dropped, you will become one of my pāṛṣada- my attendants in my world. Your devotion will remain intact and you will not forget all these happenings. In this way, that divine sound, that divine presence became quiet.

नामान्यनन्तस्य हतत्रपः पठन् गुह्यानि भद्राणि कृतानि च स्मरन् । गां पर्यटंस्तुष्टमना
गतस्पृहः कालं प्रतीक्षन् विमदो विमत्सरः ॥ २७ ॥
nāmāny anantasya hata-trapaḥ paṭhan guhyāni bhadrāṇi kṛtāni ca smaran |
gāṁ paryaṭaṁs tuṣṭa-manā gata-sprhaḥ kālaṁ pratīkṣan vimado vimatsarah
॥27॥

This is the way Nārada lived the rest of his life and it is a reminder of how we should lead our life:

1. Chanting the name of the Lord loudly, without any shyness, shame or a feeling of what others will think of me. Shamelessly, loudly chanting.
2. Ever grateful, thinking of all the past things that Bhagavān has done for us. Remembering all those līlās of the Lord which are auspicious, which are both sacred and a secret. When Nārada's mother passed away, it felt like it was a great tragedy. But actually, it was a blessing in disguise. Because that was the only attachment and Bhagavān removed that attachment. Now the mind could fully focus on the Lord. From worldly standards, it appeared a tragedy,

but from the spiritual standards it was a great blessing that is why गुह्यानि (guhyāni) is used. What Bhagavān does we just don't know. It is ever a secret. But later on you will find that whatever is happening, is happening for my good. But everything is a secret and is hidden from us.

Always remember in gratitude whatever he is doing for us. How Bhagavān has been my well wisher and has beautifully taken care of me, fulfilling all desires in such a way that finally I come out of that desire. कषाया (kaṣāyā) becomes पक्व (pakva) and falls पतनम् (patanam). How beautifully he is taking care of us. It is hidden from us but when we analyse the whole thing, you come to know, thank God! At that time I did not like it but after so many years you say, Bhagavān thank you very much.

3. Be ever content in life. Whatever you need will come to you. Practice contentment.
4. Never crave for anything in life. Be content, be grateful with whatever you have. Never crave for anything that you don't have. If it is needed, if it is good for you, it will come.
5. Be ever humble
6. Never compare yourself with others. Never be jealous of others. मद (mada) comes when you have more and others have less. Then superiority complex, ego, pride. Vimatsara is when others have more. So don't compare yourself with others. Everybody has their own individual journey chartered out by the Lord. Everybody is charting out to that same truth. There is no superior, there is no inferior. Unnecessarily don't mess up your life, comparing yourself with others. Everybody is well taken care of by the Lord.
7. Always keep this in mind, a time will come when I will die. This is not a place where I need to settle down. It is not a settling place. This is not our permanent abode. Forget everything else, this body itself has to be dropped. Then what to talk about other possessions, what to talk of near and dear ones? At the back of mind, always remember, I have to leave this place, I am just a visitor, I am just a traveller.

It's a beautiful verse on intelligent living. Chant Bhagavān's name, ever be grateful to what he is doing to you, ever be content, be free from all cravings and useless desires, be free from ego, be humble, be free from all kinds of

comparisons and jealousies, and always remember, this is not my abode. I have to leave this. Prepare to leave this world. Everyday are you preparing how to beautifully leave this world? Then that is intelligent living. Live by ever chanting Bhagavān's name.

एवं कृष्णमतेर्ब्रह्मन्नसक्तस्यामलात्मनः । कालः प्रादुरभूत्काले तडित्सौदामिनी यथा ॥ २८ ॥
evaṁ kṛṣṇa-mater brahmann asaktasyāmalātmanah | kālah prādurabhūt kāle
taḍit-saudāmanī yathā || 28 ||

In this way I was living with the mind always in Bhagavān. Not attached to anything. My mind absolutely pure, and one day at the right time suddenly, death came like सौदामिनी (saudāmanī) lightening.

Sudāman means Indra. That which belongs to Indra is saudāmanī. Lightning is from Indra. Just like that lightning strikes in a flash, in the same way, death also came.

प्रयुज्यमाने मयि तां शुद्धां भागवतीं तनुम् । आरब्धकर्मनिर्वाणो न्यपतत्पाञ्चभौतिकः ॥ २९ ॥
prayujyamāne mayi tāṁ śuddhāṁ bhāgavatīṁ tanum | ārabdha-karma-nirvāṇo
nyapatat pāñca-bhautikah || 29 ||

This way, the physical body, made of the five elements, dropped. Prārabdha karma was over so the physical body dropped. He got another body, a divine body that is pure and he became an attendant of the Lord- Viṣṇu Parshada.

कल्पान्त इदमादाय शयानेऽम्भस्युदन्वतः । शिशयिषोरनुप्राणं विविशेऽन्तरहं विभोः ॥ ३० ॥
kalpānta idam ādāya śayāne 'mbhasi udanvataḥ | śiśayiṣor anupāraṇaṁ viviśe
'ntara ahaṁ vibhoḥ || 30 ||

This verse talks about what happens at the end of the kalpa. It can be very confusing, so let me give some explanation.

Kalpa is 1000 Caturyuga. This concept you have to understand. 1000 Caturyugas is the day time of Brahmā ji and another 1000 Caturyugas is the night time of Brahmā ji. He works for 12 hrs and 12 hrs he takes rest and his day time is 1000 Caturyugas. Caturyuga is Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga, and Kali-yuga put together (STDK). Kaliyuga is 4 lakh 32,000 years. So, STDK together is 10 times Kali which is 43 lakh 20,000. In that 1000 Caturyugas so many creations and dissolutions are there. Finally Brahmā ji gets tired and wants

rest. Day time is over. That is called the end of one kalpa. So 2 kalpas is one full day of Brahmā ji, 2000 Caturyugas.

Let me give some explanation about the end of the Kalpa and causal waters referenced in the verse.

When creation happens, it is always from subtle to gross. Ākāśa is the subtlest element, then comes vāyu then comes agni, then comes jala, then comes pṛthvī. Always creation is from the subtle to the gross. Why is Ākāśa subtle? Because it has only one property, the property of sound - śabda. Why is earth gross? Because it has śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa, gandha. All the five sense organs are able to perceive it. So, earth is the grossest, ākāśa is the subtlest.

Creation always begins from the subtle to the gross. From the seed the tree comes. So if this is how creation unfolds, how should it fold back? It should just reverse. So earth should merge in water. That is why in Bhāgavatam you see the reference to cosmic waters, pralaya-jalam. This is the reason. Because earth has come from water, therefore earth will have to merge in water. So the first stage of pralaya is flooding. Now Bhagavān is lying down- Śeṣaśayana. Brahmā ji has come from Viṣṇu so what should happen to Brahmā ji? He has to go back. Therefore all creation merges in Brahmā ji and Brahmā ji merges into Viṣṇu. And where will Viṣṇu merge? He need not merge anywhere because He is the reality. All merging and non merging happens only at the māyā level. When we say Viṣṇu it is Sat-cit-ānanda. When we refer to the world, it is Prakṛti. The whole prakṛti merges into avyakta-prakṛti, unmanifest state. From the unmanifest comes the manifest state.

Now Brahmā ji is going to sleep. Where alone can he sleep? He cannot sleep anywhere because the world is not there so he has to sleep in Lord Viṣṇu only. Hence, the term - desiring to sleep.

So what happens to Nārada? Through the breath of Brahmā, I entered into Brahmā. The effect has to merge in the cause, the gross has to merge in the subtle. Now again, don't think of Brahmā ji as a person, That creative urge in the total mind is called Brahmā. In the story we picturise one person. So into that life breath, I was just sucked in.

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्त उत्थायेदं सिसृक्षतः । (सहस्रयुगपर्यन्ते) मरीचिमिश्रा ऋषयः प्राणेभ्योऽहं च
जज्ञिरे ॥ ३१ ॥

sahasra-yuga-paryanta utthāyedaṁ sisṛkṣataḥ | marīci-miśrā ṛṣayaḥ prāṇebhyo
'haṁ ca jajñire || 31 ||

It is written सहस्रयुग (sahasra-yuga), you have to understand it as sahasra Caturyuga. After 1000 Caturyugas, Brahmā ji got up for creation. He is also choiceless. He can't sleep long just like we can't sleep for long. After sometime, once the prārabdha karma comes you have to get up. So, desiring to create he got up. I also came out from him along with other Sapta Ṛṣi's and mind born children of Brahmā ji. Like Sanakadi Ṛṣi's etc. I was also born.

So this is the next kalpa. First he gave up that physical body then he continued in the divine body and continued in that kalpa. After that when the kalpa was over that divine body went away, he merged into Brahmā ji and in the next kalpa he was born as a Deva Ṛṣi.

अन्तर्बहिश्च लोकांस्त्रीन् पर्येम्यस्कन्दितव्रतः । अनुग्रहान्महाविष्णोरविघातगतिः क्वचित् ॥
३२ ॥

antar bahiś ca lokāṁs trīn paryemy askandita-vrataḥ | anugrahān mahā-viṣṇor
avighāta-gatiḥ kvacit || 32 ||

Now, O' Ṛṣi, this is my state - In the three worlds, outside and inside, I can roam around, I travel without any obstruction. How did this happen? It is because of the blessings of Maha Viṣṇu. There is no obstruction, and I can go anywhere.

देवदत्तामिमां वीणां स्वरब्रह्मविभूषिताम् । मूर्च्छयित्वा हरिकथां गायमानश्चराम्यहम् ॥ ३३ ॥
devadattām imāṁ vīṇāṁ svara-brahma-vibhūṣitām | mūrchayitvā hari-kathāṁ
gāyamānaś carāmy aham || 33 ||

Bhagavān has given this Veena and it is very unique. It is decorated by swara Brahmā, you play that veena and that Swara takes you to Brahmān. Swara to Īśvara. It is a divine instrument. I play the Veena, chanting Bhagavān's katha and I move around.

प्रगायतः स्ववीर्याणि तीर्थपादः प्रियश्रवाः । आहूत इव मे शीघ्रं दर्शनं याति चेतसि ॥ ३४ ॥
prāgayataḥ sva-vīryāṇi tīrtha-pādaḥ priya-śravāḥ | āhūta iva me śīghraṁ
darśanaṁ yāti cetasi || 34 ||

In this way I sing Bhagavān's glory and the moment I sing Bhagavān's glory and remember Him, as though I have called him, he immediately gives darshan to me in my mind. There is no difficulty at all. Just give a call and he is readily available in the heart.

Now you compare this state of Nārada Ṛṣi, with the the earlier state. What was the earlier state? He got that bliss and he was struggling and Bhagavān says in this birth you are not going to get it and now what is the state, he is readily available. That obstruction is gone. What was that obstruction? The obstruction was his desire to move around in all the worlds. That is why he is given this form. Maybe he had a desire to become a Deva Ṛṣi, and had a desire to go to different higher worlds and experience those worlds. Bhūḥ, Bhuvah, Svaḥ, Mahah, Janah, Tapaḥ, Satyam. This desire was there. He himself did not know he had a desire, Bhagavān said you have a desire, I can't liberate you now. That desire was fulfilled. Now that कषाया (kaṣāyā) has become पक्व (pakva) the mind is free from all kinds of desires.

Remember that is also a prārabdha karma only. Till that kalpa is there, he will remain as Nārada ji but now there is no obstruction as such, just finishing his prārabdha karma, till he becomes one with the Lord.

एतद्ध्यातुरचित्तानां मात्रास्पर्शच्छया मुहुः । भवसिन्धुप्लवो दृष्टो हरिचर्यानुवर्णनम् ॥ ३५ ॥
etad dhyātur acittānāṁ mātṛā-sparśecchayā muhuḥ | bhava-sindhu-plavo dr̥ṣṭo
hari-caryānuvarṇanam || 35 ||

The whole purpose of telling this is, O' Ṛṣi, people are miserable because again and again there is only one desire- मात्रास्पर्शच्छया (mātṛā-sparśecchayā). Mātṛā means sense organs. Sense organs are craving for the touch of the sense objects. Therefore, am I happy after sense indulgence? No, I am miserable. For such people, this goes on birth after birth. Our own desires of the present become the birth in the future. That vasana (V) in the BMI (Body, Mind, Intellect) chart becomes the cause for me to come to the world of OET (Objects, Emotions, Thoughts), taking the instrument of BMI in the PFT (Perceiver, Feeler, Thinker).

This is भवसिन्धुप्लवो दृष्टो हरिचर्यानुवर्णनम् (bhava-sindhu-plavo hari-caryānuvarṇanam) the ocean of becoming. Devotion to God is the boat which will take us across this ocean of transmigration. Everybody is trying to become something or the other. Today I am not happy, tomorrow if I become that

I'll be happy, if I become this, I'll be happy. This is called भवसिन्धु (bhava-sindhu). Everyone is miserable. R̥ṣi, the only way to come out of all this is bhakti.

यमादिभिर्योगपथैः कामलोभहतो मुहुः । मुकुन्दसेवया यद्वत्तथाऽऽत्माद्धा न शाम्यति ॥ ३६ ॥
yamādibhir yoga-pathaiḥ kāma -lobha-hato muhuḥ | mukunda-sevayā yadvat
tathātmāddhā na śāmyati || 36 ||

The most effective means to get rid of all the negativities of the mind (kāma, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya). People are struggling and they don't know how to come out. The path of Yoga has so many aspects- yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna, samādhi. Compared to that, the easiest path is to develop devotion for God, otherwise you can't win over all these negativities.

It is true, because all these negativities are holding on to ego. When ego is there, all these negativities are very strong. There is a direct connection between kāma, krodha and ego. The highly egoistic people will have very strong kāma and krodha. So what does bhakti do? In bhakti you just surrender your ego to Bhagavān. When the ego is surrendered, automatically all the negativities also go away. The moment the root is cut- the leaves and branches, everything becomes dry. That is why Mukunda seva, devotion to God, is considered to be the easiest. Surrender to Bhagavān.

सर्वं तदिदमाख्यातं यत्पृष्टोऽहं त्वयानघ । जन्मकर्मरहस्यं मे भवतश्चात्मतोषणम् ॥ ३७ ॥
sarvaṁ tad idam ākhyātaṁ yat pṛṣṭo 'haṁ tvayānagha | janma-karma-rahasyaṁ
me bhavataś cātma-toṣaṇam || 37 ||

O R̥ṣi I have told everything to you. Whatever you asked, I have answered all the questions. This is my जन्मकर्मरहस्यं (janma-karma-rahasyaṁ), all the secrets of my origin, my deeds, I have spoken all this. You asked the question, therefore I told you.

सूत उवाच ।

एवं सम्भाष्य भगवान्नारदो वासवीसुतम् । आमन्त्र्य वीणां रणयन् ययौ यादृच्छिको मुनिः ॥
३८ ॥

sūta uvāca |

evaṁ sambhāṣya Bhagavān nārado vāsavī-sutam | āmantrya vīṇāṁ raṇayan
yayau yādṛcchiko muniḥ || 38 ||

Thus saying this, Nārada Ṛṣi took permission from Vyāsa Ṛṣi and playing the Veena, he left the place. Where Nārada ji goes no one knows. Whenever there is a need, he appears and once the need is over, he disappears. That is Nārada. How did he come here? Vyāsa Ṛṣi was stuck on a crossroad. Vyāsa Ṛṣi was in tune with Bhagavān, he was an instrument of Bhagavān and Bhagavān wanted someone to clear the path of Vyāsa Ṛṣi. So He sent Nārada Ṛṣi.

They are all absolutely perfect instruments in the hands of the Lord. The moment Vyāsa Ṛṣi was struck, there came another perfect instrument who cleared the path and the instrument is gone now. To the extent we are tuned to the Lord, to that extent we become instruments of the Lord and to that extent, whatever we need will come. So is there stress? There is no need for stress. It is His work, If He wants it, let Him empower me to do His work. This is the attitude. Thus Nārada Ṛṣi went away.

अहो देवर्षिर्धन्योऽयं यत्कीर्तिं शार्ङ्गधन्वनः । गायन् माद्यन्निदं तन्त्र्या रमयत्यातुरं जगत् ॥
३९॥

aho devarṣir dhanyo 'yaṁ yat kīrtiṁ śārṅga-dhanvanah | gāyan mādyaṇṇ idaṁ
tantryā ramāyāty āturaṁ jagat || 39 ||

O Deva Ṛṣi. you are the most blessed one. Who is saying this, we don't know. It may be Vyāsa Ṛṣi or it may be Sūta Ṛṣi. O' Deva Rishi you are indeed a blessed one and the most fortunate one. All the time you sing the glory of the Lord, and are intoxicated by the devotion for the Lord. This bliss of devotion you give everyone in this miserable world. What a blessed thing you are doing. Indeed you are the most fortunate. With this, the chapter gets over.

Chapter 7 ॥ सप्तमोऽध्यायः ॥

शौनक उवाच ।

निर्गते नारदे सूत भगवान् बादरायणः । श्रुतवांस्तदभिप्रेतं ततः किमकरोद्विभुः ॥ १ ॥
śaunaka uvāca |

nirgate nārade sūta Bhagavān bādarāyaṇah | śrutavāṁs tad abhipretaṁ tataḥ
kim akarod vibhuḥ || 1 ||

Now Śaunaka Ṛṣi asks, O Ṛṣi, after Nārada Ṛṣi's leaving, and giving the advice what did Vyasa Ṛṣi do?

सूत उवाच ।

ब्रह्मनद्यां सरस्वत्यामाश्रमः पश्चिमे तटे । शम्याप्रास इति प्रोक्त ऋषीणां सत्रवर्धनः ॥ २ ॥
sūta uvāca |

brahma-nadyām sarasvatyām āśramah paścime taṭe | śamyā-prāsa iti prokta
ṛṣīṇām satra-varadhanah || 2 ||

On the western banks of Saraswati, there is a beautiful place where all the Ṛṣis gather for a spiritual retreat. In such a place, Vyāsa Ṛṣi also had an āśram.

तस्मिन् स्व आश्रमे व्यासो बदरीषण्डमण्डिते । आसीनोऽप उपस्पृश्य प्रणिदध्यौ मनः स्वयम् ॥
३॥

tasmin sva āśrame vyāso badarī-ṣaṇḍa-maṇḍite | āsīno 'pa upasprśya
praṇidadhyau manaḥ svayam || 3 ||

He sat in his āśram that was on the banks of Saraswati and beautified by Badri trees. Sitting there he performed the purification rites of aachamanam etc and concentrated his mind. What was the advice given by Nārada Ṛṣi? Go into samādhi and re-collect the līlās of the Lord. That is exactly what Vyāsa Ṛṣi did. He went into samādhi.

In samādhi what did he see?

भक्तियोगेन मनसि सम्यक् प्रणिहितेऽमले । अपश्यत्पुरुषं पूर्वं मायां च तदुपाश्रयाम् ॥ ४॥
bhakti-yogena manasi samyak praṇihite 'male | apaśyat puruṣam pūrvam māyām
ca tad-upāśrayām || 4 ||

How he entered into meditation and entered into Samādhi. How did he do that? He started with bhakti yoga- started with all humility, filling the heart with gratitude, humility, devotion, and surrender. Thus making the mind very pure and with that pure mind concentrating the mind (Citta Shuddhi, Citta Ekagrata) through bhakti yoga. With that concentrated, purified mind, Vyāsa Rishi saw that Supreme reality. He saw that Supreme being, that Sat Chit Ānanda, that Supreme Self and upon that he saw māyā dependent on the Supreme Self.

यया सम्मोहितो जीव आत्मानं त्रिगुणात्मकम् । परोऽपि मनुतेऽनर्थं तत्कृतं चाभिपद्यते ॥ ५॥
yayā sammohito jīva ātmānaṁ tri-guṇātmakam | paro 'pi manute 'nartham
tat-kṛtaṁ cābhipadyate || 5 ||

Who is jīva? He is that Lord only. He is that Sat Chit Ānanda, that Supreme being, but is completely deluded. He considers himself completely deluded by the three gunas of the physical body. Though he is none other than the Supreme Lord, that māyā completely deludes him and makes him believe that he is this physical body. He is finished. Then this becomes the seed of all calamities. The moment we identify with the body, I and mine, you and yours starts. Everything

starts from body identification. With this delusion he invites on to himself, all calamities. That is the problem to be addressed.

All jīvatmas are completely deluded by this māyā. Actually every being is none other than Supreme Brahman but they are all completely deluded by māyā. They consider themselves not as Sat Chit Ananda atma but Trigunatmakam Atmanam. They consider themselves made of three gunas, consider themselves as the physical body, mind and intellect. This then becomes the seed of all calamities. Everything starts from body identification

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Session 8

[Chapter 7 verse 6 - Chapter 7 Verse 55]

अनर्थोपशमं साक्षाद्भक्तियोगमधोक्षजे । लोकस्याजानतो विद्वांश्चक्रे सात्वतसंहिताम् ॥ ६ ॥
anartha-upaśamaṁ sākṣād bhakti-yogam adhokṣaje | lokasya ajānato vidvān
cakre sātvata-saṁhitām || 6 ||

There is only one solution for this calamity. Devotion unto that Lord. Because all problems are created from the identification with the body, which leads to the ego. Bhakti yoga leads to the surrender of this ego and this bhakti yoga becomes a solution. Also bhakti yoga leads to jñāna. This is the one solution to all calamities. But people don't know this. Therefore, the great Ṛṣi composed this scripture of devotion, Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

यस्यां वै श्रूयमाणायां कृष्णे परमपूरुषे । भक्तिरुत्पद्यते पुंसः शोकमोहभयापहा ॥ ७ ॥
yasyāṁ vai śrūyamāṇāyāṁ kṛṣṇe parama-pūruṣe | bhaktir utpadyate puṁsaḥ
śoka-moha-bhayāpahā || 7 ||

This scripture is written in such a way that by just listening to it, the heart is filled with devotion. Devotion for Kṛṣṇa, who is परमपूरुष (parama-pūruṣa), that supreme being. And what happens with this bhakti? It removes śoka, moha, bhaya. They are all together. The first is body identification which comes from avidyā and not knowing myself, who am I. After that comes delusion, not knowing the reality. With delusion comes bhaya, fear, and all fears are basically the fear of death. The moment I start identifying with the body, there is fear of death. After bhaya comes śoka, because everything in this world is perishable. So the final thing is sorrow. These are all connected- avidyā, moha, bhaya, ending in śoka, sorrow. Once this bhakti comes in, all these negativities go away.

स संहितां भागवतीं कृत्वानुक्रम्य चात्मजम् । शुक्रमध्यापयामास निवृत्तिनिरतं मुनिः ॥ ८ ॥
sa saṁhitāṁ bhāgavatīṁ kṛtvā 'nukramya cātmajam | Śukam adhyāpayām āsa
nivṛtti-nirataṁ muniḥ || 8 ||

After having composed Bhāgavatam, revising it, he taught his son, शुक्रम (Śukam) Śuka Bhamha Ṛṣi, an embodiment of renunciation.

शौनक उवाच ।

स वै निवृत्तिनिरतः सर्वत्रोपेक्षको मुनिः । कस्य वा बृहतीमेतामात्मारामः समभ्यसत् ॥ ९ ॥
śaunaka uvāca |
sa vai nivṛtti-nirataḥ sarvatroppekṣako muniḥ | kasya vā bṛhatīm etām ātmārāmaḥ
samabhyasat || 9 ||

O' Lord, this is just difficult to believe. Why did Śuka Brahmā Rṣi study such a huge text of 18,000 verses? Why should that Śuka Brahmā Rṣi, who is an embodiment of renunciation, embodiment of knowledge and bhakti, study such a huge book? He already knew everything, there was nothing new to gain. Why did he put forth that effort, why did he learn this? Without any purpose nobody puts forth any effort.

सूत उवाच ।

आत्मारामाश्च मुनयो निर्ग्रन्था अप्युरुक्रमे । कुर्वन्त्यहैतुकीं भक्तिमित्थम्भूतगुणो हरिः ॥ १० ॥
sūta uvāca |
ātmārāmāś ca munayo nirgranthā apy urukrame | kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim
ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ || 10 ||

O Śaunaka Rṣi your question is valid. Why should Śuka Brahmā Rṣi take so much effort to study such a huge book? That is because even though these sages are abiding in themselves and the knot of their heart is completely gone, ignorance is completely gone and they are firmly abiding in the self, they are enlightened people, but their devotion to God doesn't go away.

Now this is a very important question which people ask. Once you merge with that supreme state, there is no jīvatma and Parāmatma, so naturally, jīva bhava is completely gone and there is only one truth. Then where is the question of loving God? So here it is said, even if a person reaches that stage, this bhakti is such that those devotees continue to remain at the lower level and enjoy this bhakti.

Bhagavān is an embodiment of virtues. So these devotees even though they have reached that state, they don't want to remain in that state where everything is gone. They want to come down a little and they maintain that difference. They maintain the bhakta- Bhagavān difference so that they can enjoy this devotion.

The same thing Ramakṛṣṇa Parāmahansa also says. He said, I don't want to become sugar. I want to be an ant enjoying the sugar. Suppose there is a huge hill of sugar crystal, big big saints like Śuka etc, at the most enjoy only one

crystal. If Bhagavān is a big heap, then great saints like Śuka, Nārada etc are enjoying only one or two crystals, that's all. That is Bhagavān. So Ramakṛṣṇa Parāmahansa says, to enjoy the joy of devotion, they deliberately keep themselves one step lower. Once you enter Nirvikalpaka, everything is gone. They don't want that. They remain a little less. So what is said here is very very true. They prefer māyā only. At least I am able to love God. The devotion is as sweet as that state of samādhi.

हरेर्गुणाक्षिप्तमतिर्भगवान् बादरायणिः । अध्यगान्महदाख्यानं नित्यं विष्णुजनप्रियः ॥ ११ ॥
harer guṇākṣipta-matir Bhagavān bādarāyaṇiḥ | adhyāgan mahad-ākhyānaṁ
nityāṁ viṣṇu-jana-priyaḥ || 11 ||

So when Śuka Bhamha Ṛṣi heard this Bhāgavatam, his mind got gravitated towards the līlās of the Lord. He just could not control himself. It's just like a pure iron piece gets attracted towards a huge magnet. That iron piece has no choice. The magnet just attracts. Stronger the magnet, more powerful the attraction. Purer the iron, greater the attraction. So, that Śuka Bhrahma Ṛṣi had no choice. When he heard Bhāgavatam, his mind got drawn into Bhāgavatam and helplessly he learnt it. There was no effort. Though huge, he joyfully, effortlessly learnt the scripture.

He also may have thought, if this scripture has to bring devotion onto others then why not make use of it? Because every devotee has the same goal, just like I am enjoying this devotion, let everyone enjoy this. Therefore, he studied it for the welfare of all and for his joy also. It was not to gain anything from it, but to enjoy that devotion.

परीक्षितोऽथ राजर्षेर्जन्मकर्मविलापनम् । संस्थां च पाण्डुपुत्राणां वक्ष्ये कृष्णकथोदयम् ॥ १२ ॥
parīkṣito 'tha rājarṣer janma-karma-vilāpanam |
saṁsthāṁ ca pāṇḍu-putrāṇāṁ vakṣye kṛṣṇa-kathodayam || 12 ||

Now I will tell you about Parīkṣit. His birth, his deeds, his death and also the final departure of all the Pāṇḍavas and how they dropped the body. I will tell you all the stories because this is necessary as a background before narrating the stories of Kṛṣṇa.

So it starts with the story of Pāṇḍavas. The real Bhāgavatam is starting now.

यदा मृधे कौरवसृञ्जयानां वीरेष्वथो वीरगतिं गतेषु । वृकोदराविद्धगदाभिर्मर्श- भग्नोरुदण्डे
धृतराष्ट्रपुत्रे
॥ १३ ॥

yadā mṛdhe kauravā-sṛñjayānāṁ vīreṣv atho vīra-gatiṁ gateṣu |
vṛkodarāviddha-gadābhimarśa- bhagnoru-daṇḍe dhṛtarāṣṭra-putre || 13 ||

In that Mahābhārata war between kauravās and Pāṇḍavas, on both sides, many heroes gave up their lives. The final episode was वृकोदर-आविद्ध-गदा-अभिर्मर्श भग्नोरुदण्डे धृतराष्ट्रपुत्रे (vṛkodarāviddha-gadābhimarśa- bhagnoru-daṇḍe dhṛtarāṣṭra-putre) The one whose thigh was smashed by the gada of Bhima. That Dhṛtarāṣṭra putra- referring to Duryodhana.

वृकोदर (vṛkodarā) is Bhima. The one with the stomach of a fox, meaning someone with a very high digestive power. You will not find Bhima with a big belly -the belly is inside. That Duryodhana was lying down near the pond. He was not dead. Bhima had smashed his thigh, so he was lying down.

भर्तुः प्रियं द्रौणिरिति स्म पश्यन् कृष्णासुतानां स्वपतां शिरांसि । उपाहरद्विप्रियमेव तस्य
जुगुप्सितं कर्म विगर्हयन्ति ॥ १४ ॥
bhartuḥ priyaṁ drauṇir iti sma paśyan kṛṣṇāsutānāṁ svapatāṁ śirāṁsi |
upāharad vipriyam eva tasya jugupsitaṁ karma vigarhayanti || 14 ||

After 18 days of war, Aśvatthāmā (referred to as Drauni, son of Droṇācārya); to please Duryodhana went to the camp of the Pāṇḍavas when everyone was asleep. The purpose was to kill all the Pāṇḍavas when they were asleep.

It was by only the grace of the Lord that Pāṇḍavas escaped. That night, Bhagavān called all of them and took them away. But in that camp were children of the Pāṇḍavas. Draupadī had five children with the five Pāṇḍavas and they were called Upa Pāṇḍavas. They were sleeping and among the main warriors, Dhṛṣṭadyumna was also sleeping. Dhṛṣṭadyumna was Draupadī's brother and Drupadas son.

Drupada and Drona were Guru-bhais. They were together. Drupada was the prince of Pāñcāla desha. Drona was a poor Brahmin boy. Bharadvāja Ṛṣi had a son, Agniveśa. Both stayed in the same gurukula and were very close friends. At one time Drupada had told Drona, once I become the king, I will give you half of the kingdom. He made a promise. After many years Drupada became the king of Pāñcāla and Droṇācārya was extremely poor. He was a poor Brahmān, who even had nothing to eat. So one day, he went to meet his friend, Drupada, the

king of Pāñcāla. Drupada had completely changed. He said what friendship can be between a poor man like you and a king like me. He insulted him and that insult went deep into Drona and he said I am going to teach him a lesson. That was the time when Bhīṣma was looking for a teacher for **kauravās** and Pāṇḍavas.

There is an episode, when the kids were playing with the ball and their ball fell in the well and Drona took it out with the help of straws. This information reached Bhīṣma and he felt this was the right person. Thus, Drona was appointed the teacher. He taught them and in the end, after teaching, naturally Guru dakshina was to be given. As Guru dakshina, Drona asked kauravās to defeat Drupada. kauravās failed. Then he told Pāṇḍavas. Pāṇḍavas did it. They defeated Drupada especially with the valour of Arjuna. Drupada was brought completely handcuffed to Droṇācārya.

Then Droṇācārya told Drupada, see now you are defeated but I want to maintain the friendship. You said that friendship is not possible between unequals. So half of the kingdom you keep, half of the kingdom I'll keep. We will divide it into Uttara Panchala and Dakshina Panchala. Then he left him. Now Drupada wanted revenge. He has humiliated me, I must kill him. With my power I cannot do anything so therefore he started doing a yāga, a sacrifice. The purpose of this yāga was to get a son who could kill Drona. Thus was born Dhṛṣṭadyumna. Later Draupadī was also born.

So this Dhṛṣṭadyumna was born only for killing Drona. Then during Mahābhārata war, Droṇācārya killed Drupada and then that stage when Droṇācārya became totally invincible, and no one could defeat him, then Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa did that trick. What did he do? अश्वत्थामा हतः, नरो वा कुञ्जरो वा। *Aśvatthāmā hataḥ, nara vā kuñjaro vā*. Bhagavān knew that Drona's greatest weakness was his son so he killed one elephant named Aśvatthāmā. So an elephant by name Aśvatthāmā was killed and the news spread and reached Drona who thought Aśvatthāmā - his son was killed. This was because once he got to know his son had died he would become completely depressed and keep all the weapons away. This way, killing him would become very easy.

Droṇācārya only trusted Yudhiṣṭhira so he went to Yudhiṣṭhira to ask him about Aśvatthāmā. That's when Yudhiṣṭhira was forced to say *Aśvatthāmā hataḥ, nara vā kuñjaro vā*. I know Aśvatthāmā is dead, I don't know if it is a human being or an animal. Anyways it seemed like that he said very mildly. It was at that time,

Droṇācārya leaves everything and sits in samādhi. This is when Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna chops off his head.

Now, Aśvatthāmā who was the son, became miserable. You see, this story is a story of revenge. One after the other. That night, after the war was over, Aśvatthāmā, went to the camp of Pāṇḍavas. When everybody was asleep, in the middle of the night he went with the sword and all the five children of Draupadī were killed. He could not see in the darkness and thought they were the Pāṇḍavas and just went massacring. All the five were killed and Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna was also killed. Śikhaṇḍī was also killed.

Do you know who was Śikhaṇḍī? She was Amba re-incarnated as Śikhaṇḍī, because of whom Bhīṣma died. So Arjuna kept Śikhaṇḍī in front because Bhīṣma said I don't fight with any woman. In fact, this technique was given by Bhīṣma himself.

So, Śikhaṇḍī was also killed that night. He chopped the heads of all these five and presented them to Duryodhana, thinking Duryodhana will be pleased. But it is said here that Duryodhana was very sad. What have you done? Is this the way? You killed sleeping children! It is amazing that Duryodhana was not happy. Duryodhana is praised here because he said this is such a heinous act. Everybody criticised.

माता शिशूनां निधनं सुतानां निशम्य घोरं परितप्यमाना ।
तदारुदद्बाष्पकलाकुलाक्षी तां सान्त्वयन्नाह किरीटमाली ॥ १५ ॥
mātā śiśūnāṃ nidhanaṃ sutānāṃ niśamya ghoram paritapyamānā |
tadā rudad-bāṣpa-kalākulākṣī tām sāntvayann āha kirīṭamālī || 15 ||

The next day, when Draupadī came to know that all her children had been massacred, she became extremely miserable. She was full of tears, and unconsolable. To console Draupadi, Arjuna said:

तदा शुचस्ते प्रमृजामि भद्रे यद्ब्रह्मबन्धोः शिर आततायिनः । गाण्डीवमुक्तैर्विशिखैरुपाहरे
त्वाऽऽक्रम्य यत्स्नास्यसि दग्धपुत्रा ॥ १६ ॥
tadā śucaḥ te pramrjāmi bhadre yad brahma-bandhoḥ śira ātatāyīnaḥ |
gāṇḍīva-muktair viśikhair upāhare tvā'kramya yat snāsyasi dagdha-putrā || 16 ||

O' auspicious one, I will wipe your tears only after I chop off the head of that inferior Brāhmaṇa with the arrows flying from my gandiva. I will 'gift' that head to you and then you will stand on that head to perform the final rites. After the final rites only I will wipe your tears.

इति प्रियां वल्गुविचित्रजल्पैः स सान्त्वयित्वाच्युतमित्रसूतः । अन्वाद्रवद्दंशित उग्रधन्वा
कपिध्वजो गुरुपुत्रं रथेन ॥ १७॥

iti priyāṁ valgū-vicitra-jalpaiḥ sa sāntvayitvā 'cyuta-mitra-sūtaḥ |
anvādravad daṁśita ugra-dhanvā kapi-dhvajo guru-putraṁ rathena || 17 ||

In this way, consoling Draupadī with these sweet comforting words, Arjuna put on his armour and then with Bhagavān as his charioteer he ran after Guru putra- Aśvatthāmā.

तमापतन्तं स विलक्ष्य दूरात् कुमारहोद्विग्नमना रथेन । पराद्रवत्प्राणपरीप्सुरुर्व्या यावद्गमं
रुद्रभयाद्यथार्कः ॥ १८॥

tam āpatantaṁ sa vilakṣya dūrāt kumāra-ho udvigna-manā rathena |
parādravat prāṇa-parīpsur urvyāṁ yāvad-gamaṁ rudra-bhayād yathārkaḥ || 18 ||

And when Aśvatthāmā saw Arjuna chasing him, he understood there is danger now. He saw Arjuna coming with Kṛṣṇa as his charioteer and started running away, He was extremely disturbed and ran everywhere, all around the earth, scared for his life. He started running everywhere like the Sun God ran out of fear of Rudra.

The referenced story of Sun and Rudra happens when Sati was killed in Dakṣayajña. Bhagavān became very angry as all the devatas were also there in that yajña. At that time, how Surya devata and other devatas ran when Lord Shiva came with anger, is being referenced here. Aśvatthāmā ran all over the earth with the chariot chasing him.

यदाशरणमात्मानमैक्षत श्रान्तवाजिनम् । अस्त्रं ब्रह्मशिरो मेने आत्मत्राणं द्विजात्मजः ॥ १९॥
yadā śaraṇam ātmānam aikṣata śrānta-vājinam | astram brahma-śiro mene
ātma-trāṇam dvijātmajaḥ || 19 ||

He ran everywhere and understood that there is no place where he could be saved. No where to take refuge and at the same time he saw his horses were also tired. He understood, there is only one way, and shoot the Brahmāstra. In modern language you can say this is like a hydrogen bomb. I am going to die, so let us all die. That is the way it has to be understood.

अथोपस्पृश्य सलिलं सन्दधे तत्समाहितः । अजानन्नुपसंहारं प्राणकृच्छ्र उपस्थिते ॥ २०॥

athopaspr̥śya salīlāṁ sandadhe tat samāhitaḥ | ajānan upasaṁhāraṁ
prāṇa-kṛcchra upasthite || 20 ||

Out of extreme love and affection for his son, Drona had given the technique to use Brahmāstra to Aśvatthāmā also. But he knew only how to release it and did not know how to retract it or withdraw it. Thus purifying himself, he concentrated his mind and released Brahmāstra. Brahmāstra is considered to be the most powerful weapon.

ततः प्रादुष्कृतं तेजः प्रचण्डं सर्वतो दिशम् । प्राणापदमभिप्रेक्ष्य विष्णुं जिष्णुरुवाच ह ॥ २१ ॥
tataḥ prāduṣkṛtaṁ tejaḥ pracanḍaṁ sarvato diśam | prāṇāpadam abhiprekṣya
viṣṇuṁ jiṣṇur uvāca ha || 21 ||

And when he released that Brahmāstra missile, there was intense radiation. There was heat and light and it was scorching from all directions. Arjuna was really scared and did not know what was happening. Seeing his life in danger he prayed to the Lord. This is what Arjuna always did whenever he was in trouble.

He has been in trouble in many places and many times we don't even know and we think that single handedly Arjuna won the war. There were many places where Arjuna did not know what to do and it was Bhagavān who saved him. There were many times:

- When Karna used Nagashtra, the arrow was going towards Arjuna's neck. Bhagavān pressed the entire chariot because of which the arrow knocked off the crown instead of the head and this way Arjuna was saved from Karna.
- Aśvatthāmā had used a Nārāyaṇa Astra. There is no counter missile for Nārāyaṇa Astra. The more you fight against it, the more the astra will become powerful. All the Pāṇḍavas were fighting against Nārāyaṇa Astra and Bhagavān said, just bow down. This is the only solution. Again it was Kṛṣṇa who saved everybody.
- Bhagadatta sitting on top of an elephant launched an astra called Vaishnava astra. Bhagavān just absorbed it into himself because he is the greatest Vaishnava. Thus they were saved.
- Again, when Bhīṣma was fighting valiantly it was Bhagavān who saved Arjuna on that 9th day.

- When Arjuna took the vow to kill Jayadrata before sunset, it was impossible. In that mood of anger, he took a vow. kauravā army was a huge army and without thinking properly he took that vow. Therefore, the next day in the entire kauravā army there was only one focus, protect Jayadrata because once Jayadrata is protected, Arjuna is gone. Once Arjuna is gone, Pāṇḍavas are gone. The whole mission was to protect Jayadrata and as anticipated Arjuna could not reach anywhere near Jayadrata. Bhagavān is a māyāvi so he created another māyā. He created a sunset and everybody came out to celebrate the death of Arjuna. Jayadrata also came to mock Arjuna. Kṛṣṇa said this is the time, finish him off.

Now again Jayadrata was very dangerous. He had a boon from his father. The boon was, whoever chops the head of Jayadrata, will be blown off into a thousand pieces. So Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna to chop the head in such a way that it falls exactly where his father was meditating. When the father was meditating, the head fell on his lap. He opened his eyes and got up in shock. That head fell from his lap and his head was blown into a thousand pieces. As you sow so shall you reap.

- Then during Aśvatthāmā's incident, that night if they all were there Aśvatthāmā would have killed all of them. There were so many instances where Bhagavān literally was Kaiyaṭṭaka Keśava.

Here also, Arjuna did not know what was happening. Only when you know what is happening can you do something about it. So now you will find, Arjuna offers a prayer. This is the way we all should pray:

There should be three contents in any prayer: Bhagavān you are all powerful. Bhagavān, I am good for nothing, I have no power. Bhagavān, please save me. This is how Arjuna was praying.

अर्जुन उवाच ।

कृष्ण कृष्ण महाभाग भक्तानामभयङ्कर । त्वमेको दह्यमानानामपवर्गोऽसि संसृतेः ॥ २२॥
arjuna uvāca |

kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa mahābhāga bhaktānām abhayaṅkara | tvam eko dahyamānānām
apavargo 'si saṁsṛteḥ || 22 ||

त्वमाद्यः पुरुषः साक्षादीश्वरः प्रकृतेः परः । मायां व्युदस्य चिच्छक्त्या कैवल्ये स्थित आत्मनि ॥
२३॥

tvam ādyaḥ puruṣaḥ sāksād īśvaraḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ | māyāṁ vyudasya
cic-chaktyā kaivalye sthita ātmani || 23 ||

स एव जीवलोकस्य मायामोहितचेतसः । विधत्से स्वेन वीर्येण श्रेयो धर्मादिलक्षणम् ॥ २४॥
sa eva jīva-lokasya māyā-mohita-cetasah | vidhatse svena vīryeṇa śreyo
dharmādi-lakṣaṇam || 24 ||

तथायं चावतारस्ते भुवो भारजिहीर्षया । स्वानां चानन्यभावानामनुध्यानाय चासकृत् ॥ २५॥
tathāyaṁ cavatāraas te bhuvo bhāra-jihīṛṣayā | svānāṁ cānanya-bhāvānām
anudhyānāya cāsakṛt || 25 ||

Hey Bhagavān, the one who frees devotees who are scorched in the fire of saṁsāra; the one who liberates. You are that supreme being upon which the whole world is projected as māyā. Therefore you are absolutely unaffected by māyā. Bhagavān you are one who provided a means for the jīvas to come out of this saṁsāra and now you have taken up a form by which you can do līlās so all the devotees can meditate upon you.

You have taken up a form to lighten the burden of the earth by killing all the wicked people. Bhagavān, prostrations unto you. So this is the first step. Bhagavān, you are all capable. Bring this into mind. I don't have a problem which Bhagavān cannot solve because He is all powerful. That is the point.

Second is, Bhagavān, I am helpless. Surrender doesn't come as long as I think I can do. So here Arjuna is completely helpless because he doesn't know what is happening. There is a huge ball of fire which is just spreading all over. What will you do?

किमिदं स्वित्कुतो वेति देवदेव न वेदम्यहम् । सर्वतोमुखमायाति तेजः परमदारुणम् ॥ २६॥
kim idaṁ svit kuto veti deva-deva na vedmy aham | sarvato-mukham āyāti tejaḥ
parama-dāruṇam || 26 ||

Bhagavān what is this? Where is it coming from? Bhagavān I do not know what is happening. I can only see intense radiation spreading in all directions. It is coming towards me and it is powerful, scorching and terrifying. Bhagavān, save me!

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

वेत्थेदं द्रोणपुत्रस्य ब्राह्ममस्त्रं प्रदर्शितम् । नैवासौ वेद संहारं प्राणबाध उपस्थिते ॥ २७ ॥
śrī-Bhagavān uvāca |
vetthedaṁ droṇa-putrasya brāhmam astram pradarśitam | naivāsau veda
saṁhāram prāṇa-bādha upasthite || 27 ||

Arjuna I know what it is. That Droṇa putra has released Brahmāstra and he does not know how to withdraw it. In a state of panic he had released it. He felt that now he is going to die and in that situation where his life was at risk, he just released this.

न ह्यस्यान्यतमं किञ्चिदस्त्रं प्रत्यवकर्शनम् । जह्यस्त्रतेज उन्नद्धमस्त्रज्ञो ह्यस्त्रतेजसा ॥
२८ ॥
na hy asyānyatamaṁ kiñcid astram pratyavakarśanam | jahy astra-teja
unnaddham astra-jñō hy astra-tejasā || 28 ||

As far as Brahmāstra is concerned, there is no counter missile for it. The only solution is Arjuna, you also release a Brahmāstra countering this Brahmāstra. There is no other way.

सूत उवाच ।
श्रुत्वा भगवता प्रोक्तं फाल्गुनः परवीरहा । स्पृष्ट्वापस्तं परिक्रम्य ब्राह्मं ब्राह्माय सन्दधे ॥ २९ ॥
sūta uvāca |
śrutvā bhagavatā proktaṁ phālgunaḥ para-vīra-hā | sprṣṭvāpas taṁ parikramya
brāhmaṁ brāhmāyā sandadhe || 29 ||

When Bhagavān said this, Arjuna immediately purified himself. That is Arjuna, an embodiment of complete surrender. Whatever Bhagavān says, he would just do it. So he purified himself, did parikrama of the Lord and fixed his Brahmāstra.

संहत्यान्योन्यमुभयोस्तेजसी शरसंवृते । आवृत्य रोदसी खं च ववृधातेऽर्कवह्निवत् ॥ ३० ॥
saṁhatyānyonyam ubhayos tejasī śara-saṁvr̥te | āvr̥tya rodasī khaṁ ca
vavṛdhāte 'rka-vahnivat || 30 ||

He released his Brahmāstra also. Now with two Brahmāstras, both of them powerful, full of radiance, it appeared as though the whole Earth started getting engulfed by its power.

दृष्ट्वास्त्रतेजस्तु तयोस्त्रींल्लोकान् प्रदहन् महत् । दह्यमानाः प्रजाः सर्वाः सांवर्तकममंसत ॥
३१ ॥

dr̥ṣṭvāstra-tejas tu tayos trīṃl lokān pradahan mahat | dahyamānāḥ prajāḥ
sarvāḥ sām̐vartakam amamsata || 31 ||

The three worlds started burning in the scorching heat because of these two. Everybody thought Pralaya had come. This is what happens during Pralaya. First, the earth is engulfed with water. Earth will have to merge in water, water will have to merge in fire. The Sun becomes a thousand times hotter, in that final stage and it is said from Ādiśeṣa's mouth that fire emerges and together the sun and fire burn the whole creation. So everybody thought Pralaya had come.

प्रजोपद्रवमालक्ष्य लोकव्यतिकरं च तम् । मतं च वासुदेवस्य सञ्जहारार्जुनो द्वयम् ॥ ३२ ॥
prajopadravam ālakṣya loka-vyatikaraṁ ca tam | mataṁ ca vāsudevasya
sañjahārārjunō dvayam || 32 ||

Everyone was distressed and Bhagavān thought if this continues for some more time, the world will perish. So he told Arjuna, now withdraw both of them. See Aśvatthāmā doesn't know how to withdraw. But Arjuna had that power. That's what makes him one notch higher than everyone. Droṇa gave everything to his son. But what to do, Arjuna was extremely smart. There are certain things that others can't learn. Arjuna had the ability to withdraw. That is why he asked Arjuna to send Brahmāstra. You send yours and withdraw both of them. That was the technique. Arjuna then withdrew both of them. Now the effect of Brahmāstra was gone.

तत आसाद्य तरसा दारुणं गौतमीसुतम् । बबन्धामर्षताम्राक्षः पशुं रशनया यथा ॥ ३३ ॥
tata āsādy tarasā dāruṇaṁ gautamī-sutam | babandhāmarṣa-tāmrākṣaḥ paśuṁ
raśanayā yathā || 33 ||

Arjuna ran to his chariot, caught hold of Aśvatthāmā, son of Gautami. His eyes were red in anger. He tied Aśvatthāmā like we tie a sacrificial animal so that he can't run away.

शिविराय निनीषन्तं दाम्ना बद्ध्वा रिपुं बलात् । प्राहार्जुनं प्रकुपितो भगवानम्बुजेक्षणः ॥ ३४ ॥
śibirāya ninīṣantaṁ dāmnā baddhvā ripuṁ balāt | prāhārjunaṁ prakupito
Bhagavān ambujekṣaṇaḥ || 34 ||

And then he caught hold of him, put him onto his chariot and dragged him to his camp by force. At that time, Bhagavān was also full of anger. Bhagavān spoke these words:

मैनं पार्थार्हसि त्रातुं ब्रह्मबन्धुमिमं जहि । योऽसावनागसः सुप्तानवधीन्निशि बालकान् ॥ ३५॥
mainaṁ pārthārhasi trātuṁ brahma-bandhum imaṁ jahi | yo 'sāv anāgasah
suptān avadhīn niśi bālakān || 35 ||

Bhagavān said: Arjuna this person should not be pardoned. Kill him. Why do you want to take him to the shivira? Finish him off because he has killed innocent children, and that too sleeping children in the night. He doesn't deserve any pardon.

मतं प्रमत्तमुन्मतं सुप्तं बालं स्त्रियं जडम् । प्रपन्नं विरथं भीतं न रिपुं हन्ति धर्मवित् ॥ ३६॥
mattaṁ pramatta-munmattaṁ suptaṁ bālaṁ striyaṁ jaḍam | prapannaṁ
virathaṁ bhītaṁ na ripuṁ hanti dharmā-vit || 36 ||

The law says, the knower of dharmā will never kill anyone even if they are his enemy. Who are the ones we should never kill? Absent minded people, an intoxicated person, a mad person, a child, a sleeping person, a woman, a mentally challenged person, the one whose chariot is broken during the war, the one who is scared. Even if they are your enemy, you should not kill.

But what has he done! He has called sleeping children. So therefore, he should not be spared.

स्वप्राणान् यः परप्राणैः प्रपुष्णात्यघृणः खलः । तद्वधस्तस्य हि श्रेयो यद्दोषाद्यात्यधः पुमान् ॥
३७॥
sva-prāṇān yaḥ para-prāṇaiḥ prapuṣṇāty aghṛṇaḥ khalah | tad-vadhas tasya hi
śreyo yad doṣād yāty adhaḥ pumān || 37 ||

What a heinous act! To protect himself, he was slaughtering everyone. When we say yajña spirit it is just the opposite, I sacrifice myself for the welfare of the totality. That is yajña. What is this? I sacrifice the totality to protect myself. Therefore Arjuna, this person has to be killed. Such people are dangerous for society and should be killed for their own good. This is because, the more he lives, the more sins he will commit and more pāpa he will gather. So, for his own good it is better to kill him.

प्रतिश्रुतं च भवता पाञ्चाल्यै शृण्वतो मम । आहरिष्ये शिरस्तस्य यस्ते मानिनि पुत्रहा ॥ ३८॥
pratiśrutaṁ ca bhavatā pāñcālyai śṛṇvato mama | āhariṣye śiras tasya yas te
mānini putra-hā || 38 ||

Also you have promised Draupadī that you will bring his head and present it to her. So therefore you have to fulfill that promise also.

तदसौ वध्यतां पाप आतताय्यात्मबन्धुहा । भर्तुश्च विप्रियं वीर कृतवान् कुलपांसनः ॥ ३९॥
tad asau vadhyatām pāpa ātatāyy ātmabandhuhā | bhartuś ca vipriyaṁ vīra
kṛtavān kulapāṁsanah || 39 ||

Such a person is a shame to his own lineage. See, even his own master-Duryodhana did not like it. Therefore he is an ātatāyī. This is a term you find in Bhagavad Gita also. Arjuna says these ātatāyīs I am going to kill them.

Manusmriti says this about ātatāyī- it is not in Bhāgavatam but I am quoting from Manusmriti

अग्निदो गरदश्चैव शस्त्रपाणिर्धनापहः । क्षेत्रदारापहारी च षडेते ह्य् आततायिनः ॥
agnido garadaś caiva śastrapāṇir dhanāpahah | kṣetradārāpahārī ca ṣaḍ ete hy
ātatāyīnah ||

The following 6 people are called ātatāyī: The one who sets fire to others houses; the ones who give poison and kill others; the one who uses weapons against the weaponless; the one who steals wealth; the one who steals land; and the one who abducts somebody's wife. So these are the 6 ātatāyīs which according to manusmriti, should be killed. So Bhagavān says, see he is an ātatāyī so therefore nothing wrong in killing him.

एवं परीक्षता धर्म पार्थः कृष्णेन चोदितः । नैच्छद्धन्तुं गुरुसुतं यद्यप्यात्महनं महान् ॥ ४०॥
evam parīkṣitā dharmāṁ pārthaḥ kṛṣṇena coditaḥ | naicchad hantum guru-sutaṁ
yady apy ātma-hanaṁ mahān || 40 ||

Even though Kṛṣṇa was prompting Arjuna to kill Aśvatthāmā, Arjuna did not want to kill him because he was the son of Arjuna's Guru. This is the greatness of Arjuna. Despite his son being killed, Arjuna felt this way. Anyone in his place would have lovingly done this and Bhagavān himself is saying. The whole story unfolds to show the glories of Pāṇḍavas. Why is Bhagavān always with the Pāṇḍavas? This is the reason.

What happens when one is extremely angry and extremely sad? Generally anger paralyses intellect. In that angry mood, you don't think about all the good things the person has done. It's very easy to slip down. Arjuna's eyes were red with anger but at the same time he was totally under control. You see this? Amazing! Arjuna said, 'I can't do this, he is the son of my guru'.

अथोपेत्य स्वशिविरं गोविन्दप्रियसारथिः । न्यवेदयत्तं प्रियायै शोचन्त्या आत्मजान् हतान् ॥ ४१ ॥
athopetya sva-śibiram govinda-priya-sārathiḥ | nyavedayat taṁ priyāyai śocantyā
ātma-jān hatān || 41 ||

Finally they reached shivira. He just placed Aśvatthāmā in front of grieving Draupadī.

तथाऽऽहतं पशुवत्पाशबद्धमवाङ्मुखं कर्मजुगुप्सितेन । निरीक्ष्य कृष्णापकृतं गुरोः सुतं
वामस्वभावा कृपया ननाम च ॥ ४२ ॥
tathāhṛtaṁ paśu-vat pāśa-baddham avāṅ-mukhaṁ karma-jugupsitena | nirīkṣya
kṛṣṇāpakṛtaṁ guroḥ sutaṁ vāma-svabhāvā kṛpayā nanāma ca || 42 ||

Here was this Aśvatthāmā fully bound by ropes like a helpless sacrificial animal. He was looking down. That was the kind of heinous act that he had done, he himself was ashamed as though. He was looking down, completely humiliated and helpless. When Draupadī saw him in this condition, what did she do? She went and prostrated to him.

Can you believe this! This is a mother who has lost 5 children. That noble lady instead of shouting at him, she just prostrated. Everybody was shocked!

उवाच चासहन्त्यस्य बन्धनानयनं सती । मुच्यतां मुच्यतामेष ब्राह्मणो नितरां गुरुः ॥ ४३ ॥
uvāca cāsaḥantyaśya bandhanānayanam satī | mucyatāṁ mucyatām eṣa
brāhmaṇo nitarāṁ guruḥ || 43 ||

She was not able to see her Guru's son tied like an animal. She just screamed, 'leave it!' 'What is this you are doing'? 'He is a Brahmāna, he is most reverential'. Is this the way to behave?

सरहस्यो धनुर्वेदः सविसर्गोपसंयमः । अस्त्रग्रामश्च भवता शिक्षितो यदनुग्रहात् ॥ ४४ ॥
sarahasyo dhanur-vedaḥ sa-visargo-pasaṁyamaḥ | astra-grāmaś ca bhavatā
śikṣito yad anugrahāt || 44 ||

स एष भगवान् द्रोणः प्रजारूपेण वर्तते । तस्यात्मनोऽर्धं पत्न्यास्ते नान्वगादवीरसूः कृपी ॥ ४५ ॥
sa eṣa Bhagavān droṇaḥ prajā-rūpeṇa vartate | tasyātmano 'rdhaṁ patnyās te
nānwagād vīra-sūḥ kṛpī || 45 ||

Have you forgotten everything? He is the son of that reverential, glorious Guru who has taught us everything. Whatever we know about archery and how to use weapons etc, how to release the arrow and how to withdraw it, everything we have learnt from that Guru. It is only by his grace that we have learnt about the different kinds of weapons. That very same Droṇa has come in front of us as his son. The son of Guru should be treated like Guru only. That was the custom. That was the respect given.

Not only that, his mother, Kripa is still alive. She did not attain Sati. Even now she is alive and is very much attached to him.

तद्धर्मज्ञ महाभाग भवद्भिर्गौरवं कुलम् । वृजिनं नार्हति प्राप्तुं पूज्यं वन्द्यमभीक्ष्णशः ॥ ४६ ॥
tad dharmājña mahābhāga bhavadbhir gauravaṁ kulam | vrjinaṁ nārhati
prāptuṁ pūjyaṁ vandyam abhīkṣṇaśaḥ || 46 ||

O' Lord, you know dharmā. Don't you know this, that we should never give sorrow to the lineage of our Guru? Instead they are worshipful. We have to respect them, revere them. We should never give sorrow to them. What are we doing? All of us?

मा रोदीदस्य जननी गौतमी पतिदेवता । यथाहं मृतवत्साऽऽर्ता रोदिम्यश्रुमुखी मुहुः ॥ ४७ ॥
mā rodīd asya janānī gautamī pati-devatā | yathāhaṁ mṛta-vatsā ārtā rodimya
śru-mukhī muhuḥ || 47 ||

Moreover I know the pain of a mother when the child is lost. I know the extreme, unbearable pain that a mother goes through and I don't want his mother to undergo the same suffering. I don't want Gautami to go through this suffering.

यैः कोपितं ब्रह्मकुलं राजन्यैरजितात्मभिः । तत्कुलं प्रदहत्याशु सानुबन्धं शुचार्पितम् ॥ ४८ ॥
yaiḥ kopitaṁ brahma-kulaṁ rājanyair ajitātmabhiḥ | tat kulaṁ pradahaty āśu
sānubandhaṁ śucārpitaṁ || 48 ||

Don't you know when unrighteous, sensuous kings do something that gives sorrow in a Brahmāna family, that sorrow is enough to burn the entire empire! Not only that the sorrows will come back to them, their entire family lineage will be burnt and destroyed completely. Don't you know all this? So we should never do things which will ultimately cause us sorrow.

सूत उवाच ।

धर्म्यं न्याय्यं सकरुणं निर्व्यलीकं समं महत् । राजा धर्मसुतो राज्याः प्रत्यनन्दद्वचो द्विजाः ॥
४९ ॥

sūta uvāca |

dharmyaṁ nyāyyaṁ sa-karuṇaṁ nirvyaḷīkaṁ samaṁ mahat | rājā dharmā-suto
rājñyāḥ pratyanandad vaco dvijāḥ || 49 ||

When Yudhiṣṭhira heard this, he immediately supported Draupadī.

When Yudhiṣṭhira comes to a conclusion he sees things from so many angles धर्म्यं न्याय्यं सकरुणं निर्व्यलीकं समं महत् (dharmyaṁ nyāyyaṁ sa-karuṇaṁ nirvyaḷīkaṁ samaṁ mahat) that is why he is called Dharmaraj. What you said is righteous, lawful, merciful, sincere, comes from the depth of your heart, it is balanced and impartial and indeed praiseworthy. Draupadī, during this grave time if you can think this way, it is amazing and praiseworthy.

See the greatness of Pāṇḍavas, even at such a moment everybody is discussing only dharmā. Even in the moments of extreme sorrow, there is no anger, no revenge, what is dharmā and Guru bhakti is being discussed. It is unbelievable.

It is this Guru bhakti which makes them so powerful and invincible. This is why Bhagavān is always with them.

नकुलः सहदेवश्च युयुधानो धनञ्जयः । भगवान् देवकीपुत्रो ये चान्ये याश्च योषितः ॥ ५० ॥
nakulaḥ sahadēvaś ca yuyudhāno dhanañjayah | Bhagavān devakī-putro ye
cānye yāś ca yoṣitaḥ || 50 ||

Immediately Nakula and Sahadeva, Yuyudhāna, Sartike, Arjuna all of them said, I am with Draupadī. And Bhagavān also said what Draupadī is saying is right and all the other women also agreed.

तत्राहामर्षितो भीमस्तस्य श्रेयान् वधः स्मृतः । न भर्तुर्नात्मनश्चार्थं योऽहन् सुप्तान् शिशून् वृथा
॥ ५१ ॥
tatrāhāmarṣito bhīmas tasya śreyān vadhaḥ smṛtaḥ | na bhartur nātmanas cārthe
yo 'han suptān śiśūn vṛthā || 51 ||

Only Bhima did not agree. He has killed little children while they were sleeping. He did it for himself, not his master. Even his master is angry with him therefore he has to be killed. Bhima was full of anger! But see the greatness of Bhima. Once a decision is taken by the elder brother, he becomes quiet. Just bows down

to the elder brother. I may not agree with him but if he has taken a decision, the matter is over.

In that dice game when Yudhiṣṭhira said, 'next is Bhima', he accepted. Surrendering with power is very difficult. Weak people surrendering is easy but his power was invincible. If two people really made Pāṇḍavas win the war, the first person was Arjuna and the other, Bhima. If you see the description of the war, it was Bhima who literally killed every kauravā. That was his power. With that power, having this surrender is unbelievable. So Bhima said, 'I don't accept this'.

निशम्य भीमगदितं द्रौपद्याश्च चतुर्भुजः । आलोक्य वदनं सख्युरिदमाह हसन्निव ॥ ५२ ॥
niśamya bhīma-gaditaṁ draupadyāś ca catur-bhujah | ālokya vadanam sakhyur
idam āha hasann iva || 52 ||

Bhagavān smiled, listening to everyone. He said

श्रीकृष्ण उवाच ।
ब्रह्मबन्धुर्न हन्तव्य आततायी वधार्हणः । मयैवोभयमाम्नातं परिपाह्यनुशासनम् ॥ ५३ ॥
śrī-krṣṇa uvāca |
brahma-bandhur na hantavya ātatāyī vadhārhaṇaḥ | māyāivobhayam āmnātaṁ
paripāhy anuśāsanam || 53 ||

Arjuna I only have given these injunctions in the scriptures. An inferior Brahmāna should not be killed. At the same time if a person is an ātatāyī he has to be killed. There is a conflict. Both are said by me only. Follow the righteous path.

कुरु प्रतिश्रुतं सत्यं यत्तत्सान्त्वयता प्रियाम् । प्रियं च भीमसेनस्य पाञ्चाल्या मह्यमेव च ॥ ५४ ॥
kuru pratiśrutaṁ satyaṁ yat tat sāntvayatā priyām | priyaṁ ca bhīmasenasya
pāñcālyā mahyam eva ca || 54 ||

You have to fulfill your promise towards Pāñcālī, you have to please Bhima. You have to walk along the path of the scriptures, at the same time you have to please me also. Do the needful.

Pleasing Bhagavān is so difficult, this is called dharmā sankata. What is the righteous path? But Arjuna wasn't confused. The moment Bhagavān said, Arjuna understood what Bhagavān had in mind. That much tuning was there between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa.

It is said here in the 40th verse of 7th chapter, when Bhagavān asked Arjuna to kill Aśvatthāmā, Bhagavān was testing Arjuna and his sense of right conduct. He was testing if Arjuna is really blind because of his anger, because of his revenge. In fact Bhagavān was happy that Arjuna did not kill Aśvatthāmā.

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[09/17]

Session 9

[Chapter 7 Verse 55 Chapter 8 Verse 27]

सूत उवाच ।

अर्जुनः सहसाऽऽजाय हरेर्हृदमथासिना । मणिं जहार मूर्धन्यं द्विजस्य सहमूर्धजम् ॥ ५५ ॥
sūta uvāca |

arjunaḥ sahasā jñāyā harer hārdam athāsinā | maṇim jahāra mūrdhanyaṁ
dvijasya saha-mūrdhajaṁ || 55 ||

Immediately, Arjuna understood what Bhagavān expected from him. He did not take time to understand what was in the heart of Bhagavān. This means there was perfect attunement between the devotee and the Lord. He took his sword and removed the mani (jewel) on his forehead.

Aśvatthāmā had a jewel on his head. He was born with this jewel which was given to him as a blessing. It was because of this jewel, that he was invincible and he could not die. No missile could affect him. It was a special divine boon given to him. There is no clarity on who gave that boon but he had it and even if he had any injury in the body, it would heal quickly and he would be untouched by any disease.

Aśvatthāmā was blessed because of that and Arjuna removed that Mani. He also shaved the tuft (shikha) from his head. Shaving the head is a symbol of humiliation or disrespect.

विमुच्य रशनाबद्धं बालहत्याहतप्रभम् । तेजसा मणिना हीनं शिबिरान्निरयापयत् ॥ ५६ ॥
vimucya raśanā-baddhaṁ bāla-hatyā-hata-prabhaṁ | tejasā maṇinā hīnaṁ
śibirān nirayāpayat || 56 ||

After this, they released Aśvatthāmā.

Aśvatthāmā's face was dull. The lustre / shine on the face was gone due to killing the children. When we do something against the voice of the conscience, it reflects on the face. Now that mani also was gone, the tejas was gone and he was sent away from the camp.

वपनं द्रविणादानं स्थानान्निर्यापणं तथा । एष हि ब्रह्मबन्धूनां वधो नान्योऽस्ति दैहिकः ॥ ५७ ॥
vapanam draviṇādānam sthānān niryāpaṇam tathā | eṣa hi brahma-bandhūnām
vadho nānyo 'sti daihikaḥ || 57 ||

So what Arjuna did was right. For a Brahmāna who is an inferior person, shaving head, confiscating wealth, taking away his power/position is considered to be death and not physically killing him.

One may question, is there a special treatment for Brahmānas? A non Brahmāna should be killed and a Brahmāna should not be killed. This is not fair.

The whole idea is this - a Brahmāna is supposed to be an evolved person. An evolved, sensitive, mature person in today's context is called Brahmāna. Not just jāti. Now, what is worse than killing for a Brahmāna? It is disrespect, humiliation. It is very very painful and is worse than death. In fact, this is one of the arguments given by Bhagavān in Bhagavad Gita. Arjuna, do you know what will happen if you run away from the battle field?

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः । येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥ २.३५ ॥
bhayād raṇād uparataṁ maṁsyante tvāṁ mahā-rathāḥ | yeṣāṁ ca tvam
bahu-mato bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam || 2.35 ||

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः । निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥ २.३६ ॥
avācya-vādānś ca bahūn vadiṣyanti tavāhitāḥ | nindantas tava sāmartyam tato
duḥkhataraṁ nu kim || 2.36 ||

Arjuna do you know, people will speak such words which cannot be uttered, they will ridicule you. They will make fun of you. Can there be a greater misery than that?

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् । सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥
२.३४ ॥

*akīrtiṁ cāpi bhūtāni kathayiṣyanti te 'vyayām | sambhāvitasya cākīrtir maraṇād
atiricyate || 2.34 ||*

A person who has enjoyed respect in the society, for him disrespect is worse than death. It is a fact. Just imagine a person who is revered and respected and suddenly he does something and everybody starts looking down upon him. Imagine the life of such a person afterwards, it is horrible. For example, in cricket, imagine the life of team captains that were caught in match fixing. They would be silently praying- O' Lord it is far better if death comes, because everybody who looks at him will not think of his records or his talents and abilities. Only one thing will come to their mind- this person cheated the country. He is a traitor. That is why, for a Brahmāna death is not prescribed because his real death is not physical death. Physical death is a blessing for him. Death for him is that, for the rest of his life, he will rot in loneliness, disrespect and humiliation. A person who has lost respect can never come back in his life. That mark will remain forever.

This is said only for Brahmānas - meaning it is for evolved people. For the non evolved, anyways no self respect and dignity is there so for them there is physical death.

Just like an animal. An animal will understand the language of love but will never understand the language of respect. In the same way, low and unevolved people are like animals only. They don't understand the language of respect, they only understand the language of birth and death. For the low people killing is mentioned but for the evolved people, allow them to live in the society going through humiliation and disrespect. It is a great punishment.

पुत्रशोकातुराः सर्वे पाण्डवाः सह कृष्णया । स्वानां मृतानां यत्कृत्यं चक्रुर्निर्हरणादिकम् ॥ ५८ ॥
putra-śokāturāḥ sarve Pāṇḍavaḥ saha kṛṣṇayā | svānāṁ mṛtānāṁ yat-kṛtyaṁ
cakrur nirharaṇādikam || 58 ||

Then all of them performed the final rights. They went to Ganga. All of them gathered, they cried, and consoled each other. Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa and other Ṛṣis also consoled them. What is there in the destiny, nobody can wipe, you have to accept it, etc etc.

Chapter 8 ॥ अष्टमोऽध्ययः ॥

The first four verses of chapter 8 describe the final rites etc. In the fifth verse, Kṛṣṇa's job in Hastinapura is over. What did He do in Hastinapura?

साधयित्वाजातशत्रोः स्वं राज्यं कितवैर्हृतम् । घातयित्वासतो राज्ञः कचस्पर्शक्षतायुषः ॥ ५॥
sādhayitvā jāta-śatroḥ svaṁ rājyaṁ kitavair hr̥tam | ghātayitvā asato rājñāḥ
kaca-sparśa-kṣatāyusaḥ ||

याजयित्वाश्वमेधैस्तं त्रिभिरुत्तमकल्पकैः । तद्यशः पावनं दिक्षु शतमन्योरिवातनोत् ॥ ६॥
yājayitvāśvamedhais taṁ tri-bhir uttama-kalpakaiḥ | tad-yaśaḥ pāvanam dikṣu
śatamanyor ivātanot ||

All of Bhagavān's plans were executed. The kingdom which was usurped by evil king Duryodhana was given back to Yudhiṣṭhira.

Those people who had attained the end of life span by touching the hair of Draupadī (those evil people in the royal family who dragged Draupadī by touching her hair. Their lifespan ended the moment they dis-respected Draupadī). Bhagavān killed all of them.

He made Yudhiṣṭhira perform three Aśvamedha yajña. He became very famous. Just like Indra, his fame spread far and wide because of the three Aśvamedha yāgas. Thus, he became the emperor of the whole world. The jobs were done, Bhagavān had accomplished his mission and was now planning to return to Dvārakā.

आमन्त्र्य पाण्डुपुत्रांश्च शैनेयोद्धवसंयुतः । द्वैपायनादिभिर्विप्रैः पूजितैः प्रतिपूजितः ॥ ७॥
āmantya pāṇḍu-putrāṁś ca śaineyoddhava-saṁyutaḥ | dvaipāyanaādibhir vipraiḥ
pūjitaiḥ pratipūjitaḥ || 7 ||

गन्तुं कृतमतिर्ब्रह्मन् द्वारकां रथमास्थितः । उपलेभेऽभिधावन्तीमुत्तरां भयविह्वलाम् ॥ ८॥
gantum kṛta-matir brahman dvārakāṁ ratham āsthitaḥ | upalebhe 'bhidhāvantīm
uttarāṁ bhaya-vihvalām || 8 ||

Kṛṣṇa took the formal leave from all the Pāṇḍavas and was planning his return with Sarthaki and Uddhava. All the great Ṛṣis like Vyāsa Ṛṣi and other Ṛṣi munis came to him, took blessings from them. Younger ones took blessings from Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa took blessings from the older ones. Bhagavān is playing the role. So with the elders he would bow down to take their blessings, with the younger ones he would bless them. Whatever role you are playing, play it properly. Some

worshiped him, some he worshiped. This way he made up his mind to return to Dvārakā. He was seated in the chariot and at that time something happened.

Uttarā (wife of Abhimanyu) came running to him full of fear and in panic.

उत्तरोवाच ।

पाहि पाहि महायोगिन् देवदेव जगत्पते । नान्यं त्वदभयं पश्ये यत्र मृत्युः परस्परम् ॥ ९॥
uttarovāca |

pāhi pāhi mahā-yogin deva-deva jagat-pate | nānyaṁ tvad-abhayaṁ paśye yatra
mrtyuḥ parasparam || 9 ||

O' Lord, save me! I don't find any other refuge other than you. In this world, where everybody is engaged in mutual destruction (Mahābhārata was a big war with 18000 akṣauhiṇīs and most of them were dead also) You alone Bhagavān are my savior.

अभिद्रवति मामीश शरस्तप्तायसो विभो । कामं दहतु मां नाथ मा मे गर्भो निपात्यताम् ॥ १०॥
abhidravati mām īśa śaras taptāyaso vibho | kāmaṁ dahatu mām nātha mā me
garbho nipātyatām || 10 ||

Bhagavān, I feel a missile coming towards me. Hot molten, iron coming towards me. Bhagavān, may this missile kill me, may it not destroy the child in the womb.

Who is the child in her womb? Parīkṣit. Son of Abhimanyu. Bhagavān, this is my only request. I may die but please protect this child.

सूत उवाच ।

उपधार्य वचस्तस्या भगवान् भक्तवत्सलः । अपाण्डवमिदं कर्तुं द्रौणेस्त्रमबुध्यत ॥ ११॥
sūta uvāca |

upadhārya vacas tasyā Bhagavān bhakta-vatsalaḥ | aPāṇḍavam idaṁ kartuṁ
drauṇer astram abudhyata || 11 ||

Bhagavān thought, who is sending this missile? And then he came to know this missile is Brahmāstra sent again by Aśvatthāmā. This child in the womb is the only one who could continue the Pāṇḍava vaṁśa. He wanted to end Pāṇḍavas with Pāṇḍavas. So he sent Brahmāstra to kill that child. This Bhagavān understood.

तह्यैवाथ मुनिश्रेष्ठ पाण्डवाः पञ्च सायकान् । आत्मनोऽभिमुखान् दीप्तानालक्ष्यास्त्राण्युपाददुः
॥ १२॥

tarhy evātha muni-śreṣṭha Pāṇḍavaḥ pañca sāyakān | ātmano 'bhimukhān dīptān
ālakṣyāstrāṇy upādadhuh || 12 ||

Not only had he sent a missile to kill the child, he also sent this missile, divided into five, wanting to kill the five Pāṇḍavas and this child. Pāṇḍavas saw these 5 missiles coming towards them.

व्यसनं वीक्ष्य ततेषामनन्यविषयात्मनाम् । सुदर्शनेन स्वास्त्रेण स्वानां रक्षां व्यधाद्विभुः ॥ १३ ॥
Vyāsanaṁ vīkṣya tat teṣām ananya-viṣayātmanām | sudarśanena svāstreṇa
svānāṁ rakṣāṁ vyadhād vibhuh || 13 ||

So when the missiles were approaching Pāṇḍavas, they immediately got ready with their weapons to resist this weapon. Remember, you cannot do anything with Brahmāstra. It is the most powerful weapon. Nobody can face it. Bhagavān knew it.

Throughout their life, the attention of Pāṇḍavas was on Bhagavān. When Bhagavān saw his devotees in trouble (those who Bhagavān considered his own and none other than himself). To the extent Bhagavān becomes your highest priority, to that extent you will become Bhagavān's highest priority. The relationship goes both ways. To the extent our life becomes a God centric life, to that extent you will find protection, guidance, solace, everything coming to you. To the extent I ignore God, to that extent I will experience as though God is ignoring me. It is like looking at a mirror. When you look at the mirror image, that image also will look at you. It is almost the same here also. To the extent Bhagavān becomes important to you, you experience that you are becoming important for Bhagavān also.

They are my own, I have to protect them. Immediately Bhagavān took out His sudarśana cakra and protected them.

अन्तःस्थः सर्वभूतानामात्मा योगेश्वरो हरिः । स्वमाययाऽऽवृणोद्गर्भं वैराट्याः कुरुतन्तवे ॥ १४ ॥
antaḥ-sthaḥ sarva-bhūtānām ātmā yogeśvaro hariḥ |
sva-māyāyā āvṛṇod garbhaṁ vairāṭyāḥ kuru-tantave || 14 ||

That Lord who is seated in the hearts of all, that Lord of all Yogas, the remover of all sorrows, He just covered and protected the baby in the womb by his own divine power. Thus this baby who was there to ensure the continuity of the Pāṇḍava lineage was protected.

यद्यप्यस्त्रं ब्रह्मशिरस्त्वमोघं चाप्रतिक्रियम् । वैष्णवं तेज आसाद्य समशाम्यद्भृगूद्वह ॥ १५॥
yady apy astram brahma-śiras tva-mogham cāpratikriyam | vaiṣṇavaṁ teja
āśādy samaśāmyad bhṛgu-udvaha || 15 ||

Brahmāstra is infallible and has no counter missile. But with the power of Viṣṇu, it just subsided. It was only because Bhagavān was there that this could be done. Who is more powerful? Brahmā or Viṣṇu according to Bhagavata purāṇa ?

According to Bhagavata purāṇa Brahmā ji was created by Viṣṇu. He came from the navel. Therefore the missile blessed by Brahmā cannot touch Viṣṇu. The creation cannot override the creator. This is the law. Though that missile from all world standards cannot be subsided, Bhagavān out of his power just neutralised it.

मा मंस्था ह्येतदाश्चर्यं सर्वाश्चर्यमयेऽच्युते । य इदं मायया देव्या सृजत्यवति हन्त्यजः ॥ १६॥
mā maṁsthā hy etad āścaryam sarvāścaryamaye 'cyute | ya idaṁ māyāyā devyā
srjaty avati hanty ajaḥ || 16 ||

Don't think it is some wonder. Whatever Bhagavān does, everything is wonderful, inexplicable and mysterious. Just imagine the power of his māyā. He just creates, sustains and dissolves this world as a child's play. So don't think this is impossible - this is nothing. One who can create this world so effortlessly, what is so difficult for him? Brahmāstra is only one entity in the world and here is a person who dissolves the world effortlessly.

When this happened, Bhagavān protected the child, Bhagavān protected Pāṇḍavas. Kunti devi was filled with the emotion of devotion and gratitude. Now we have a Kunti stuti. This Stuti is beautiful because in this you find a lot of pointers on how to develop devotion for God.

ब्रह्मतेजोविनिर्मुक्तैरात्मजैः सह कृष्णया । प्रयाणाभिमुखं कृष्णमिदमाह पृथा सती ॥ १७॥
brahma-tejo-vinirmuktair ātmajaiḥ saha kṛṣṇayā | prayāṇa-abhimukhaṁ kṛṣṇam
idam āha pṛthā satī || 17 ||

When Kunti Devi saw that her children and the baby were saved from this Brahmāstra by Bhagavān and as Kṛṣṇa was about to leave for Dvārakā, she stood in front and began the Stuti of Bhagavān.

कुन्त्युवाच ।
नमस्ये पुरुषं त्वाऽऽद्यमीश्वरं प्रकृतेः परम् । अलक्ष्यं सर्वभूतानामन्तर्बहिरवस्थितम् ॥ १८॥

kuntī uvāca |

namasye puruṣaṁ tvādyam īśvaraṁ prakṛteḥ param | alakṣyaṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ
antar bahir avasthitam || 18 ||

My prostrations to you, O' Lord who is the primeval being. The one who is beyond matter. That consciousness, the Lord of the Universe and that Bhagavān who is there inside, outside and at the same time everywhere. He is not seen. It is a wonder, God who is everywhere but is not seen by anyone. My prostrations to that Bhagavān.

This is the first pointer in developing devotion. Know who God is. He is Sat–Chit–Ānanda Swaroopa, the consciousness in us which is free from matter, is a causeless cause and is the self in us. Knowing God is very important to love God. Loving is not possible without knowing. Therefore that Bhagavān who cannot be seen and perceived by our senses.

Why are we not able to perceive?

मायाजवनिकाच्छन्नमज्ञाधोक्षजमव्ययम् । न लक्ष्यसे मूढदृशा नटो नाट्यधरो यथा ॥ १९ ॥
māyā-javanikācchannam ajñādhokṣajam avyayam | na lakṣyase mūḍha-dṛśā
naṭo nāṭya-dhara yathā || 19 ||

Bhagavān you cannot be seen by others. Your glory cannot be seen by others because you are covered / wielded by a curtain of māyā. Bhagavān, you have beautifully disguised yourself with the curtain of māyā. You are imperishable - the one just behind the sense organs and propelling the sense organs. The foolish people, deluded people, ignorant people don't see you. Exactly like the actor is not seen amidst theoretical costumes. There is an actor who has put on these costumes and you are wondering where that actor is? He is right in front of you and you are searching for the actor. He is right behind the costume.

In the same way, Kṛṣṇa is standing there and you are saying where is that God? He is right behind the costume of that physical form. This is the superficial meaning. What is the spiritual meaning? Right behind this aham-vṛtti is aham. Right behind the little i is the capital I. This little i is searching outside for capital I. In a drama there is a role given to you and you are playing the role, say of a beggar. Now that beggar is looking for the actor. The beggar himself is the actor but he is searching outside. Will he ever find it? It's a beautiful example. The role and the actor are both the same and in the same place. Jīvatma and Paramatma are ever together. They cannot be separated. It's only a wrong notion separating

them. Where is the dreamer and the waker? How far is the dreamer from the waker? Both are in the same place. Because of ignorance we don't know.

So the second pointer in developing devotion is, I am not able to see God not because of lack of grace or blessing of God, but because of my own ignorance. This is a very important point. Otherwise we go on blaming God only. God your grace is not there that is why I am not able to develop devotion for you.

तथा परमहंसानां मुनीनाममलात्मनाम् । भक्तियोगविधानार्थं कथं पश्येम हि स्त्रियः ॥ २० ॥
tathā paramahaṁsānāṁ munīnām amalātmanām | bhakti-yoga-vidhānārthaṁ
kathaṁ paśyema hi striyaḥ || 20 ||

O' Lord, how can foolish, ignorant women like me see you? You are seen only by the pure hearted people, the contemplative ones with the ability to separate real from unreal and permanent from the impermanent.

The qualifications are a pure mind and the ability to discriminate between real and unreal, consciousness and matter and devotion. If you have all these, jñāna, bhakti and vairāgya, you can experience that presence in your own heart.

We cannot blame God for not seeing God. God is so clearly available. Even if He wants to hide, He can't. But we are not able to see him because of our own impure mind. We have to improve. Know God and know that I am not experiencing God because of my own imperfection.

कृष्णाय वासुदेवाय देवकीनन्दनाय च । नन्दगोपकुमाराय गोविन्दाय नमो नमः ॥ २१ ॥
kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya devakī-nandanāya ca | nanda-gopa-kumārāya govindāya
namo namaḥ || 21 ||

My prostrations to Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva, the son of Devaki, the son of Nanda Gopa. To that protector of the Earth, to that giver of liberation, my prostrations.

So the third pointer we can say is, making use of the līlās of the Lord, to develop devotion for God. Bhagavān has taken an avatāra. Make use of that story to develop love and devotion for God.

नमः पङ्कजनाभाय नमः पङ्कजमालिने । नमः पङ्कजनेत्राय नमस्ते पङ्कजाङ्घ्रये ॥ २२ ॥
namaḥ paṅkaja-nābhāya namaḥ paṅkaja-māline | namaḥ paṅkaja-netrāya
namas te paṅkaja-aṅghraye || 22 ||

My prostrations onto Bhagavān, from whose naval came the lotus. He has a garland made of lotus and his eyes are as beautiful as lotus. The one who has lotus feet. Everything is lotus. What does lotus represent? It represents perfection. See, superficially there is a meaning but don't get stuck. They are all symbolic. There is a symbolic significance because Vyāsa Ṛṣi has a great task that even a highly gross, materialistic sensuous person should also enjoy Bhāgavatam. Highly philosophical people should also enjoy Bhāgavatam. So, this is one syllabus from LKG, UKG to PHD. One syllabus where everybody should find material according to their evolution. Namo 'stu te vyāsa viśāl-buddhe. Every verse has to be understood. Pankaja means perfection. That lotus flower is perfect. What is perfection? Remaining in dirty water it brings out fragrance, remaining in dirty water it brings out nectar, it brings out beauty and freshness. These are all the glories of that flower. The environment is very unconducive. The dirty water represents an unconducive environment and toxic people around. But you are bringing out the fragrance of the self - love, kindness, sweetness, forgiveness even when the environment is not conducive.

In fact, Kṛṣṇa's life itself was like that. Where was the birth? In jail. From the beginning itself there was only killing of so many of the Asuras. Finally he had to kill his own uncle. Just imagine, his own mother and father were in jail and finally he too was shot dead by a hunter. But there was not even one instance where one could see tears in the eyes of Kṛṣṇa. He was always smiling, always joyful. That is called lotus like life.

Here Pankaja means perfection. Bhagavān is perfect and his creation is also perfect. That is the meaning of Pankaja Naabhaya. Naabhi (navel) is the source. Whenever we think there is a threat to life or we are going to die, you feel something happening in your navel. Especially on that roller coaster ride, you start feeling something in the navel, because that is our source. The baby is also in the navel only. In the same way from his naval the world has come. Brahmā ji coming from the lotus of his naval means the whole creation has come from Him. Pankaja Nabhaya means He is perfect, His creation is also perfect. Pankaja Netraya means His vision is perfect and he sees the reality with impartiality. He sees everything with love and kindness. That is the perfection of vision. He sees the one in the many.

Pankaja Anghrahe: What is the perfection of feet? When we remember his lotus feet, we are at peace. Those feet which run to his disciple are perfect. Feet also means the place where you stand. That is why we worship the padukas of Guru.

Where does the Guru stand? He stands on knowledge. That, where Bhagavān stands- He stands on reality. These are all the spiritual symbolic meanings. To that God of perfection, my prostrations. How does this help in developing devotion? Point number four is always keep this in mind that this world is perfect. Nothing is imperfect in this world. Don't think that you are more intelligent than God. Grumbling and complaining indicate that somewhere I think I am superior to God. That very same moment the mind gets disturbed. Whatever God does is perfect.

यथा हृषीकेश खलेन देवकी कंसेन रुद्धातिचिरं शुचार्पिता । विमोचिताहं च सहात्मजा विभो
त्वयैव नाथेन मुहुर्विपद्गणात् ॥ २३ ॥

yathā hr̥ṣīkeśa khalena devakī kaṁsena ruddhāti-ciraṁ śucārpitā |
vimocitāhaṁ ca sahātmajā vibho tvayaiva nāthena muhur vipad-gaṇāt || 23 ||

Bhagavān, how you saved your mother Devaki from that wicked Kamsa. That mother Devaki was imprisoned for a long time and was miserable and grieving in that prison cell, but you released her from that wicked person called Kamsa. In the same way Bhagavān, this is true not only for Devaki, it is true for me also. Because, you have saved me and my children again and again from so many calamities and dangers. Bhagavān I remember all of them.

विषान्महाग्नेः पुरुषाददर्शना- दसत्सभाया वनवासकृच्छ्रतः । मृधे मृधेऽनेकमहारथास्त्रतो
द्रौण्यस्त्रतश्चास्म हरेऽभिरक्षिताः ॥ २४ ॥

viṣān mahāgneḥ puruṣāda-darśanād asat-sabhāyā vana-vāsa-kṛcchrataḥ |
mṛdhe mṛdhe 'neka-mahā-rathāstrato drauṇy-astrataś cāsma hare 'bhirakṣitāḥ ||
24 ||

To understand this verse, you must know the story of Mahābhārata. Bhagavān you saved us from poison. When the kauravās were children, they tried to poison Bhima and kill him. Bhagavān you saved us from poisoning. These kauravās tried to burn down Pāṇḍavas in that lakshagraha, the house of lac. Bhagavān you saved us from that fire also.

पुरुषाददर्शना puruṣāda-darśanād: There can be two meanings of this. The first meaning is that unseen Purusha. Here the story is about Yaksha. One by one Pāṇḍavas were dead. Yaksha said unless you answer my question I am not going to let you drink the water. They were all thirsty in a forest and in search of water. They went one by one. First Sahadeva went, he saw the lake and was going to take water when the yaksha said - don't drink water, first you have to answer my question only then you can take water. But he did not listen, he just

drank the water. He was dead on the spot. So Sahadeva was gone and everybody started searching. Then Nakula was sent. Nakula also comes there, sees the water and his brother dead. He says let me first drink water. Again the voice said stop. So the story goes that everybody was dead and finally Yudhiṣṭhira comes and answers all the questions of Yaksha. It is called Yaksha Prashana. It is very famous. And finally he revives all of them. So from that unseen man- this is one meaning

Another meaning is, Purusha Ada, from man eaters. Hidumba was a man eater. Bhagavān you saved us from man eaters.

From that evil assembly also you saved us. That was the Draupadī episode. See Kunti mata is remembering everything. This is something we should remember. There are many times in life when we are in trouble, totally helpless and we ask God for help and he saves us. Then what is the wonderful thing we do? We forget everything. When the problem is over, we forget everything. But Kuntii mata remembers everything. Also in the forest how many times you saved us. One famous episode is that of Duruvasa Ṛṣi and when he comes with ten thousand Ṛṣis.

Bhagavān, in every war very many weapons were shot at my children but in all the cases you saved my children.

- Nagastra was sent by Karna. Bhagavān pressed the chariot and it hit Kirita instead and thus Arjuna was saved.
- Nārāyaṇa astra was sent by Aśvatthāmā. Bhagavān said just bow down thus Bhagavān saved all of them.
- Vaiṣṇavāstra was sent by Bhagadatta and Bhagavān just absorbed it.
- Shakti astra as given by Indra to Karna. When Karna gave his Kawacha kundala, Indra had said you use this against anyone and that person is finished. Karna had kept it for Arjuna. And Bhagavān knew if it is used against Arjuna then my Arjuna will not be there and I must protect him.

So Bhagavān sent Ghaṭotkaca - son of Bhima. Ghaṭotkaca unleashed terror to such an extent that at one time he would have wiped away all the kauravā forces. At that time Karna had no choice but to use this. That is how Ghaṭotkaca is killed and this is how Bhagavān saved Arjuna. That

missile is called Shakti. This way, how many missiles were shot at my children. You saved my children.

- Now Aśvatthāmā sent this Brahmāstra and you have saved my children.

So the point number five is, always be grateful to what Bhagavān is doing to you. We may not have missiles to remember. Arjuna was a warrior so these are the stories. We also have our own stories. Never forget, be ever grateful.

There must be some situations in life where you are completely cornered, you just don't know what to do, where to turn to and you say Bhagavān save me and something happens and you are saved. Remember all those moments, treasure them and never forget them. Be grateful. Then only you will develop devotion. Then only you will know there is somebody taking care of you all the time.

Then you automatically start loving. There is somebody loving me, constantly taking care of me. When you have seen all the calamities, when you have seen the result, don't forget, be grateful.

The next one is a very famous verse

विपदः सन्तु नः शश्वत्तत्र तत्र जगद्गुरो । भवतो दर्शनं यत्स्यादपुनर्भवदर्शनम् ॥ २५॥
vipadaḥ santu naḥ śaśvat tatra tatra jagad-guro | bhavato darśanam yat syād
apunar-bhava-darśanam || 25 ||

Therefore Bhagavān, again and again let calamities come to me. Let there be more and more suffering, more and more calamities because whenever there is a calamity, I sincerely pray to you and in that sincere heart felt prayer, I experience your presence in my heart which ultimately leads to freedom from birth death cycle.

See the play of words here. भवतो दर्शनं यत्स्यादपुनर्भवदर्शनम् (bhavato darśanam yat syād apunar-bhava-darśanam) Godly vision ends the worldly vision. The moment you have the vision of God, world ends. The world ends because the mind becomes absolutely quiet. The world is nothing but a projection upon the mind. That is called moksha.

Convert every calamity into an opportunity. This is the sixth point. What is that opportunity- take that problem to God. He will solve it and then when he solves it, that problem becomes a wonderful means to develop love for God, devotion for God. All of us have problems. Instead of becoming miserable in trying to solve

the problem, take the problem to God. You will find that anything taken to God becomes your strength. Any weakness taken to God, becomes your strength. Addiction becomes a means. That is the beauty of God. You take anger to God, anger becomes your strength. You take fear to God, that fear leads you to strength.

How do you become strong? With your connectivity with God. For example, I have a lot of fear. Whenever there is fear, chant Bhagavān's name. Go on chanting Bhagavān's name and in the process what is happening is, you are getting connected to God. When you are connected to God, you become strong and when you become strong, what happens to fear? It goes away. So fear has become your strength. Convert every calamity into an opportunity. That is the sixth point.

जन्मैश्वर्यश्रुतश्रीभिरेधमानमदः पुमान् । नैवार्हत्यभिधातुं वै त्वामकिञ्चनगोचरम् ॥ २६ ॥
janmaishvarya-śruta-śrībhir edhamāna-madaḥ pumān | naivārhati abhidhātum vai
tvām akiñcana-gocaram || 26 ||

Bhagavān those who are bloated with ego due to their birth.

People born in a big royal family, a great family, a rich family, can develop an ego because of their birth. Power, influence, position can create ego. Fame, popularity can create ego. Wealth can create ego. In this way, those people whose egos are bloated, they never take your name. You will always find this. The more and more the ego rules us, the less we feel the need for spirituality. We become more and more materialistic. Very true.

So, to develop devotion for God, you have to be very careful of the ego. Never be arrogant, never be egoistic. Be very very humble because Bhagavān you are akiñcana-gocaram. That which can be perceived is gocaram. Perception is gocaram. Bhagavān you are akiñcana. The one who has nothing is called akiñcana. Such a person only sees you. The one who is perceivable by those who have nothing. The point is not whether we have anything or not. The point is what is your understanding. If in everything you only see God then you are akiñcana only. It is not literal. It is possible that a person may have only a langoti (dhoti) but he is very proud of his langoti. A sadhu can have competition with another sadhu. It is possible. Both are beggars but my āsana is better than his āsana. That is possible. You can be egoistic even with nothing. But king Janaka was a king, and a Brahmā jñānī. So akiñcana does not mean what you have. Are you having pride for what you have? Be humble. This is the seventh one.

नमोऽकिञ्चनविताय निवृत्तगुणवृत्तये । आत्मारामाय शान्ताय कैवल्यपतये नमः ॥ २७ ॥
namo 'kiñcana-vittāya nivṛtta-guṇa-vṛttaye | ātmārāmāyā śāntāya kaivalya-pataye
namaḥ || 27 ||

My prostration unto the Lord who is A'kiñcana-vittāya. Bhagavān is the wealth of the one who has nothing. This refers to a person who has given up everything but Him.

My prostrations to that Lord who is free from all guṇas. He is आत्मारामाय शान्ताय (ātmārāmāyā śāntāya) ever reveling in His own self. The one who is peaceful and the bestower of liberation. What is Bhagavān doing? Reveling in His own self.

This becomes the eighth point. What is devotion? What is the goal of spirituality? Abide in yourself. Be clear as to what you have to expect from this path. Many times we feel if I become a devotee of God, I will get a lot of power, I will be able to read the minds of others. I will have ṛddhi, siddhi, aṇimā, mahimā, garimā, laghimā, I will fly unseen. People have all these wrong notions. What is spiritual progress? Reading somebody's mind? Ability to predict the future? Fly high unseen? Light weight? Heavy weight? No no no. आत्मारामाय ātmārāmāyā is spirituality. Let there be clarity.

हृत् स्थले मनः स्वास्थ्यम् प्रियम् । भावि योग तज निश्चितम् (hṛt sthale manaḥ svāस्थ्यam priyam | bhāvi yoga tja niścitam)

Bhakti yoga kriya and all these paths lead to हृत् स्थले मनः स्वास्थ्यम् (hṛt sthale manaḥ svāस्थ्यam). Firm abidance in the heart space. The same thing is said here with आत्मारामाय ātmārāmāyā - when the mind rests in the self. That is the purpose of devotion, of knowledge. That is the purpose of karma yoga, raja yoga, ashtanga yoga, kundalini yoga, whichever yoga it may be. Let there be clarity. Then what will happen? शान्ताय śāntāya. This is called liberation. To that Lord, the bestower of liberation, my prostrations. So expression of devotion in the language of knowledge is abidance in the self.

Many times we have wrong notions. Crying and weeping is devotion or losing body consciousness - samādhi or singing some bhajans. That does not necessarily mean devotion. The sign of devotion is, where is your mind? Is it abiding in the self? In the language of devotion we call it remembering the lotus feet of the Lord. Sometimes it is very confusing- what are these lotus feet? Be

very clear- your attention is upon your own self. Abiding in consciousness. Being in the here and now. Languages are different but let there be clarity about what this devotion is going to do to you.

Many people are sad, Swamiji I am not able to cry. Others are able to cry when they are listening to the glories of the Lord. But my tears are not coming. It is not necessary. My hair is not standing, there are no horripilations. Expressions are different for different people. All these are not necessarily needed. Devotion is what is your mind doing? Is the mind wandering in the world or is the mind abiding in the Lord, abiding in the Self? Let there be clarity. This is the eight point.

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Session 10

[Chapter 8 Verse 28 - Chapter 9 Verse 9]

In the last class we had seen, Aśvatthāmā was punished for his cruelty. The crest jewel was taken away, he was not killed. So it is said that Aśvatthāmā is one amongst the cirañjīvis. Here cirañjīvi doesn't mean he is immortal, It only means he stays on Earth for a time. It is said, he stayed for three thousand years. Going through suffering, disease, loneliness. This is what is believed.

In the stuti we find so many pointers to develop devotion.

1. To love God we must know who God is. The one who is always in us as the very consciousness in us.
2. We must know that I am developing love for God not because of the lack of grace of God, it is because of my own defects.

If the iron piece is not feeling the pull towards a powerful magnet, the problem is not with the magnet. The problem is with the iron piece. It has rust. Greater the rust, lesser the pull. The rust of our mind is that the mind is not pure. It has kāma krodha etc. Viveka Shakti, virāga shakti, vairagya, bhakti are not there. As we start developing bhakti we start developing the pull towards God, devotion for God.

3. Make use of all the līlās of the Lord in developing devotion.
4. Always know that Bhagavān is perfect and his creation is also perfect. The moment we find defects in the world, then the greatest tragedy is we won't be able to love God who is the creator of this world. So keep it in mind that Bhagavān is perfect and his creation is also perfect.
5. Always remember all those moments where we have been helpless and have turned to God and the help came in a mysterious way. Never forget the moments. Be grateful.

6. Convert every calamity into an opportunity. When a problem comes, the problem has a purpose. The purpose is to make us turn towards God. Getting stressed is the wrong way of handling a problem. If you succeed, ego will grow, if you fail you will get into depression. Both ways it is a loss.

Whereas when you convert that problem into an opportunity and take that problem to God, definitely the solution will come.

What are the four ways in which Bhagavān answers prayers? Yes, No, wait, take here is something better. This is the way Bhagavān answers our problems. When we see how our problems are solved, our love for God, devotion for God, trust in God, faith in God all grow. That is why Kunti mata says give me more and more problems, because I feel I am nearing more and more towards you and my prayer is becoming of higher quality.

The quality of prayer becomes high when you pray to solve a pressing problem. The bigger the problem, the greater is the intensity of prayer. So convert calamities into opportunities.

7. Beware of all those goodies that you have in life- because the tendency of the mind is to take pride in all those things. Name, fame, good family, education, good looks, wealth. Somewhere we become proud. The moment pride takes over us, for such a person devotion becomes very difficult because Bhagavān is akiñcana-gocara. For someone who is very humble, for that person alone Bhagavān becomes visible.
8. What is devotion we must know. Growing in devotion has nothing to do with supernatural powers. Many times spirituality is associated with some power. The progress in devotion is ātmā rāmaṇam- reveling in one's own self. This is how - whether it is knowledge, whether it is devotion, it is all one and the same thing.

मन्ये त्वां कालमीशानमनादिनिधनं विभुम् । समं चरन्तं सर्वत्र भूतानां यन्मिथः कलिः ॥ २८ ॥
manyē tvāṁ kālam īśānam anādi-nidhanam vibhum | samam carantam sarvatra
bhūtānām yan-mithaḥ kaliḥ || 28 ||

Bhagavān I consider you as a time spirit. The Lord, kāla Bhagavān. Sometimes you express yourself as time. Time which has no beginning, no end, is beginningless and endless.

समं चरन्तं सर्वत्र भूतानां यन्मिथः कलिः (samarṁ carantaṁ sarvatra bhūtānāṁ yan-mithaḥ kaliḥ) Time is the same for everyone. Therefore, this war that has happened because of which two mighty forces clashed with each other and there is a big destruction that has happened, Bhagavān, according to me, you alone are the doer of this. This war happened under your supervision, by your will, by your command, with your permission. You are the time spirit and when you want to destroy something, you just destroy it. When the time comes for destruction, nothing can stop it. It's all your will.

न वेद कश्चिद्भगवंश्चिकीर्षितं तवेहमानस्य नृणां विडम्बनम् । न यस्य कश्चिद्दयितोऽस्ति
कर्हिचि- द्द्वेष्यश्च यस्मिन्विषमा मतिर्नृणाम् ॥ २९॥

na veda kaścīd bhagavaṁś cikīrṣitaṁ tavehamānasya nṛṇāṁ viḍambanam |
na yasya kaścīd dayito 'sti karhicit dveṣyaś ca yasmin viṣamā matir nṛṇām || 29 ||

Bhagavān, what is there in your mind, nobody knows. What you are going to do nobody knows. In this līlā that you are doing, taking a human form is very mysterious because nobody knows what you are going to do. There is nobody who you consider dear and no one that you consider an enemy. For you, all are the same. Therefore Bhagavān, it is very difficult to understand you. Whoever has tried to understand you, has failed. Everything about you is mysterious.

जन्म कर्म च विश्वात्मन्नजस्याकर्तुरात्मनः । तिर्यङ्नृषिषु यादःसु तदत्यन्तविडम्बनम् ॥ ३०॥
janma karma ca viśvātmann ajasyākartur ātmanaḥ | tiryāṅ-nṛ-ṛṣiṣu yādaḥsu tad
atyanta-viḍambanam || 30 ||

Bhagavān, you are birthless but you appear to be born. You are actionless but it appears you are performing all actions. You appear to be in this body but actually you are viśvātmann, the soul of all beings. You appear to be with form but actually you are formless and you take various forms. Sometimes you take the form of an animal, sometimes that of a human being. Sometimes you take the form of an aquatic creature. Sometimes you come in the form of a Ṛṣi. You take different forms but actually you are formless. Bhagavān everything about you is mysterious.

How can this information be used to develop Bhakti? Cheerful acceptance of choiceless situations. In life, many times we go through choiceless, inexplicable

situations, tragic situations. In all these situations where we don't understand why certain things are happening, at that time our attitude should be - there is a Lord who is viśvātmann, the self of all beings. Who is there everywhere, who is there in everyone. Such a being can never be partial. He knows everything. So whatever is happening in this world is right. Therefore if something is happening in this world, know that it is happening by the will of the Lord, never question it, never complain about it, cheerfully accept it. This is the way to develop devotion.

With our little intelligence we know very very little. Whereas Bhagavān is Sarvajña- all knowing. Just bow down to His will. Whatever is happening in this world, is happening with His will, His permission and His knowledge. This becomes point nine. Cheerful acceptance of choiceless, tragic, unavoidable, mysterious, inexplicable situations.

Many times, during a war, the mind becomes disturbed. We often think this shouldn't have happened, so many people are injured. We often ask, why is God allowing these things? There is a reason. Everything has a reason and if God is doing it, it is a great thing. We may not understand and that is ok. But that faith is there and that gives us peace.

गोप्याददे त्वयि कृतागसि दाम ताव- द्या ते दशाश्रुकलिलाञ्जनसम्भ्रमाक्षम् । वक्त्रं निनीय
भयभावनया स्थितस्य सा मां विमोहयति भीरपि यद्विभेति ॥ ३१ ॥
gopy ādade tvayi kṛtāgasi dāma tāvad yā te
daśāśru-kalīlāñjana-sambhramākṣam |
vaktram niniya bhaya-bhāvanayā sthitasya sā mām vimohayati bhīr api yad
bibheti || 31 ||

Bhagavān this līlā of yours, this particular līlā, touches my heart and I am filled with wonder! Bhagavān, as a child you did a mischievous act and broke a pot.

The story goes thus, Yashoda was churning the milk to take curd out of it and baby Kṛṣṇa comes running saying give me milk. So mother Yashoda started breast feeding the child and at that time she found that the milk in the fireplace started foaming and frothing and just overflowing. So in that rush, she just kept Kṛṣṇa there and rushed to remove that milk. And Kṛṣṇa was so angry because he was drinking milk at that time.

So he just broke the churning pot. And then he understood his mistake and immediately ran away from that place. So when Yashoda came, she saw all that milk spilt and Kṛṣṇa was missing. She understood and she started searching. He

was hiding somewhere. She caught hold of him and after some chase, she took one rope. Yashoda maiya was full of anger.

At that time what was the state of Kṛṣṇa? At that time Kṛṣṇa's eyes were filled with anxiety and fear that mother is going to punish me and tie me down and those eyes filled with tears messed up that kajal. And you were looking down (because you knew you had done some mischief that deserves some punishment). You were not looking at Yashoda, full of fear. Bhagavān this līlā of yours touches my heart and fills me with wonder. Because You are the creator. Even the Lord of death, Yamaraj is afraid of you. Everyone is scared of Yamaraj (death). And that Yamaraj is also scared of you and is doing everything efficiently with your fear. But Bhagavān you say you are Bhakta Parādhina- a servant of my devotees. I am helpless in front of my devotees.

There is a very famous song - Jagadodharana Adisidale Yashoda. That Yashoda who made the supporter of the whole universe, dance to her tunes.

Here the point is, if you have to grow in devotion, there has to be an iṣṭa-devatā and there has to be a relation with God then the progress is very fast. Better to have one mantra, one relationship and one iṣṭa-devatā. Yashoda was thinking of the Lord as her own child. You will find great devotees had one particular relationship, one particular attitude, one particular iṣṭa-devatā.

For Ramakṛṣṇa Paramahansa, it was Kaali. She is my divine mother and I am a child. Meera Bai, Tulsidas are some other examples.

So you have one name, one relationship and you go on working on it and the progress is very fast. Whatever you do, do it consistently. Repeated actions make it a habit and the groove becomes deeper and deeper. Once the groove becomes deeper, the mind effortlessly gets into the groove. Just like with the axe you cut the wood. In the beginning it is difficult, but when the groove is set, it just goes there only. The mind also functions in grooves. Whatever we do consistently, becomes a habit and the groove is set. Once the groove is set, effortlessly things happen. This is very important in bhakti.

Choose one iṣṭa-devatā, one relationship and slowly you will find you are able to connect to God in that relationship, in that mantra and with that attitude.

केचिदाहुरजं जातं पुण्यश्लोकस्य कीर्तये । यदोः प्रियस्यान्ववाये मलयस्येव चन्दनम् ॥ ३२॥

kecid āhur ajaṁ jātaṁ puṇya-ślokasya kīrtaye |
yadoḥ priyasyānvavāye malayasyeva candanam || 32 ||

Bhagavān, different people give different reasons why you have come to this world. Some say you came to this world to enhance the glory of Yaduvaṁśa. Just like, upon the Malaya mountain we have sandalwood trees and the fragrance of this sandalwood makes the mountain famous. In the same way, you made Yaduvaṁśa glorious.

अपरे वसुदेवस्य देवक्यां याचितोऽभ्यगात् । अजस्त्वमस्य क्षेमाय वधाय च सुरद्विषाम् ॥ ३३ ॥
apare vasudevasya devakyāṁ yācito 'bhyāgat | ajas tvam asya kṣemāyā
vadhāya ca sura-dviṣām || 33 ||

Others say that Lord came in order to fulfill the promise he had given to Devakī and Vasudeva. They did a lot of tapas as Sūtapa and Prishni. When Bhagavān appeared, they said we want you as our next son. Thus, to fulfil the promise to Vasudeva and Devaki this way you manifested upon the earth.

भारावतारणायान्ये भुवो नाव इवोदधौ । सीदन्त्या भूरिभारेण जातो हयात्मभुवार्थितः ॥ ३४ ॥
Bhāravatāraaṇāyānye bhuvo nāva ivodadhau | sīdantya bhūri-bhāreṇa
jāto hy ātma-bhuvārthitaḥ || 34 ||

Others say, Bhagavān you took avatāra because of a request by Lord Brahmā. The earth was filled with all kinds of wicked people and became like a boat burdened by too many wicked people. Just like an overloaded boat would sink in the ocean, the earth was over burdened with wicked people so Lord Brahmā requested Viṣṇu and therefore Bhagavān Viṣṇu took the avatāra. Some say this is the reason you came to earth.

भवेऽस्मिन् क्लिश्यमानानामविद्याकामकर्मभिः । श्रवणस्मरणार्हाणि करिष्यन्निति केचन ॥
३५ ॥
bhava 'smin kliśyamānānām avidyā-kāma -karmabhiḥ | śravaṇa-smaraṇārharṇi
kariṣyann iti kecana || 35 ||

Some others say Bhagavān has come to bless all of us with liberation because people are suffering because of ignorance, desires, action. They are tied up in the birth death cycle so Bhagavān came to do līlā so that meditating upon that wonderful Lord, people can get liberated. This is what others say.

Bhagavān, this is what I also say.

शृण्वन्ति गायन्ति गृणन्त्यभीक्ष्णशः स्मरन्ति नन्दन्ति तवेहितं जनाः । त एव पश्यन्त्यचिरेण
तावकं

भवप्रवाहोपरमं पदाम्बुजम् ॥ ३६ ॥

śṛṇvanti gāyanti grṇanty abhīkṣṇaśaḥ smaranti nandanti tav ehitam janāḥ |
ta eva paśyanty acireṇa tāvakam bhava-pravāhopa-ramam padāmbujam || 36 ||

You do such līlās so that people listen to it, sing it, they expound it, they remember it, they find joy in it always. In this way, their mind revels in you, in your līlās and thus, such people very soon see your lotus feet which becomes a cause of the end of the flow of birth-death cycle.

Here the point is, how are we analyzing our experiences in life? There are so many ways of analysis. For example, Bhagavān's birth. Some say, He came to enhance the glory of Yadus, some say it was to fulfil the promise to Devakī and Vasudeva, some say it was to fulfill the request of Brahmā ji but I say that you came here to do līlās.

The same situation can be interpreted in so many ways by so many people. But if you want to grow in devotion, you must interpret in such a way that you see the hidden hand of God in everything. This is the way to grow in devotion.

For example when it rains, a biologist will have his own explanation, a scientist will have his own explanation and a poet will have his own imagination. What do scientists say? Heat from the sun makes the water go above 100 degrees, and once it becomes vapour, it goes up and then through condensation forms a cloud which comes down as rain. The explanation is good but with this devotion will not come. It will be a dry explanation of something. If you want to become a devotee, how should you see the very same situation?

Bhagavad Gita Bhagavān says, तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णम्युत्सृजामि च । अमृतं चैव
मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन (tapāmyaham aham varṣam nigriḥṇāmyutsrijāmi cha
amṛitam chaiva mṛityuśh cha sad asach chāham arjuna) Bhagavad Gita [9.19]

Tapami Aham- I, as the sun, heat up the earth. What are you seeing in the sun? Bhagavān's glory. I heat up, I take water and I release water. So what are you seeing in the clouds? You are seeing the hand of Bhagavān and how beautifully he is quenching the thirst of all the living beings. In the sun you should see God, in the clouds you should see God, in the rain you should see God, in the mountains which block the clouds you should see God. That is the right vision.

That is how Bhagavān says you should analyse happenings. The entire 10th chapter is nothing but this. Seeing the vibhūti of God in the creation.

That what you see will determine what you become. If you are seeing science you will become a scientist. If you are seeing God, you will become a devotee. Everything depends on what you think. As are your thoughts, so is your personality. As your thoughts so will be the world perceived by you, so will be the world formed around you, so will be your destiny. Simple.

देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि (devān deva-yajo yānti mad-bhaktā yānti mām api) (Bhagavad Gita 7.23)

Life's situations and happenings should be analysed as a devotee. What is the message Bhagavān wants to give me in this situation? In this problem? What is the lesson he is trying to convey through this situation? What is the lesson I have to learn? Why did God do this to me, is there a reason? All the time with every incident associate God. This is the way to develop a relationship with God.

There can be so many ways why Kṛṣṇa has to come down. They are all fine, but Bhagavān, my explanation is you came here to attract the minds of the devotees and to liberate them. This is my explanation. There is nothing called right or wrong explanation. Interpret events in such a way that it develops devotion for the Lord. Remember, you can interpret a situation in such a way that you can be an atheist also. The sun is burning, water is getting heated up, it's all science. Where is God here? This too is fine but beware, you will remain an atheist.

The one who meditates on the elements attains to that state. What you think, you will become that. This is the way a devotee has to develop devotion. This is point eleven.

के वयं नामरूपाभ्यां यदुभिः सह पाण्डवाः । भवतोऽदर्शनं यर्हि हृषीकाणामिवेशितुः ॥ ३८ ॥
ke vayaṁ nāma-rūpābhyāṁ yadubhiḥ saha Pāṇḍavaḥ | bhavato 'darśanaṁ yarhi
hṛṣīkāṇām iveśituḥ || 38 ||

Bhagavān, why are you leaving us? We are completely dependent upon you. We have nobody other than you. In fact we are surrounded by kings who are inimical towards us, and still you are leaving us? Bhagavān, you are everything for us. के वयं नामरूपाभ्यां (ke vayaṁ nāma-rūpābhyāṁ). All the fame and prosperity that we have gained, Bhagavān, is only because of you. Without you we are like हृषीकाणामिवेशितुः (hṛṣīkāṇām iveśituḥ). This relationship is very important. Just like life principle is for the sense organs, prāṇa is for the sense organs. The

moment life principle goes away, what happens to all the sense organs? They are gone. The ability to see, the ability to hear. You see, the importance of a life principle is not seen. When you say my eyes can see, ears can hear, they seem capable by themselves. But actually speaking, it is life because of which everyone is functioning. Kunti mata is saying, Bhagavān whatever we have attained, is because of you. You are like the prāṇa in us. This is point twelve. Be in touch with the reality of life. The reality is, I am nothing, I have nothing, I know nothing, I can do nothing - the four Mahāvākyas.

Kunti mata is in touch with reality. Everywhere we sing the praise of Arjuna, Bhima and Pāṇḍavas. Bhagavān I know the reality, it is because of you that these people have become great. This should be your attitude in bhakti also. Bhagavān, I am nothing but by your grace I have become something. I know nothing but because of your grace I know something. Be in touch with the reality of life. That is point twelve.

अथ विश्वेश विश्वात्मन् विश्वमूर्ते स्वकेषु मे । स्नेहपाशमिमं छिन्धि दृढं पाण्डुषु वृष्णिषु ॥ ४१ ॥
atha viśveśa viśvātman viśva-mūrte svakeṣu me | sneha-pāśam imam chindhi
dṛḍham pāṇḍuṣu vṛṣṇiṣu || 41 ||

O' Lord, the self of all, the one who has become all these forms, I have a request to make. I am extremely attached to my children Pāṇḍavas and to Yadavas- my relatives, near and dear ones. Bhagavān, you have to cut off this extreme attachment that I have with my family members. The attachment is so firm, it has tied me down. This chord of attachment is a big obstruction in my path of devotion as the mind again and again goes away from you.

The mind is constantly worrying about my near and dear ones and their well being. It is a big obstruction. Bhagavān, I am stuck here. All the time my mind is thinking about my children and therefore the mind is not available for you. Cut it off. This is point thirteen, develop healthy detachment.

Don't be unhealthily attached to anyone in this world. What is unhealthy attachment? That which makes you forget God. See the terms used. Bhagavān you are residing in everyone, but the moment my children come in front of me, I forget you. In fact you alone reside in the hearts of my children also. But the moment my children come in front of me, you are forgotten. This स्नेहपाशमं (sneha-pāśam) for my children makes me see them. I don't see you. That is the problem. Hey Viśvātman, O' Viśvamūrti, the moment the people I am attached to

come in front of me, my brain fails and I don't know where my devotion goes, I become a completely deluded mother.

Bhagavān, I can't do it, you only have to do it. Cut it off. Here we are talking of healthy detachment (not unhealthy detachment not unhealthy attachment).

What is unhealthy detachment- I don't care attitude. Kunti mata is telling- you become so attached to a person that the person becomes the center of your life and you become a slave to that person. Yes my near and dear ones are there, I serve them but I never forget the fact that my only relation is Bhagavān alone.

त्वयि मेऽनन्यविषया मतिर्मधुपतेऽसकृत् । रतिमुद्वहतादद्धा गङ्गेवौघमुदन्वति ॥ ४२॥
tvayi me 'nanya-viṣayā matir madhupate 'sakṛt | ratim udvahatād addhā
gaṅgevaugham udanvati || 42 ||

Bhagavān, may I have devotion for you that is single pointed and uninterrupted, all the time. May my thoughts flow towards you single pointedly, effortlessly, uninterruptedly just like the flow of Ganga towards the ocean. This is the way devotion should be. Single pointed, effortless, uninterrupted. Constant flow of thoughts towards God in love. This is point number fourteen.

Just like Ganga is flowing towards the ocean. This example is beautiful. If you see Ganga, in the beginning, at Gomukh it starts as a very thin stream and slowly picks up momentum. As it reaches near the ocean, the momentum becomes so strong. Bhakti is also like that. In the beginning it comes as a thin stream. But slowly with perseverance and consistent practice it starts gathering momentum and becomes intense. Bhakti is exactly like that.

If you see Ganga, all the time the river is constantly thinking of the ocean. So if you see the flow, it is all the time directed towards the ocean and in different ways it overcomes the obstacles that come along the way. That is also very important. If the obstacle is small, Ganga goes on top of it. If it is a mountain the flow is sideways. The goal is all the time set but there are times when the whole thing is such that it has to go up and then comes back also. There are places where literally Ganga goes back and it returns. Such places are considered very auspicious because Ganga is moving towards its source. That is considered auspicious. Whenever you are moving towards your source, it is considered auspicious because there is a possibility of liberation. Such places are sacred and a lot of teertha kṣetras are made there. It is symbolic.

Ganga constantly has only one goal - I have to merge into the infinite. I have to give up the finite and merge with the infinite and for that, every flow is directed towards the ocean. Sometimes it overcomes, sometimes it goes sideways, sometimes it comes back only to go forward. This is called perseverance. Consistent, constant, single pointed perseverance. This is the way we have to be on this path also. Single pointed, effortless. Uninterrupted flow doesn't come all of a sudden. It comes with constant practice. Perseverance is necessary. This has to be kept in mind. Don't be impatient. Sometimes it takes lifetimes. Are you ready for it? That much patience is necessary. Bhagavān doesn't matter, if not in this birth, next birth but I am going to continue. No stepping back and then it might suddenly happen. When it happens, we don't know but that must be the patience you must have. Even if it is hundreds of lifetimes, I am going to stick to it. Then the results are very fast.

श्रीकृष्ण कृष्णसख वृष्णयुषभावनिधुग्- राजन्यवंशदहनानपवर्गवीर्य । गोविन्द
 गोद्विजसुरातिहरावतार योगेश्वराखिलगुरो भगवन् नमस्ते ॥ ४३ ॥
 śrī-kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa-sakha vṛṣṇy-ṛṣabhāvani-dhruḡ- rājanya-vaṁśa-dahanān
 apavarga-vīrya | govinda go-dviḡa-surārti-haravatāraa yogeśvarākhila-guro
 Bhagavān namas te || 43 ||

Bhagavān, my prostrations to you. With this verse she ends her stuti. My prostrations to you, who is the teacher of the world and the Lord of all yogas. You are a friend of Arjuna, the protector of the whole world and the one who has killed all the wicked kings and has destroyed all of them. The Lord of liberation, Lord of strength who has taken avatāra to protect cows, devatas and brāhmaṇas, my prostrations unto you.

Kunti stuti is over. What was Bhagavān's reaction?

सूत उवाच ।
 पृथयेत्थं कलपदैः परिणूताखिलोदयः । मन्दं जहास वैकुण्ठो मोहयन्निव मायया ॥ ४४ ॥
 sūta uvāca |
 pṛthayaitthaṁ kalapadaiḥ pariṇūtākhilodayaḥ | mandam jahāsa vaikunṭho
 mohayan iva māyāyā || 44 ||

तां बाढमित्युपामन्त्र्य प्रविश्य गजसाह्वयम् । स्त्रियश्च स्वपुरं यास्यन् प्रेम्णा राजा निवारितः ॥
 ४५ ॥
 tāṁ bāḍham ity upāmantrya praviśya gaja-sāhvayam | striyaś ca sva-puraṁ
 yāsyān premṇā rājñā nivāritaḥ || 45 ||

With these sweet words Kunti did the stuti of the Lord. Bhagavān was glorified. He just smiled - मोहयन्निव मायया (mohayan iva māyāyā) just like his māyā, it is said. Amma definitely, I bless you. You asked for devotion, definitely you will gain that devotion. Thus blessing Kunti mata Bhagavān met the royal ladies and as he was leaving, Yudhiṣṭhira came. Bhagavān don't leave. I also have a problem.

व्यासाद्यैरीश्वरेहाजैः कृष्णेनाद्भुतकर्मणा । प्रबोधितोऽपीतिहासैर्नाबुध्यत शुचार्पितः ॥ ४६ ॥
Vyāsadyair īśvarehājñaiḥ kṛṣṇenādbhuta-karmaṇā | prabodhito 'pi itihāsair
nābudhyata śucārpitaḥ || 46 ||

Yudhiṣṭhira was miserable after the war. He felt that all this destruction and death was only because of him. He was inconsolable. Very many people tried to console him. So many Ṛṣi munis including Vyāsa Ṛṣi tried to convince him. But he was miserable. That guilt was there - It all happened because of me. What to talk of other Ṛṣi munis, Kṛṣṇa himself tried to put some words of wisdom but Kṛṣṇa was also playing a trick. He tried to console Yudhiṣṭhira but he was not consoled. There was a purpose.

आह राजा धर्मसुतश्चिन्तयन् सुहृदां वधम् । प्राकृतेनात्मना विप्राः स्नेहमोहवशं गतः ॥ ४७ ॥
āha rājā dharmā-sutaś cintayan suhrḍāṁ vadham | prākṛtenātmanā viprāḥ
sneha-moha-vaśaṁ gataḥ || 47 ||

That king who was miserable and grieving and feeling a lot of conscious prick. Like an ignorant person he was grieving. Just like Arjuna was grieving before the war, the same thing happened to Yudhiṣṭhira after the war. Because of his intense attachment to near and dear ones he started lamenting like an ignorant person.

अहो मे पश्यताज्ञानं हृदि रूढं दुरात्मनः । पारक्यस्यैव देहस्य बह्व्यो मेऽक्षौहिणीर्हताः ॥ ४८ ॥
aho me paśyatājñānaṁ hṛdi rūḍhaṁ durātmanaḥ | pārakyasyaiva dehasya
bahvyo me 'kṣauhiṇīr hatāḥ || 48 ||

Look at me how cruel and wicked I am. For this body which is meant for the others- jackals, vultures, for this body that finally has to become the food for all these jackals and vultures, I have killed so many akṣauhiṇīs. So selfish and self centered I am. To win the kingdom, I have killed all these people. There were 18 akṣauhiṇīs. (Akṣauhiṇī is one unit of an army which has 22,000 chariots, 22,000 elephants, 66,000 horsemen, and 110,000 soldiers. Like that 18 akṣauhiṇīs were in that war. So around five million people participated in the war). Only a few survived.

बालद्विजसुहृन्मित्रपितृभ्रातृगुरुद्रुहः । न मे स्यान्निरयान्मोक्षो ह्यपि वर्षायुतायुतैः ॥ ४९ ॥
bāla-dvija-suhṛn-mitra-pitr-bhrātr-guru-druhaḥ | na me syān nirayān mokṣo hy api
varṣāyutāyutaiḥ || 49 ||

I am a slayer of children, Brahmānas, well wishers, friends, fatherly figures, brothers, teachers. I have killed all of them. (Bala - abhimanyu who was 16 years; Dvija Brahmāna- Droṇācārya; Suhrat - Virat; Mitra - Virat; Shalya etc, Pitra- Bhīṣma; Bhratra- Karna. Later on only they came to know that Karna was their brother; Guru- Drona. So many other relations also may be there that we may not know. There were so many people that died. Not much information is available about all. I don't think I am going to get liberation even after thousands of years and I am going to escape from hell. This way, Yudhiṣṭhira was miserable.

नैनो राजः प्रजाभर्तुर्धर्मयुद्धे वधो द्विषाम् । इति मे न तु बोधाय कल्पते शासनं वचः ॥ ५० ॥
naino rājñah prajā-bhartur dharmā-yuddhe vadho dviṣām | iti me na tu bodhāya
kalpate śāsanam vacaḥ || 50 ||

But all these people say that this is not a sin, O' King. As a king you will have to kill all the wicked people for the protection of the subjects. Such dharmāyudha is unavoidable. But it doesn't console me.

स्त्रीणां मदधतबन्धूनां द्रोहो योऽसाविहोत्थितः । कर्मभिर्गृहमेधीयैर्नाहं कल्पो व्यपोहितुम् ॥ ५१ ॥
strīṇāṁ mad-dhata-bandhūnāṁ droho yo 'sāv ihotthitaḥ | karmabhir
grhamedhīyair nāhaṁ kalpo vyapohitum || 51 ||

Because of me, how many women are suffering as I have killed so many of their relatives. So many have become widows, some have lost their children, some their husbands. All because of me and now you say do some prāyaścitta karma - homa havana etc. No, how can it be?

यथा पङ्केन पङ्काम्भः सुरया वा सुराकृतम् । भूतहत्यां तथैवैकां न यज्ञैर्मार्ष्टुमर्हति ॥ ५२ ॥
yathā paṅkena paṅkāmbhaḥ surayā vā surākṛtam |
bhūta-hatyāṁ tathaivaikāṁ na yajñair mārṣṭum arhati || 52 ||

Even when we do a ritual of atonement- prāyaścitta karma, there are a lot of animals that are sacrificed. How can the sacrifice of animals be an atonement for the sacrifice of human beings? It is like with dirty water you are trying to wash the

dirt. I drink and to get rid of the effect, I drink more. No, I am not convinced at all. This way he was miserable.

Chapter 9 ॥ नवमोऽध्यायः ॥

सूत उवाच ।

इति भीतः प्रजाद्रोहात्सर्वधर्मविवित्सया । ततो विनशनं प्रागाद्यत्र देवव्रतोऽपतत् ॥ १ ॥
sūta uvāca |

iti bhītaḥ prajādrohāt sarvadharmāvivitsayā | tato vinaśanaṁ prāgaḍ yatra
devavrato'patat || 1 ||

When Yudhiṣṭhira was confused, Bhagavān said there is only one person who can now truly answer your question. He was Devavratāḥ.

This was the līlā of Bhagavān. Remember, कृष्णेन अद्भुतकर्मणा (Kṛṣṇena adbhuta-karmaṇā). His ways are mysterious. Yudhiṣṭhira could not be consoled by Vyāsa Ṛṣi and other Ṛṣis including Bhagavān because Bhagavān had a secret plan. Because there was a great devotee who was lying down in the battle field, ready to leave. Uttarāyaṇa kāla was coming and the world should know the glory of Bhīṣma. For that he was doing this līlā. Hence Yudhiṣṭhira was told there is one person who has not left the body. He is an embodiment of knowledge. You must go to him.

तदा ते भ्रातरः सर्वे सदश्वैः स्वर्णभूषितैः । अन्वगच्छन् रथैर्विप्रा व्यासधौम्यादयस्तथा ॥ २ ॥
tadā te bhrātaraḥ sarve sadaśvaiḥ svarṇabhūṣitaiḥ |
anvagacchan rathair viprā Vyāsadhaumyādayas tathā || 2 ||

So all those brothers got the best of their horses and chariots ready and decorated them with gold etc and proceeded towards the battlefield. They were followed by the great Ṛṣis like Vyāsa, Dhaumya etc.

भगवानपि विप्रर्षे रथेन सधनञ्जयः । स तैर्व्यरोचत नृपः कुबेर इव गुह्यकैः ॥ ३ ॥
Bhagavān api viprarṣe rathena sadhanañjayah | sa tair vyarocata nṛpaḥ kubera
iva guhyakaiḥ || 3 ||

Bhagavān, alongside Arjuna, followed them. The coming of Yudhiṣṭhira and all the Ṛṣi munis and the brothers appeared as though Kubera was coming with his celestial following. Finally they reached the battle field where Bhīṣma was lying.

How was Bhīṣma lying?

दृष्ट्वा निपतितं भूमौ दिवश्च्युतमिवामरम् । प्रणेमुः पाण्डवा भीष्मं सानुगाः सह चक्रिणा ॥ ४॥
dr̥ṣṭvā nipatitaṁ bhūmau divaś cyutam ivāmaram | praṇemuḥ Pāṇḍava bhīṣmaṁ
sānugāḥ saha cakriṇā || 4 ||

Imagine, after the war Bhīṣma was lying all alone on that bed of arrows. They saw Bhīṣma lying on the battlefield. He was lying down and looked as though some God had fallen from the heavens. All of them bowed down to Bhīṣma, including Bhagavān.

He was not alone. There were others already present.

तत्र ब्रह्मर्षयः सर्वे देवर्षयश्च सत्तम । राजर्षयश्च तत्रासन् द्रष्टुं भरतपुङ्गवम् ॥ ५॥
tatra brahmarṣayaḥ sarve devarṣayaś ca sattama | rājarṣayaś ca tatrāsan
draṣṭuṁ bharatapuṅgavam || 5 ||

There was a big crowd. Brahmarṣis, devarṣis, and rājarṣis. All were there. A Ṛṣi who is a Brahmāna is a Brahmarṣi. Deva Ṛṣi is Ṛṣi who is a devata like Nārada Ṛṣi etc, Raja Ṛṣi is Ṛṣi who is a royal sage.

All of them were there and there is a big list given

पर्वतो नारदो धौम्यो भगवान् बादरायणः । बृहदश्वो भरद्वाजः सशिष्यो रेणुकासुतः ॥ ६॥
parvato nārado dhaumyo Bhagavān bādarāyaṇaḥ | bṛhadaśvo bharadvājaḥ
saśiṣyo reṇukāsutaḥ || 6 ||

वसिष्ठ इन्द्रप्रमदस्त्रितो गृत्समदोऽसितः । कक्षीवान् गौतमोऽत्रिश्च कौशिकोऽथ सुदर्शनः ॥ ७॥
vasiṣṭha indrapramadas trito gr̥tsamado'sitaḥ | kakṣīvān gautamo'triś ca
kauśiko'tha sudarśanaḥ || 7 ||

अन्ये च मुनयो ब्रह्मन् ब्रह्मरातादयोऽमलाः । शिष्यैरुपेता आजग्मुः कश्यपाङ्गिरसादयः ॥ ८॥
anye ca munayo brahman brahmarātādayo'malāḥ | śiṣyair upetā ājagmuḥ
kaśyapāṅgirasādayaḥ || 8 ||

Many Ṛṣis were there and the names of some prominent is given. Parvata Ṛṣi, Dhomya Ṛṣi, Vyāsa Ṛṣi, Kakshimana Ṛṣi, Gautama Ṛṣi, Atri Ṛṣi, Kaushika Ṛṣi (Vishwamitra), Sudarshana Rshi, Bharadwaja Ṛṣi, Parāshurama Ṛṣi with his disciples. Vishwamitra, Brahmāratra (Śuka Bramha Ṛṣi) all of them come with

their disciples. Kashyap Ṛṣi, Angiras, Ṛṣi all of them were there. You can imagine how much respect and reverence they had for Bhīṣma.

All of them had come for the very auspicious moment as Bhīṣma was going to drop the body. He was an Iccha marani.

तान् समेतान् महाभागानुपलभ्य वसूतमः । पूजयामास धर्मज्ञो देशकालविभागवित् ॥ ९ ॥
tān sametān mahābhāgān upalabhya vasūttamaḥ | pūjayāmāsa dharmājñō
deśakālavibhāgavit || 9 ||

Seeing all the great Ṛṣi munis and great personalities assemble, Bhīṣma who is धर्मज्ञ - the knower of right conduct and a person who knew the importance of right behaviour, worshipped everyone. How did he worship? He was lying down on a bed of arrows. Can he do pooja there? So you have to understand this according to context. He worshipped them verbally and then his attention fell upon Kṛṣṇa.

कृष्णं च तत्प्रभावज्ञ आसीनं जगदीश्वरम् । हृदिस्थं पूजयामास माययोपात्तविग्रहम् ॥ १० ॥
kṛṣṇaṁ ca tatprabhāvajña āsīnaṁ jagadīśvaram | hṛdisthaṁ pūjayāmāsa
māyāyopāttavigrahaṁ || 10 ||

Bhīṣma knew the glory of Kṛṣṇa as जगदीश्वरम् (jagadīśvaram) the Lord of the whole Universe. Remember not many people knew who Kṛṣṇa was.

When Bhīṣma saw Kṛṣṇa, he worshiped him. See the beauty of how this is written- हृदिस्थं पूजयामास माययोपात्तविग्रहम् (hṛdisthaṁ pūjayāmāsa māyāyopāttavigrahaṁ).

See the construction of sanskrit पूजयामास (pūjayāmāsa) means in the middle and one side is हृदिस्थं (hṛdisthaṁ) and the other is माययोपात्तविग्रहम् (māyāyopāttavigrahaṁ). This is called देहली-दीपक-न्याय (Dehali Depakanyaya). Suppose you have only one lamp in the darkness and you want light inside and outside the room, what do you do? You keep the दीपक (deepak) in the देहली (dehali), in the threshold so the light is outside and inside.

In the same way, when Bhīṣma saw Bhagavān, where did he worship Bhagavān? That Bhagavān who is seen outside माययोपात्तविग्रहम् (māyāyopāttavigrahaṁ), the one who has taken a body out of his own māyā. That is outside. But where is he actually? He is inside. So He worshiped him inside also.

Session 11

[Chapter 9 Verse 10 - 43]

पाण्डुपुत्रानुपासीनान् प्रश्रयप्रेमसङ्गतान् । अभ्याचष्टानुरागासैरन्धीभूतेन चक्षुषा ॥ ११ ॥
pāṇḍuputrān upāsīnān praśrayapremasaṅgatān | abhyācaṣṭānurāgasair
andhībhūtena cakṣuṣā || 11 ||

So then Bhīṣma's attention fell upon Pāṇḍavas. They were all seated at his feet. With all humility, with all love and respect they were obediently seated at the feet of Bhīṣma. When Bhīṣma saw these Pāṇḍuputras, his eyes were filled with tears of love and affection. To such an extent the tears flowed that he literally became blind with tears.

Why was he weeping like that? Bhīṣma speaks to all the Pāṇḍavas.

अहो कष्टमहोऽन्याय्यं यद्यूयं धर्मनन्दनाः । जीवितुं नार्हथ क्लिष्टं विप्रधर्माच्युताश्रयाः ॥ १२ ॥
aho kaṣṭam aho'nyāyyaṁ yad yūyaṁ dharmānandanāḥ | jīvitum nārhatḥ kliṣṭaṁ
vipradharmācyutāśrayāḥ || 12 ||

O' children of righteousness. Throughout your life you have taken refuge in holy men, righteousness and the Lord. Therefore naturally, you should not have had any tragedies in life. But what a sad thing, and a matter of great tragedy and injustice that you had to go through. You don't deserve this.

O' Pāṇḍavas, my dear children, you truly don't deserve this much suffering. In spite of walking the path of righteousness, in spite of ever being at the feet of the holy men and always being with the Lord, you had to go through so much suffering. Even at a very young age itself.

संस्थितेऽतिरथे पाण्डौ पृथा बालप्रजा वधूः । युष्मत्कृते बहून् क्लेशान् प्राप्ता तोकवती मुहुः ॥
१३ ॥

saṁsthite'tirathe pāṇḍau pṛthā bālaprajā vadhūḥ | yuṣmatkṛte bahūn kleśān
prāptā tokavatī muhuḥ || 13 ||

At a very young age, Pandu died and Kunti became a young mother without a husband and at such a young age she had to take care of you. She raised you with so many difficulties. Imagining the suffering, Bhīṣma was in tears. Bhīṣma

himself is lying down on a bed of arrows and he is thinking of the suffering of others- see the greatness of this person.

सर्व कालकृतं मन्ये भवतां च यदप्रियम् । सपालो यद्वशे लोको वायोरिव घनावलिः ॥ १४ ॥
sarvaṁ kālakṛtaṁ manye bhavatāṁ ca yad apriyam | sapālo yad vaśe loko vāyor
iva ghanāvaliḥ || 14 ||

Nothing is in our hands. That spirit of time, kāla Bhagavān decides. What can we do, we are helpless. Just like the clouds are helpless in the hands of the wind, wherever the wind blows, the clouds have to go, there is no choice. In the same way all of us are helpless. What to talk of us, even the guardian deities under whom the world is, even they have no choice. Everything in this world happens by the will of God.

Therefore for all the sorrows you have gone through, the only thing we can say is, it was the will of God.

यत्र धर्मसुतो राजा गदापाणिर्वृकोदरः । कृष्णोऽस्त्री गाण्डिवं चापं सुहृत्कृष्णस्ततो विपत् ॥ १५ ॥
yatra dharmāsuto rājā gadāpāṇir vṛkodaraḥ | kṛṣṇo'strī gāṇḍivam cāpaṁ suhṛt
kṛṣṇas tato vipat || 15 ||

Just imagine where there is a righteous person like Yudhiṣṭhira, mighty person like Bhima with his gada, a mighty archer Arjuna with his mighty gandiva and their friend is Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa himself. Naturally anyone would say this is the safest place without any tragedy. The mightiest and wisest people are there and Lord himself is there so naturally anyone would think there won't be any sorrow. But, all dangers, all tragedies happened here only. Unbelievable. Therefore, the only thing we can say is everything is happening by the will of God.

न ह्यस्य कर्हिचिद्राजन् पुमान् वेद विधित्सितम् । यद्विजिज्ञासया युक्ता मुह्यन्ति कवयोऽपि
हि ॥ १६ ॥
na hy asya karhicit rājan pumān veda vidhitsitam | yad vijijñāsayā yuktā muhyanti
kavayo'pi hi || 16 ||

O' Rajan, O' Yudhiṣṭhira nobody knows what is going to happen in the future, what is the destiny, nobody knows. What is in the mind of the Lord even the wise sages also are in the dark, nobody knows.

So therefore, what is the only freedom we have?

तस्मादिदं दैवतन्त्रं व्यवस्य भरतर्षभ । तस्यानुविहितोऽनाथा नाथ पाहि प्रजाः प्रभो ॥ १७ ॥
tasmād idam daivatantram vyavasya bharatarṣabha | tasyānuvihito'nāthā nātha
pāhi prajāḥ prabho || 17 ||

We have to just accept that this is the will of the Lord. In this world, nothing happens other than the will of the Lord. Live life based on whatever is in store for us. This is the only thing we can do.

We had discussed this earlier also. From the highest point, there is nothing called self effort or self will. The more and more we become tuned to the Lord, we become instruments of God. Then we do the will of God and that is the best thing to do also. The more we are in tune with the Lord, we will be inspired to walk the path shown by God. But when we are cut off from the divine, it may appear like we have a lot of choices available. Actually there is no choice. This is a fact of life from the highest standpoint.

The world is going perfectly well and perfection can be only one. Exactly like the peak of the mountain can only be one. The world is running in a perfect way and therefore whatever is happening is perfect and if you want to know what is that perfect thing, tune to God.

Many times we think we have a lot of free will. Whenever ego is ruling us, we think there is free will. To the extent we efface the ego, we know there is only God's will. Exactly like in a dream.

In the dream, it appears like a lot of freedom is given to us, and a lot of choice is available. But when you wake up, what is your conclusion? The whole dream experience is pre-planned. It is pre-planned based on the impressions gathered in the waking state. We are just going through the plot that is already set. That you come to know only after waking. But in the dream it appears as if we have a lot of freedom.

This is a fact of life. That is why the greatest saints say that the wisest thing to do in life is keep quiet. This is what Ramaṇa Maharṣi also said, keep quiet and obey the inspiration from within. Understand that it is God functioning through you otherwise just be silent. That is what Bhīṣma is also saying.

This is also the parting message of Bhīṣma to the new king. Yudhiṣṭhira you have become the king now, the destiny has made you the king. You don't really have a choice, it is the will of the Lord. Now that you have become the king, and

especially after the war, the prajā have become orphans, therefore look after them following the will of the Lord. As a king you will have a lot of problems and you will get a lot of new responsibilities.

एष वै भगवान् साक्षादाद्यो नारायणः पुमान् । मोहयन् मायया लोकं गूढश्चरति वृष्णिषु ॥ १८ ॥
eṣa vai Bhagavān sākṣād ādyo nārāyaṇaḥ pumān | mohayan māyāyā lokam
gūḍhaś carati vṛṣṇiṣu || 18 ||

This person who is standing next to you indeed is Bhagavān himself. He is Nārāyaṇa only. The primeval being. Even before creation he was there. But you may not recognise it. Because of his māyā he is deluding everyone and secretly in disguise, he is roaming around as one ordinary Yadava. Don't mistake him to be an ordinary Yadava. He is Bhagavān only.

अस्यानुभावं भगवान् वेद गुह्यतमं शिवः । देवर्षिर्नारदः साक्षाद्भगवान् कपिलो नृप ॥ १९ ॥
asyānubhāvaṁ Bhagavān veda guhyatamaṁ śivaḥ | devarṣir nāradaḥ sākṣād
Bhagavān kapilo nrpa || 19 ||

His greatness, only a few people know. Few people like Lord Shiva, Devarṣi Nārada, and Kapila muni. Familiarity breeds contempt. Beware.

यं मन्यसे मातुलेयं प्रियं मित्रं सुहृत्तमम् । अकरोः सचिवं दूतं सौहृदादथ सारथिम् ॥ २० ॥
yaṁ manyase mātuleyaṁ priyaṁ mitraṁ suhṛttamam | akaroḥ sacivaṁ dūtaṁ
sauhrdād atha sārathim || 20 ||

Whom you consider to be your uncle's son, your dear friend, a very selfless good friend is a great personality. You also made him a messenger, your advisor. Worse than that, you made him a charioteer also. I hope you are not disregarding him and taking him to be an ordinary individual.

You will make him a charioteer but he will not feel bad because..

सर्वात्मनः समदृशो ह्यद्वयस्यानहङ्कृतेः । तत्कृतं मतिवैषम्यं निरवद्यस्य न क्वचित् ॥ २१ ॥
sarvātmanaḥ samadṛśo hy advayasyānahaṅkṛteḥ | tatkrtaṁ mativaiṣamyam
niravadyasya na kvacit || 21 ||

As far as Bhagavān is concerned, when he is respected he is not elated and when he is humiliated and ignored, he doesn't feel bad. This is because He is there as the self in all. He has a vision of equanimity, of oneness. He has absolutely no ego and doesn't see anybody different from himself. Such is his

glory. Therefore even if you make him a charioteer, he will happily become a charioteer. He will never say I am the Lord of the Universe, and will be silent only. For Him, whatever role is given, he will just adapt accordingly, beautifully well. He will not show himself off. That is his glory.

तथाप्येकान्तभक्तेषु पश्य भूपानुकम्पितम् । यन्मेऽसूस्त्यजतः साक्षात्कृष्णो दर्शनमागतः ॥
२२॥

tathāpy ekāntabhakteṣu paśya bhūpānukampitam | yan me'sūms tyajataḥ sākṣāt
kṛṣṇo darśanam āgataḥ || 22 ||

Look at his compassion! He is the Lord of this universe - omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. Look at his compassion towards his devotees who worship him single pointedly. Here I am going to leave my physical body and just to give me darshan, He himself has come all the way. My devotee is not in a position to come to me, I should go to Him. See the compassion of the Lord!

भक्त्याऽऽवेश्य मनो यस्मिन् वाचा यन्नाम कीर्तयन् । त्यजन् कलेवरं योगी मुच्यते कामकर्मभिः
॥ २३॥

bhaktyāveśya mano yasmin vācā yan nāma kīrtayan | tyajan kalevaram yogī
mucyate kāma karmabhiḥ || 23 ||

He is that Lord unto whom the great yogis fix their mind. With all devotion, they chant his name and thus fixing their mind upon him, becoming free from avidyā, kāma, karma (ignorance, desire, action) they drop the body. It is this Bhagavān that the yogis meditate upon all the time.

स देवदेवो भगवान् प्रतीक्षतां कलेवरं यावदिदं हिनोम्यहम् ।
प्रसन्नहासारुणलोचनोल्लस- न्मुखाम्बुजो ध्यानपथश्चतुर्भुजः ॥ २४॥
sa devadevo Bhagavān pratīkṣatāṁ kalevaram yāvad idaṁ hinomy aham |
prasannahāsāruṇalocanollasa- nmukhāmbujo dhyānapathaś caturbhujah || 24 ||

To such a Lord of Lords, Bhagavān, this is my loving request.

Uttarāyaṇa-kāla has not yet come, there is some more time. My only request is, till that time please stand in front of me. Don't go anywhere. Go on looking at me and let me also keep on looking at you. Till I drop this body, be in front of me, don't go anywhere. This is my request.

This is called loving authority. When you have lived your life dedicating everything to the Lord, then you get an authority on the Lord. Whatever you say,

he will just listen and obey. Such a life you must have lived only then this happens. Bhagavān just obeys whatever you say. When you have completely surrendered to him, he just becomes Bhakta parādhīna.

One such instance is this as Bhīṣma is telling Bhagavān not to go anywhere. Time has not yet come. Stand in front of me with a cheerful lotus face and a lotus smile with lotus eyes that are full of compassion, full of love, full of cheerfulness. I also have a request, Bhagavān, I want to see your चतुर्भुज (caturbhujaḥ). I want to see all the hands. Bhagavān said ok.

सूत उवाच ।

युधिष्ठिरस्तदाकर्ण्य शयानं शरपञ्जरे । अपृच्छद्विविधान् धर्मान् ऋषीणां चानुशृण्वताम् ॥ २५ ॥
sūta uvāca |

yudhiṣṭhiraś tadākarnya śayānaṁ śarapañjare | aprcchad vividhān dharmān
ṛṣīṇāṁ cānuśṛṇvatām || 25 ||

At that time, Yudhiṣṭhira slowly approached Bhīṣma and asked a lot of questions on dharmā. And as he asked, everybody was able to hear.

Imagine the scene, Bhagavān himself, all great Ṛṣis, Vasiṣṭha Ṛṣi - the same who gave Yoga-vāsiṣṭha to Rama, Parāshurama Ṛṣi, Nārada, Veda Vyāsa, Sukha Brahmā Ṛṣi, Vishwamitra. All these great Ṛṣis were in the audience. Yama dharmāraj, the very same teacher in Kathopanishad is the śiṣya and the guru is Bhīṣma. And the condition of Bhīṣma is that he is lying on a bed of arrows. It is here in this auspicious moment that Viṣṇu Sahasranama comes out. Amongst all the Sahasranamas, the most popular the most famous. The thousand names of that Lord comes from Bhīṣma.

पुरुषस्वभावविहितान् यथावर्णं यथाश्रमम् । वैराग्यरागोपाधिभ्यामाम्नातोभयलक्षणान् ॥ २६ ॥
puruṣasvabhāvavihitān yathāvarṇaṁ yathāśramam | vairāgyarāgopādhibhyām
āmnāto bhaya lakṣaṇān || 26 ||

The questions asked were about the duties of men in general, duties of men according to stages of life, duties based on the path of renunciation, the path of action, the path of rāga and vairāgya

दानधर्मान् राजधर्मान् मोक्षधर्मान् विभागशः । स्त्रीधर्मान् भगवद्धर्मान् समासव्यासयोगतः ॥
२७ ॥

dāna-dharmān rāja-dharmān mokṣa-dharmān vibhāgaśaḥ | strī-dharmān
bhagavad-dharmān samāsa-Vyāsayogataḥ || 27 ||

Rules of charity, duties of a king, spiritual practices to attain liberation, duties of women, duty of devotees. In some cases he expounded in detail, in some questions the answer was brief.

धर्मार्थकाममोक्षांश्च सहोपायान् यथा मुने । नानाख्यानेतिहासेषु वर्णयामास तत्त्ववित् ॥ २८ ॥
dharmārthakāma mokṣāṁś ca sahopāyān yathā mune | nānākhyānetihāseṣu
varṇayāmāsa tattvavit || 28 ||

The knower of truth using various ancient traditions, using Itihāsas expounded on dharmā, artha, kāma, moksha and its means. He explained in detail till Yudhiṣṭhira's mind was at peace. Here is the place where Yudhiṣṭhira finds peace.

धर्मं प्रवदतस्तस्य स कालः प्रत्युपस्थितः । यो योगिनश्छन्दमृत्योर्वाञ्छितस्तूतारायणः ॥ २९ ॥
dharmāṁ pravadataḥ tasya sa kālaḥ pratyupasthitaḥ | yo yoginaś chanda-mṛtyor
vāñchitaḥ tūttarāyaṇaḥ || 29 ||

As Bhīṣma was narrating all this and by then all was over, Uttarāyaṇa-kāla came.

The greatness of Uttarāyaṇa-kāla is, those yogis who have death under their control who can choose the time of death, for them, this is the time which they desire. Bhīṣma was also waiting for this time. You know how many days he was waiting? Two months. During the war he waited for nine days about 60 days after that.

Here one more topic has to be discussed. Will a person who dies in Uttarāyaṇa-kāla, attain the higher worlds of moksha? Has time got to do something with our future? This topic we had discussed in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 8. Shukla Paksha and the bright path and dark path. Always remember this, our future is not defined by the place where we die. Swamiji, if I die in Kashi I will get moksha? Nothing doing. Mosquitoes also die in Kashi. Your future is not going to be determined by the place you are going to die or the time of death. Your future is strictly based on how you have lived your life.

If you have lived a righteous life, even if you have died in dakṣiṇāyana, your mukti is guaranteed. This should be very very clear. I can end my life in Uttarāyaṇa-kāla and nowadays, all means are available. What determines my fate is if I have lived a good life. Basically after death what comes along with me

is only my mind. So if I have cultivated a good mind, a virtuous mind, a mind filled with devotion, dispassion then that mind comes along with me.

How does it matter when you are going to die? Because many people reading all this think I must die in Uttarāyaṇa-kāla. Don't be foolish. This is the difference between karma Kanda and jñāna Kanda. Karma Kaandis will insist on Uttarāyaṇa-kāla. Jñāna Kandis do not care about all this. But it has to be mentioned in the scripture because this scripture is meant for everybody.

Yes, if a choice is given, you can choose Uttarāyaṇa-kāla. Just as a choice is given to install an idol in the temple, you will choose some auspicious time. But whether you choose auspicious or inauspicious time, if you have installed the Lord and are doing pooja properly, it doesn't matter. But since we have a choice we choose an auspicious time. That's all. In the same way Bhīṣma had a choice so he chose Uttarāyaṇa-kāla. That's all. So don't be worried about all these things.

तदोपसंहृत्य गिरः सहस्रणी- विमुक्तसङ्गं मन आदिपूरुषे । कृष्णे लसत्पीतपटे चतुर्भुजे पुरः
स्थितेऽमीलितदृग्व्यधारयत् ॥ ३० ॥

tadopasamhṛtya girah sahasraṇīr vimuktasaṅgaṁ mana ādipūruṣe |
krṣṇe lasatpītapate caturbhuje puraḥ sthite'mīlita-dṛg vyadhārayat || 30 ||

Then Bhīṣma withdrew his speech. He stopped talking, became silent. The commander of the army who could command thousands of soldiers became completely detached. He fixed the mind in that primeval being standing in front. That Kṛṣṇa was wearing a yellow garment with his four hands and was standing in front. Bhīṣma kept on staring at Bhagavān without batting an eye and concentrating his entire personality upon that Lord.

विशुद्धया धारणया हताशुभ- स्तदीक्षयैवाशु गतायुधव्यथः/श्रमः । निवृत्तसर्वेन्द्रियवृत्तिविभ्रम-
स्तुष्टाव जन्यं विसृजञ्जनार्दनम् ॥ ३१ ॥

viśuddhayā dhāraṇayā hatāśubhaḥ tadīkṣayaivāśu gatāyudhavyathaḥ |
śramaḥ nivṛttasarvendriyavṛttivibhramaḥ tuṣṭāva janyaṁ visrjaṇ janārdanam || 31 ||

Because of his intense concentration and fixing attention on the Lord with a pure mind, the mind became very pure and free from all worldly disturbances. On one side he is looking at the Lord and on the other side Bhagavān is looking at him.

With Bhagavān's drishti falling upon him, all that pain due to the bed of arrows vanished. This is what happens when your attention shifts from the body to the self. When disidentification from the body happens, and identification with the self happens, whatever is happening at the body level you will not know. When there is body identification, the pain is experienced but with no body identification, pain also disappears. This is what is happening now.

All his indriya activities came down, disturbances came down. The mind became quiet. Now the mind was fully in tune with the Lord. That moment when Bhīṣma was going to leave the body, he did a stuti of the Lord.

श्रीभीष्म उवाच ।

इति मतिरुपकल्पिता वितृष्णा भगवति सात्वतपुङ्गवे विभूम्नि । स्वसुखमुपगते क्वचिद्विहर्तुं
प्रकृतिमुपेयुषि यद्भवप्रवाहः ॥ ३२ ॥

iti matir upakalpita vitṛṣṇā bhagavati sātvaṭa-puṅgave vibhūmni |
sva-sukham upagate kvacid vihartuṁ prakṛtim upeyuṣi yad-bhava-pravāhaḥ || 32
||

The first verse of Bhīṣma Stuti is very famous. Bhagavān you are that all pervading being who is abiding in that infinite bliss स्वसुखमुपगते (sva-sukham upagate). Sat-Chit-Ānanda swaroopa you are. But for a change, to have a sportive diversion, you thought let me just go around. Let me do some līlā, timepass. For that, you have taken up a material costume with the help of your prakriti. Thus we see you in this flow of cosmic happenings.

Your abode is there and here you have just come. To such a Lord I have to give you a gift. I want to give you something Bhagavān.

Bhagavān this mind of mine, throughout my life I have kept it pure. This pure mind I am offering unto you. What a gift it is! This is called a gift. Bhīṣma's life is nothing but a life of sacrifice. He had the courage to say, Bhagavān throughout my life I have kept this mind pure, I was waiting for this moment. This mind that I kept as pure, I am offering unto you.

त्रिभुवनकमनं तमालवर्णं रविकरगौरवराम्बरं दधाने ।

वपुरलककुलावृताननाब्जं विजयसखे रतिरस्तु मेऽनवद्या ॥ ३३ ॥

tribhuvana-kāma naṁ tamāla-varṇaṁ ravikara-gaura-varāmbaraṁ dadhāne |
vapuralaka-kulāvṛtānābjaṁ vijaya-sakhe ratir astu me'navadyā || 33 ||

Bhagavān, that infinite being you have taken up a form. The most beautiful in the three worlds. With bluish tinge colour, wearing yellow garment that shines as bright brilliant sun. A lotus face beautified by the curly forelocks in front. A friend of Arjuna. May I have unconditional love towards this form.

युधि तुरगरजोविधूम्रविष्वक् कचलुलितश्रमवार्यलङ्कृतास्ये ।
मम निशितशरैर्विभिद्यमान- त्वचि विलसत्कवचेऽस्तु कृष्ण आत्मा ॥ ३४ ॥
yudhi turāga-rajo-vidhūmra-viṣvak kacalulita-śrama-vāryalaṅkṛtāsye |
mama niśita-śarair vibhidyamāna-tvacī vilasat-kavace'stu kṛṣṇa ātmā || 34 ||

Bhagavān your 'this' form in the battlefield absorbed my attention fully.

That face Bhagavān I cannot forget. The face, decorated by waters of exertion- (sweat). The face covered with your curly hair and that hair rendered brown by the dust raised by the hooves of the horses.

In that battle field the chariot was running fast and there was dust everywhere. And that dust made the hair of Bhagavān brownish in colour. And the hair was all over the face and the face studded with pearls of sweat. My sharp arrows tore your armour apart and there was blood dripping from the body. Bhagavān, this form I am not able to forget. It shines so clearly engraved in my mind. My mind is absorbed in that.

On one side Yaśodā maiyā was thinking of Bala Kṛṣṇa and what is Bhīṣma thinking. Different people according to their inclination and nature are attracted towards different forms and nature.

Bhagavān, it is only because of you that Pāṇḍavas won the war.

सपदि सखिवचो निशम्य मध्ये निजपरयोर्बलयो रथं निवेश्य । स्थितवति परसैनिकायुरक्षणा
हृतवति पार्थसखे रतिर्ममास्तु ॥ ३५ ॥
sapadi sakhivaco niśamya madhye nijaparayor balayo ratham niveśya |
sthitavati parasainikāyur akṣṇā hṛtavati pāṛthasakhe ratir mamāstu || 35 ||

Bhagavān in the beginning of the war Arjuna told you, Kṛṣṇa bring the chariot between the two armies. Listening to that, you immediately brought the chariot between the two armies. When the chariot was standing in between the two armies, you just looked at all those warriors in the enemy line. With your very look, you took their life. Just by the look you took their Prana. To that all powerful Lord, my prostrations. May my mind be absorbed in that Lord.

व्यवहितपृतनामुखं निरीक्ष्य स्वजनवधाद्विमुखस्य दोषबुद्ध्या ।
कुमतिमहरदात्मविद्यया य-श्चरणरतिः परमस्य तस्य मेऽस्तु ॥ ३६ ॥
vyavahita-prāṇāmukhaṁ nirīkṣya svajana-vadhād vimukhasya doṣa-buddhyā |
kumatim aharad ātma-vidyāyā yaś caraṇa-ratiḥ paramasya tasya me'stu || 36 ||

Bhagavān, when Arjuna saw his near and dear ones in both these armies, and he was hesitant to fight the war, he was totally confused and deluded, he decided not to fight. At that time, you removed all the delusions with self knowledge, with the knowledge of Gita. To that Bhagavān who removed all delusion, may my mind ever rest at his holy feet.

स्वनिगममपहाय मत्प्रतिज्ञां ऋतमधिकर्तुमवप्लुतो रथस्थः । धृतरथचरणोऽभ्ययाच्चलद्गु-
हरिरिव हन्तुमिभं गतोत्तरीयः ॥ ३७ ॥
svanigamam apahāya matpratijñāṁ ṛtam adhikartum avapluto rathasthaḥ |
dhṛtaratha-caraṇo'bhyayāc calad-gur harir iva hantum ibhaṁ gatottarīyaḥ || 37 ||

The event referenced in this verse is on the 9th day of the war. Bhīṣma was the commander in chief of the Kauravā army. The first nine days Bhīṣma was leading the Kauravā forces. Till the nine days, it was not sure who would win. Infact, Bhīṣma was fighting so ferociously that Pāṇḍavas became very sad. Especially on the ninth day. On the ninth day Bhīṣma fought so valiantly that Pāṇḍavas had no hope. Just imagine, great grandfather is fighting with great grandchildren, and great grandfather is still strong! Great grandchildren are at the peak of their youth and still could not match him. What must be the strength of Bhīṣma!

On that particular day, Yudhiṣṭhira was very sad. On that night all of them went to Bhīṣma's camp saying please bless us.

On the ninth day, as Bhīṣma was fighting, Arjuna and all seemed like babies in front of Bhīṣma and did not know what to do. There was a vow taken by Bhīṣma and there was a vow taken by Kṛṣṇa also. I will not take weapons was the vow of Kṛṣṇa. Bhīṣma said I will make you take weapons. O' Kṛṣṇa, you had taken a vow and you just gave up that vow in order to make my vow come true.

That is Bhagavān. My devotee has taken up a vow, that vow should not be broken. My vow, I can break. Just to see to it that my vow stands, he broke his vow.

You were seated in the chariot you jumped down from the chariot. Holding on to the wheel, you ran towards me. The whole Earth was trembling. You charged towards me like a lion charging to kill an elephant. In the process, your upper garment fell down and you didn't even care. That serious you were, that angry you were!

शितविशिखहतो विशीर्णदंशः क्षतजपरिप्लुत आततायिनो मे । प्रसभमभिससार मद्वधार्थं स
भवतु मे भगवान् गतिर्मुकुन्दः ॥ ३८ ॥

śitaviśikha-hato viśīrṇa-daṁśaḥ kṣataja-paripluta ātatāyīno me | prasabham
abhisasāra mad-vadhārthaṁ sa bhavatu me Bhagavān gatiṁ mukundaḥ || 38 ||

And when you were charging, because of my sharp arrows, they had penetrated your armour. The armour was torn, you were bathing in blood. Such a cruel person I am. You charged towards me like a lion charging towards an elephant to kill me. That form Bhagavān, is so alive in my mind.

Remember that form- Hair brownish because of the dust raised by the hooves of the horses, curly hair, torn armour, bathed in blood, uttariya fallen, full of anger, taking a rathacakra and charging towards Bhīṣma. Why was he doing that? Because Bhagavān felt Arjuna would be in danger. Bhagavān felt if this way Bhīṣma fights, Kauravās are going to win. Pāṇḍavas will have no chance and immediately Bhagavān interfered.

That was the power of Bhīṣma. Single handedly he was making the Kauravās win. Immediately Bhagavān interfered. You know what Bhīṣma did when Bhagavān came? He kept his bow and arrow and said, Bhagavān what greater blessing can I have than death from your lotus hands. Then Bhagavān went away. That was Bhīṣma.

विजयरथकुटुम्ब आततोत्रे धृतहयरश्मिनि तच्छ्रियेक्षणीये ।
भगवति रतिरस्तु मे मुमूर्षो- र्यमिह निरीक्ष्य हता गताः सरूपम् ॥ ३९ ॥

vijaya-ratha-kuṭumba ātta-totre dhṛta-haya-raśmini tacchriyekṣaṇīye |
bhagavati ratir astu me mumūrṣo yam iha nirīkṣya hatā gatāḥ sarūpam || 39 ||

Bhagavān, that beautiful image where on one hand is that horse whip and on the other the reins of the horses, is so auspicious. Bhagavān, all those warriors in the battlefield who saw you this way and gave up their life, merged with you. That is the greatest blessing for a soldier. Seeing Bhagavān and dying, what else would you want? Bhagavān I am also going to die. May I have this form of yours in my mind.

Here the symbolic meaning is this- Bhagavān has the horse whip and the reigns. Everyone of us also has this whip. Whip means the one who is inspiring us from within. Reigns means one who is guiding us from within. There is guidance and there is inspiration. The more and more we tune to God, guidance becomes clear, inspiration also becomes intense. You clearly know, this is my svadharmā. This is what I am supposed to do. Who has to tell my svadharmā? Not somebody outside. Only Bhagavān can say.

How does he say it? He creates interest in things which actually I am supposed to do. He creates disinterest in those which I am not supposed to do. This is how he guides us.

All of us have taken up one particular profession. Who guided you? You say Swamiji this is what I like. In fact you have been whipped. The inspiration is coming from the Lord. We are not even aware. Based on our vasanas, the one who is inspiring is from within. So there is a whip and there are reigns and everybody is under His control. These are all the symbolic meanings.

ललितगतिविलासवल्गुहास- प्रणयनिरीक्षणकल्पितोरुमानाः । कृतमनुकृतवत्य उन्मदान्धाः
प्रकृतिमगन् किल यस्य गोपवध्वः ॥ ४० ॥

lalita-gati-vilāsa-valgu-hāsa-pranaya-nirīkṣaṇa-kalpitorumānāḥ |
kṛtam anukṛtavatya unmadāndhāḥ prakṛtim agan kila yasya gopa-vadhvaḥ || 40 ||

Bhagavān, the way you walk, your style, your play, your sweet smile, loving looks and all the respect you gave, the gopis became intoxicated in your love. They started imitating you and finally they became one with your nature. This is how he attracts. This is true not only with the gopis. It is true with all of us. Bhagavān pays attention to us, loves us, gives us a lot of attention, always being with us, paying attention to us but we are not aware. His love for us is unconditional and infinite. Despite our imperfections, he is paying attention, loving, guiding us and giving us importance. And finally what happened to the gopis? They recognised this and became one with him. We don't recognise therefore we ignore. They became intoxicated with your love. How blessed are those gopis.

मुनिगणनृपवर्यसङ्कुलेऽन्तः- सदसि युधिष्ठिरराजसूय एषाम् । अर्हणमुपपेद ईक्षणीयो मम
दृशिगोचर एष आविरात्मा ॥ ४१ ॥

muni-gaṇa-nṛpa-varya-saṅkule'ntaḥ-sadasi yudhiṣṭhira-rājasūya eṣām |
arhaṇam upapeda īkṣaṇīyo mama dṛśi-gocara eṣa āvir ātmā || 41 ||

This is the episode of Rājasūya yajña. The yajña was happening in the city of Indraprastha. This question came. Whose pooja has to be done? All Ṛṣis decided and Bhīṣma said we must worship Kṛṣṇa only because He is not an ordinary human being but He is the Lord of the universe. Kṛṣṇa was worshipped. That was the time when Shishupala got up and started saying how dare you worship a cowherd boy and started giving abuses.

Kṛṣṇa waited because he had promised to his mother that he will give Shishupala a hundred chances. The moment it crossed 100, Bhagavān used his Sudarshana Chakra and Shishupala was finished. When Shishupala was finished, a light came and merged into Kṛṣṇa. Because he was none other than Jaya and Vijaya.

So agra pūjā was done to Kṛṣṇa and in that yajña the role that Bhagavān took was washing the feet of the guests.

So, in that assembly where all the great kings worshiped Bhagavān. What a beautiful sight it was!

तमिममहमजं शरीरभाजां हृदि हृदि धिष्ठितमात्मकल्पितानाम् ।

प्रतिदृशमिव नैकधार्कमेकं समधिगतोऽस्मि विधूतभेदमोहः ॥ ४२ ॥

tam imam aham ajam śarīra-bhājāṁ hr̥di hr̥di dhiṣṭhitam ātma-kalpitānām |

pratidṛśam iva naikadhā arkam ekam samādhigato'smi vidhūta-bheda-mohaḥ ||

42 ||

Bhagavān now my condition is, that all delusions have gone away. Delusions that were making me have the vision of plurality. I have attained that state of vision of oneness. Bhagavān, I am seeing you as the self of all beings. In every heart you alone shine. Though the physical bodies are different, you alone are there in the hearts of everyone. This is the vision I have now. Just as the sun is one but different people see the sun differently. A blind person doesn't even see. A colour blind person sees his own colour, a person with cataract sees everything hazy. Sun is one but different people depending on their vision see different sun. In the same way the Lord alone is there in all beings- animals, plants, birds, insects, humans but then with the faulty vision we don't see God, we only see illusions.

Bhagavān that delusion has gone and now I am seeing only you everywhere. With this Bhīṣma stuti is over.

सूत उवाच ।

कृष्ण एवं भगवति मनोवाग्दृष्टिवृत्तिभिः । आत्मन्यात्मानमावेश्य सोऽन्तःश्वास उपारमत् ॥
४३॥

sūta uvāca |

kṛṣṇa evaṁ bhagavati mano-vāg-dr̥ṣṭi-vṛttibhiḥ | ātmany ātmānam āveśya
so'ntaḥ-śvāsa upāramat || 43 ||

In this way Bhīṣma with the mind, speech, eyesight, mental thoughts absorbed his entire personality into that Lord. Who is that Lord? The very Self.

आत्मन्यात्मानमावेश्य (ātmany ātmānam āveśya) Merging his individual self into that supreme self he breathed his last. When Bhīṣma became silent everybody was silent.

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Session 12

[Chapter 9 Verse 44- Chapter 11 verse 15]

When we shift our attention to the Lord we experience that His attention is always on us. And when his entire attention was upon Bhagavān, because his body identification had dropped, all the pain that he was experiencing vanished and in that peaceful withdrawn purified state of mind Bhīṣma gives Bhīṣma Stuti.

He glorifies the Lord and Bhīṣma says O'Lord who has taken the Sat-Chit-Ānanda Swaroopa. Bhagavān throughout my life I have kept my mind pure and dispassionate. Now this pure mind, I offer unto you. This is my gift, my offering. So Bhīṣma says throughout my life I have never allowed any taint to come upon this mind.

Here we will discuss certain issues that we find generally discussed.

First of all we will see Bhīṣma's life. If we see Bhīṣma's life, it is a life of complete sacrifice. Throughout life he only sacrificed and lived for others. He lived for his family, lived for his country, lived for Bhagavān and this is called yajña bhava. He never lived for himself.

His father was attached to Sattyavati. Sattyavati's father said I will give my daughter in marriage only if you ensure that my son will become the next king. I don't think that will be possible because Devavrata is there. He is so efficient and capable and has all the royal kingly virtues. Then Bhīṣma takes this vow- I promise you for the sake of my father that I will not get married. I will have no children, I will have no family and I will also not become the king. Then Sattyavati's father said, it may be possible that when Sattyavati's son becomes the king you may kill him and then become the king. What is the guarantee? Then again Bhīṣma had to promise. I promise that whoever becomes the king, I will be loyal to that king. I will never question that king. I will obey the royal family and never question their decisions even if it is not agreeable with me. It is only then Sattyavati's father allowed the marriage.

So many vows he had taken: I will not become the king, I will not marry, I will not have any children and whoever becomes the king, I will become an obedient servant. See the sacrifice. A person who is invincible, powerful, is the son of

Ganga, he is taking the vow that I will remain a humble, obedient servant. It's not easy. Useless people like Duryodhana started becoming the king and he had to obey.

It's very easy to question but it is very very difficult to remain in a surrendered mode. This was the greatness of Bhīṣma. Breaking the vow is very easy. For little little things we break the vow. One upavāsa if we take, by afternoon we break the vow. This is a human mentality and we keep giving excuses.

Chitrāṅgada and Vichitravīrya could not have children. Chitrāṅgada was dead and Vichitravīrya was impotent. Then there was pressure for him to get married but he said I have given a promise. Amba, Ambika, Ambalika were brought and Ambalika was ready to marry. But Bhīṣma said, no, I have taken a vow and I will stick to it. He had to even fight with Parāshurama, avatāra of the Lord. Even Parāshurama could not defeat Bhīṣma. See his power. Parāshurama was his own Guru and he had learnt everything from Parāshurama. But when Amba went to complain about Bhīṣma, Parāshurama said ok, if I defeat you, you have to obey me. Done. Parāshurama could not defeat Bhīṣma.

Now there is this allegation against Bhīṣma that in that evil assembly when Draupadī was disrobed, he remained quiet. This is the greatest allegation against Bhīṣma.

1. The vow that Bhīṣma had taken is called mahāvrata.

Do you know what mahāvrata means? It means I will stick to my vow even at the cost of my life. Come what may, if I have taken a vow, I will stick to it. So what is the vow he has taken? Whatever the royal families do, I will not question. This was the promise he had given. Therefore it was Bhīṣma's duty to remain quiet. That is a mahāvrata.

We find so many mahāvratis. Naciketā was a mahāvrati. Whatever my father says, in whichever mood he may be, I will just obey. So what did Vājashravas say? When Naciketā was troubling, as all old useless cows were given in dakshina, he said to his father, to whom are you giving me? Father said, mṛtyave ayaṃ dadāmi (I give you to death). So he says ok father. Later on when everything was over, Vājashravas came to Naciketā and said my dear son, in that irritated mood I told you something, why are you taking it seriously? No father, it has come from you, I have to obey. This is called mahāvrata.

Another incident is when Pāṇḍavas won Draupadī. They said, mother see what we have brought for you and Kunti said, whatever it is, you share amongst yourselves. That's it. If it has come from the mother's mouth, you have to just obey. That is again mahāvrata only. Strict obedience without giving excuses.

Karna also followed this. Whoever asks me anything, if I have it, I will give. In the previous night itself, Surya Bhagavān said, see tomorrow Indra is coming. He will come in a Brahmāna form. He will ask for your Kavacha and Kundala, your armour and earring - don't give it. He wants to take the protection away from you because of the war. His father had warned him. So Karna knew that Indra was coming in a Brahmāna form and Indra was Arjuna's father. Karna had taken a vow, either I will survive or Arjuna will survive. But he had promised Kuntī mātā. Your five sons will be there. Out of that, either I will be there or Arjuna. In spite of his intense hatred for Arjuna, he stuck to his vow. He knew he was going to die as soon as his kavacha and kundala was given, he knew it. Even then, he stuck to his vow. That is mahāvrata. Your rāga, dveṣa, revenge all those things kept aside, if I have promised it, I am going to do it.

In fact Bhīṣma died because of his vow only. What was the vow he had taken? If a woman comes in front of me, I will not take the weapon. I will not fight with a woman.

Therefore when Bhīṣma remained quiet in the sabha, it was because of the mahāvrata, he had no choice. Now there are people who may say even then he should not have kept quiet, how can you allow such things?

See, when do you say that an action is adharmic or sinful? Any action when it is instigated with an evil intention, it is called adharmā, a sin. Action by itself is neither pāpa or puṇya. The intention behind the action is what makes the action sinful or meritorious. If Bhīṣma had kept quiet out of fear of the king, it would have been a sin. If Bhīṣma had kept quiet for his power or position, then it would have been a sin. If Bhīṣma was quiet because of any selfish reason, it would have been a sin. But there was no such intention in this case.

Therefore it cannot be called a sin. Not even one Ṛṣi criticised Bhīṣma for his action.

Even Bhagavān himself did not criticize him for his action and you will find that Bhīṣma never apologised. The only statement he made was, the way of dharmā is very subtle. But he never was repentant or said I made a mistake, never. You have to read the scriptures as it is. Blaming someone loosely is very easy but when you strictly analyze every aspect, you come to know that Bhīṣma never made a mistake. Never. Never was he criticized. Just imagine, a person who can give up his life to stick to a vow.

One thing which we all love the most is our life. Here is a person who says my life will go away but I will not deviate from my vow. Is there anything more valuable or important other than one's own life? Therefore to say Bhīṣma was wrong are all careless, irresponsible statements. Just imagine on the bed of arrows, Bhagavān himself comes and in the bed of arrows Bhīṣma is saying Bhagavān throughout my life I have kept my mind pure and that is what I am offering unto you.

You can't cheat Bhagavān, He is an antaryāmi. He knows everything. To make a statement in front of the Lord, how pure he must be. That is why Bhagavān chose Bhīṣma to give the knowledge of dharmā to Yudhiṣṭhira. Only such a person is fit. The person who has never deviated from dharmā is alone the right person to give a discourse on dharmā. So for Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīṣma was the right person. This is the greatness of Bhīṣma and his devotion for God. When he saw Bhagavān wants my life, he said yes Bhagavān I will reveal the secret. He told the Pāṇḍavas, as long as I am carrying the weapons no one can defeat me but there is a way. Keep Śikhaṇḍī in front. He himself revealed it. Who will do it? In a war will I reveal my weakness to my enemies? That is the greatness of Bhīṣma. Bhagavān, if you have decided to take my life, this life is yours.

This is the greatness of Bhīṣma. These questions generally come in the minds of people so we have spent some time here.

This way, Bhagavān came and what a dignified, splendid way of leaving the body.

कृष्ण एवं भगवति मनोवाग्दृष्टिवृत्तिभिः । आत्मन्यात्मानमावेश्य सोऽन्तःश्वास
उपारमत् ॥ ४३ ॥

kr̥ṣṇa evaṁ bhagavati mano-vāg-dr̥ṣṭi-vṛttibhiḥ | ātmany ātmānam āveśya
so'ntaḥ-śvāsa upāramat || 43 ||

Fixing his mind upon the Lord, speech upon the lord, sight upon the Lord, thoughts upon the Lord, his entire personality absorbed in the Lord, dissolving the individual self completely into the supreme self, आत्मन्यात्मानमावेश्य (ātmānam āveśya) he breathed last.

सम्पद्यमानमाज्ञाय भीष्मं ब्रह्मणि निष्कले । सर्वे बभूवुस्ते तूष्णीं वयांसीव दिनात्यये ॥ ४४ ॥
sampadyamānam ājñāya bhīṣmaṁ brahmaṇi niṣkale | sarve babhūvus te tūṣṇīm
vayāṁsīva dinātyaye || 44 ||

When everyone saw that Bhīṣma has dissolved himself in that nirguṇa brahmaṇ, everybody became silent. Just as the chirping of the birds is heard in the morning and then again in the evening. As the evening turns into night, all the birds become silent. In the same way, all those people who had gathered became silent. What was that silence? The silence of joy, the silence of sorrow, the silence of wonder. When we become silent there can be so many reasons for silence. One reason could be the silence of sorrow- such a great personality is not with us anymore. The entire Mahabharata revolves around Bhīṣma. If Bhīṣma had become the king, there would have been no Mahābhārata. Bhīṣma was an ideal son, would have been an ideal king, was an ideal devotee, an ideal warrior. What is lacking in Bhīṣma? Ideal by all sense. That is why all these Ṛṣi munis came. So many Ṛṣis were there. Not even one raised any allegation against Bhīṣma. That was the respect he commanded amongst such great personalities. They all came because that was an auspicious moment. All of them became silent. Some were silent because of sorrow that such a personality is no longer with us. Some were silent because of joy. Bhīṣma attained that and the third was wonder because at the time of death fixing the mind on God is very very difficult. प्राणप्रयाणसमये कफवातपित्तैः कण्ठावरोधनविधौ स्मरणं कुतस्ते (prāṇaprayāṇasamaye kaphavātapittaiḥ kaṇṭhāvarodhanavidhau smaraṇaṁ kutaste)

At the time of death when the throat is choked, कफवातपित्तैः (kaphavātapittaiḥ) and here is a man lying on a bed of arrows also. Everybody became silent and then there was a celebration.

तत्र दुन्दुभयो नेदुर्देवमानवादिताः । शशंसुः साधवो राज्ञां खात्पेतुः पुष्पवृष्टयः ॥ ४५ ॥
tatra dundubhayo nedur deva-mānava-vāditāḥ | śaśaṁsuḥ sādhaso rājñāṁ khāt
petuḥ puṣpa-vrṣṭayah || 45 ||

Kettle drums were played by not only human beings but devatas also. All the kings praised Bhīṣma for this great attainment. Heavens showered flowers.

तस्य निर्हरणादीनि सम्परेतस्य भार्गव । युधिष्ठिरः कारयित्वा मुहूर्तं दुःखितोऽभवत् ॥ ४६ ॥
tasya nirharaṇādīni samparetasya bhārgava | yudhiṣṭhiraḥ kārayitvā muhūrtaṁ
duḥkhito'bhavat || 46 ||

Yudhiṣṭhira then performed the final rights of Bhīṣma and then for a while he remained in that state of mourning.

तुष्टुवुर्मुनयो हृष्टाः कृष्णं तद्गुह्यनामभिः । ततस्ते कृष्णहृदयाः स्वाश्रमान् प्रययुः पुनः ॥ ४७ ॥
tuṣṭuvur munayo hr̥ṣṭāḥ kṛṣṇaṁ tad-guhya-nāmabhiḥ | tatas te kṛṣṇa-hṛdayāḥ
svāśramān prayayuh punaḥ || 47 ||

All those Ṛṣi munis mentally chanted Bhagavān's name. Keeping the Lord in their heart, all of them went to their respective āśrams.

ततो युधिष्ठिरो गत्वा सहकृष्णो गजाहवयम् । पितरं सान्त्वयामास गान्धारीं च तपस्विनीम् ॥
४८ ॥
tato yudhiṣṭhiro gatvā saha-kṛṣṇo gajāhvayam | pitaraṁ sāntvayāmāsa
gāndhārīṁ ca tapasvinīm || 48 ||

Now Yudhiṣṭhira went back to the palace and consoled Dhristarashtra and Gandhari. They had lost their hundred children and the sorrow was there. So Yushistira went and consoled Dhristarashtra and Gandhari. This shows the greatness of Yudhiṣṭhira.

पित्रा चानुमतो राजा वासुदेवानुमोदितः । चकार राज्यं धर्मेण पितृपैतामहं विभुः ॥ ४९ ॥
pitṛā cānumato rājā vāsudevānumoditaḥ | cakāra rājyaṁ dharmeṇa
pitṛ-paitāmahaṁ vibhuḥ || 49 ||

So with the permission of Dhristarashtra and Gandhari and fully supported by the Lord, he started ruling the kingdom. This is the greatness of Yudhiṣṭhira. He never had any grudge towards Dhristarashtra and Gandhari. In fact, the whole issue came about because of the bad parenting of Dhristarashtra and Gandhari only. Dhristarashtra was blind, at least Gandhari should have taken care of the children. If both are blind, who will look after the children? That is also one of the allegations raised by Kṛṣṇa. Gandhari don't blame me, you alone are the cause of the calamity. When children are growing up you should give them values. If the father is blind, at least the mother should take care. Who will instill values in children when they are growing up?

But Yudhiṣṭhira never had any grudge. He looked after them as his own parents. It is said in the morning he would take bath, do all the sadhanas etc and the first thing he would do is go to the palace of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gandhari, bow down to them, spend some time with them, seek their blessings and only then go to his palace, everyday. In all the calamities there was a silent hand of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He knew about Duryodhana's attempt to kill Pāṇḍavas and everything happened in his presence only. Yet Yudhiṣṭhira never blamed Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Thus, taking his blessings, Yudhiṣṭhira started ruling the country.

So Śaunaka Ṛṣi asked Sūta Ṛṣi, please tell us how did Yudhiṣṭhira rule the kingdom?

Chapter 10 ॥ दशमोऽध्यायः ॥

शौनक उवाच ।

निशम्य भीष्मोक्तमथाच्युतोक्तं प्रवृत्तविज्ञानविधूतविभ्रमः । शशास गामिन्द्र इवाजिताश्रयः
परिध्युपान्तामनुजानुवर्तितः ॥ ३ ॥

niśamya bhīṣmoktam athācyutoktaṁ pravṛtta-vijñāna-vidhūta-vibhramah |
śaśāsa gām indra iva ajitāśrayaḥ paridhyupāntām anujānuvartitaḥ || 3 ||

After Yudhiṣṭhira had discussions with Bhagavān and Bhīṣma, all his doubts and confusions were gone. Now wisdom dawned upon him and his mind was at peace. He ruled like Indira ruling swarga. Completely taking refuge in Bhagavān, ever under the guidance and protection of the Lord and with his brothers fully supporting him, fully obedient to him.

Thus, he ruled the kingdom- the description of this verse means - till the ocean is the border of the land- which means he was the emperor of the entire Earth. He ruled ever at the feet of the Lord with his brothers completely supporting him. That is why the name Ajātaśatru. There is no śatru. No enemy. He alone was the emperor.

कामं ववर्ष पर्जन्यः सर्वकामदुघा मही । सिषिचुः स्म व्रजान् गावः पयसोधस्वतीर्मुदा ॥ ४ ॥
kāmaṁ vavarṣa parjanyaḥ sarva-kāma -dughā mahī | siṣicuḥ sma vrajān gāvaḥ
payaso dhasvatīr mudā || 4 ||

It rained perfectly- no floods or famine. There was perfect rain in the season. The Earth became fertile and high yielding. Cows were carrying so much milk in their udders that the cow shed was bathed in milk. The calf drank the milk, the calf's

stomach was full, contented and then whatever was remaining was enough for everybody. This is how milking has to be done. Otherwise it is a sin. Curse is not some sanskrit word. Curse is the pain in the heart because of a rightful thing denied. That milk is for that baby calf. The cow has the ability to release milk into the udder when that mother cow sees the child watching, he pulls that calf and takes away the milk. Here it is not like that. There was plenty of milk.

नद्यः समुद्रा गिरयः सवनस्पतिविरूढः । फलन्त्योषधयः सर्वाः काममन्वृतु तस्य वै ॥ ५॥
nadyaḥ samudrā girayaḥ savanaspati-vīrudhaḥ | phalanty oṣadhayaḥ sarvāḥ
kāma m anvṛtu tasya vai || 5 ||

Rivers, oceans, mountains, herbs, trees grew perfectly and the crops were cultivated and according to the season they yielded fruit. Every entity was doing their duty without creating any obstruction - whether it was rivers or oceans, mountains. This is the story form of whatever is said in Bhagavad Gita. देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः । परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ
devān bhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ
parasparam bhāvayantaḥ śreyaḥ param [Bhagavad Gita Chapter 3.11]

You worship the devatas with yajña bhāva, then devatas will in turn bless you. Those devatas will bless you with whatever you need, whatever you desire. But the condition is that our life should be lived with yajña bhāva. See the king himself is living such a life of service, a God oriented life, naturally prajā is also inspired to live such a life.

Yajña attitude is performing all our duties as a worship of the Lord, pouring out the God given talents and abilities for the welfare of the totality in a spirit of co-operation and not competition. Dissolving all our ego and ego centric desires. Sinking our personal opinions and differences and coming together. This is called yajña bhava and everybody was living that way, Yudhiṣṭhira was at the feet of the Lord and all his brothers were at the feet of Yudhiṣṭhira. The more and more we are tuned to the higher, the lower will be tuned to us, the lower will be obedient to us. The more and more we disrespect the higher, the lower will be disrespectful to us. Yudhiṣṭhira was ever at the feet of the Lord so everybody followed Yudhiṣṭhira. He was a man of righteousness, he was setting an example standing front, walking in front. He was setting an example for everybody and everybody lived that way, there was Rāmarāja.

There is one more thing, the cosmic behaviour and our behavior are connected. It appears there is no relationship but there is a relationship. If there is too much

fire, flood etc don't say it's an accident and give some scientific explanation. How we behave the cosmos also behaves.

नाधयो व्याधयः क्लेशा दैवभूतात्महेतवः । अजातशत्रावभवन् जन्तूनां राज्ञि कर्हिचित् ॥ ६ ॥
nādhayo vyādhayaḥ kleśā daiva-bhūtātma-hetavaḥ |
ajātaśatrāv abhavan jantūnām rājñi karhicit || 6 ||

When Yudhiṣṭhira was the king, no mental worries or disturbances, no physical diseases. No adhyātmika, ādhidaivika, ādhibhautika tapas. Just like physical health, there is something called cosmic health. For physical health, live a life of discipline.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु । (yuktāhāra-vihārasya yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu
(Bhagavad Gita 6. 17)

With good and healthy food, sense organs disciplined, exercise, good and noble thoughts and a pure mind you will have a healthy body.

In the same way, there is something called cosmic health. When everybody is living a life dedicated to God in a spirit of sacrifice and service, living for the welfare of all, that leads to cosmic health. This way Yudhiṣṭhira ruled the kingdom.

उषित्वा हास्तिनपुरे मासान् कतिपयान् हरिः । सुहृदां च विशोकाय स्वसुश्च प्रियकाम्यया ॥ ७ ॥
uṣitvā hāstinapure māsān katipayān hariḥ | suhṛdām ca viśokāya svasuś ca
priyakāmyayā || 7 ||

Bhagavān remained there for a few months to ensure that everything was fine in the new kingdom. Everyone was happy when Bhagavān was there and that was needed as so many deaths had happened. So to console the relatives and friends he remained there. And also to please his sister Subhadrā.

Subhadrā's pain was also deep with Abhimanyu's death. So therefore, to please his sister also he remained for some more time. And now he had to go back.

आमन्त्र्य चाभ्यनुज्ञातः परिष्वज्याभिवादय तम् । आरूरोह रथं कैश्चित्परिष्वक्तोऽभिवदितः ॥
८ ॥

āmantrya cābhyanuñjātaḥ pariṣvajyābhivādya tam |
āruroha ratham kaiścit pariṣvaktō'bhivāditaḥ || 8 ||

Then finally Bhagavān took permission from them and bid them farewell. Some embraced him, some he embraced, some bowed to him and some he bowed

down to. And after that he boarded his chariot. And when he boarded his chariot, everybody was miserable.

सुभद्रा द्रौपदी कुन्ती विराटतनया तथा । गान्धारी धृतराष्ट्रश्च युयुत्सुर्गौतमो यमौ ॥ ९ ॥
subhadrā Draupadī kuntī virāṭa-tanayā tathā |
gāndhārī dhṛtarāṣṭraś ca yuyutsur gautamo yamau || 9 ||

वृकोदरश्च धौम्यश्च स्त्रियो मत्स्यसुतादयः । न सेहिरे विमुहयन्तो विरहं शार्ङ्गधन्वनः ॥ १० ॥
vrkodaraś ca dhaumyaś ca striyo mātasya-sutādayaḥ |
na sehire vimuhyanto virahaṁ śārṅga-dhanvanah || 10 ||

All these people were miserable. They could not endure this grief- Subhadrā, Draupadī, Kunti, Uttara (Abhimanyu's wife), Gandhari, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Yuyutsu (Dhritarashtra's son with a Vaishya woman). He was the only one who just before the war moved to Pāṇḍavas side. He said what my brothers are doing is not right. They are fighting for adharmā so I want to support Pāṇḍavas. He was the only kauravā who fought on Pāṇḍava's side. Dritarashtra had 102 children. He also has a daughter- Dushala. She was the only daughter of Dritarashtra and she married Jayadrata. Kripacharya (was another person who survived the war in the kauravāharmy); Nakula, Sehadewa, Bhima, Dhaumya is like a Kula Guru of Pāṇḍavas- especially he would guide them during rituals. Satyavati was so attached to Bhagavān. All of them did not want Bhagavān to leave.

[There were 3 people in the kauravā army who survived the war- Kripacharya, Kritavarma and Aśvatthāmā]

सत्सङ्गान्मुक्तदुःसङ्गो हातुं नोत्सहते बुधः । कीर्त्यमानं यशो यस्य सकृदाकर्ण्य रोचनम् ॥ ११ ॥
satsaṅgān mukta-duḥsaṅgo hāturṁ notsahate budhaḥ | kīrtyamānaṁ yaśo yasya
sakṛd ākarṇya rocanam || 11 ||

तस्मिन् न्यस्तधियः पार्थाः सहेरन् विरहं कथम् । दर्शनस्पर्शसंलापशयनासनभोजनैः ॥ १२ ॥
tasmin nyasta-dhiyaḥ pārthāḥ saheran virahaṁ katham |
darśana-sparśa-saṁlāpa-śayana-āsana-bhojanaiḥ || 12 ||

There is no wonder in it that they were miserable. This is the greatness of Vyāsa Ṛṣi. Now and then he will give some philosophy. A person who has tasted satsang and has become free from duḥsaṅga, will he ever leave satsang? Once a person has tasted the joy of satsang, he is ready to pay any price. Wise people will never give up satsang. This happens generally once you have attended

Geeta class for years and have really tasted the joy of satsang and when you go to some marriage function and hear the kind of discussions that happen there, you feel suffocated. Once upon a time you also participated in all this. But once you have tasted the higher, duḥsaṅga becomes suffocating. Here Vyāsa Ṛṣi is saying just like duḥsaṅga becomes intolerable, satsanga becomes an addiction for you.

Just by listening to the kathas of the Lord we get so addicted, what to talk of these people who were with the Lord! They were people whose mind was fully absorbed in Bhagavān. Bhagavān was ever there physically present with them and in every aspect of their life दर्शनस्पर्शसंलापशयनासनभोजनैः (darśana-sparśa-saṁlāpa-śayana-āsana-bhojanaiḥ)

दर्शन (darśana) He was always for them to see, स्पर्श (sparśa) always available for them to touch संलाप (saṁlāpa) discussions would happen शयना (śayana) they would all sleep together only आसन (āsana) they would sit together भोजनै (bhojanaiḥ) eating together.

So how much they must have been attached to Bhagavān. Now when Bhagavān was leaving no wonder why they were so miserable.

सर्वे तेऽनिमिषैरक्षैस्तमनुद्रुतचेतसः । वीक्षन्तः स्नेहसम्बद्धा विचेतुस्तत्र तत्र ह ॥ १३ ॥
sarve te'nimiṣair akṣais tam anudruta-cetasah | vīkṣantaḥ sneha-sambaddhā
vicelus tatra tatra ha || 13 ||

All of them were not even blinking their eyes. Because when you blink that much time you are not able to see Bhagavān. Their mind was melting in love for Bhagavān, melting in sorrow also. The mind was becoming tender because of sorrow, because of love, because of attachment. They were so tightly bound with the Lord. They were not just leaving him so as the chariot was going they were also walking along.

न्यरुन्धन्नुद्गलद्बाष्पमौत्कण्ठ्याद्देवकीसुते । निर्यात्यगारान्नोऽभद्रमिति स्याद्बान्धवस्त्रियः
॥ १४ ॥
nyarundhann udgalad-bāṣpam autkaṇṭhyād devakī-sute | niryāty agārān no
bhadram iti syād bāndhava-striyaḥ || 14 ||

These ladies with great difficulty restrained their tears. A lot of sorrow was there and whenever there is sorrow, there are tears but with great restraint they tried to

control their tears because when someone is leaving it is inauspicious to cry. With great difficulty they were controlling their tears.

मृदङ्गशङ्खभेर्यश्च वीणापणवगोमुखाः । धुन्धुर्यानकघण्टाद्या नेदुर्दुन्दुभयस्तथा ॥ १५॥
mr̥daṅga-śaṅkha-bheryaś ca vīṇā-pañava-gomukhāḥ
dhundhurya-ānaka-ghaṇṭādyā nedur dundubhayaḥ tathā ॥ 15 ॥

As Bhagavān was leaving, people started playing a lot of instruments - soft drums, shankha, kettle drum, veena, flute. big pipe, battle drum, bells, and so many other musical instruments.

प्रासादशिखरारूढाः कुरुनार्यो दिदृक्षया । ववृषुः कुसुमैः कृष्णं प्रेमव्रीडास्मितेक्षणाः ॥ १६॥
prāsāda-śikharārūḍhāḥ kuru-nāryo didṛkṣayā |vavr̥ṣuḥ kusumaiḥ kṛṣṇam
prema-vrīḍā-smitekṣaṇāḥ ॥ 16 ॥

All the ladies in the Kuru dynasty climbed the terrace of the palace and started showering flowers as Bhagavān was going.

सितातपत्रं जग्राह मुक्तादामविभूषितम् । रत्नदण्डं गुडाकेशः प्रियः प्रियतमस्य ह ॥ १७॥
sitātapatram jagrāha muktādāma-vibhūṣitam | ratna-daṇḍam guḍākeśaḥ priyaḥ
priyatamasya ha ॥ 17 ॥

Arjuna was holding a white umbrella decorated with pearl garlands. The stick in the center was studded with a diamond.

उद्धवः सात्यकिश्चैव व्यजने परमाद्भुते । विकीर्यमाणः कुसुमै रेजे मधुपतिः पथि ॥ १८॥
uddhavaḥ sātyakiś caiva vyajane paramādbhutai | vikīryamāṇaḥ kusumai reje
madhupatiḥ pathi ॥ 18 ॥

Uddhava and Sātyaki were fanning Bhagavān and flowers were being showered from the top and on to the path.

अश्रूयन्ताशिषः सत्यास्तत्र तत्र द्विजेरिताः । नानुरूपानुरूपाश्च निर्गुणस्य गुणात्मनः ॥ १९॥
aśrūyantāśiṣaḥ satyās tatra tatra dvijeritāḥ | nānurūpānurūpāś ca nirguṇasya
guṇātmanah ॥ 19 ॥

All Brahmānas were chanting veda mantras and giving words of blessings- like may you live long etc.

Here again Vyāsa Ṛṣi says to tell the Lord who is nirguṇa rūpa and ānanda svarūpa to live happy made no sense. But for that person, for that human form, who has taken a saṁguṇa form it appeared as a blessing in place.

All the ladies who had gathered to see Bhagavān were talking amongst one another and spoke of what they had heard about Kṛṣṇa as the Lord of the universe and Śrīṣṭi Stithi Laya happened because of Him. They quoted what other Ṛṣis were saying talking about Kṛṣṇa as that Lord who is glorified in the Vedas, the Lord who has taken an avatāra to destroy all wicked people and they said how lucky are these women in Dvārakā who can see Bhagavān all the time and even more luckier are his wives. We will see verse 28 as a sample.

नूनं व्रतस्नानहुतादिनेश्वरः समर्चितो ह्यस्य गृहीतपाणिभिः । पिबन्ति याः सख्यधरामृतं मुहु-
र्ब्रजस्त्रियःसम्ममुहुर्यदाशयाः ॥ २८ ॥

nūnaṁ vrata-snāna-hutādineśvaraḥ samarcito hy asya grhīta-pāṇibhiḥ |
pibanti yāḥ sakhy adharāmṛtaṁ muhur vraja-striyaḥ sammumuhur yad-āśayāḥ ||
28 ||

O' how much tapasya and austerities, they must have done to get Bhagavān as their husband. All the time they can listen to his wonderful words and be in the company of the Lord.

Here is something that I must tell you. As long as you see Bhagavān outside of you, you can't get rid of jealousy. Kali-yuga people are jealous of Dvāpara-yuga people. Dvāpara-yuga people are jealous of people living in Dvārakā because all the time they can see Bhagavān. People in Dvārakā are jealous of people living in the palace, people living in the palace are jealous of the wives and the wives are jealous of Rukmini because she is the crest jewel amongst all wives.

As long as Bhagavān is kept out, this misery will continue. Ajñāna, will lead to kāma krodha, lobha, mada, mātsarya. You just cannot escape. There is only one way, Bhagavān has to be realised as the self. The physical form is not going to get us rid of the negativities. The purpose of the external form is only to take us to the real form of the Lord which is Sat Chit Ānanda. This we must understand.

There are five types of mukti's:

Sālokya-mukti - is when you go to the world of Bhagavān. But that person is jealous because of the next higher stage

Sāmīpya mukti - is when you are nearer to God. In the Vaikuṇṭhaloka also, some are very close to God. So people who are in the world are jealous of those who are near.

Sārūpya mukti - is when your form is like Bhagavān. This is one more step closer.

Sārṣṭi mukti - is the attainment of divine power and wealth.

Sāyujya-mukti - is the complete oneness with him.

The problem is, as long as your individuality is there, the jīva bhava is there, misery will continue even if you are in God's world.

या वीर्यशुल्केन हताः स्वयंवरे प्रमथ्य चैद्यप्रमुखान् हि शुष्मिणः ।
प्रद्युम्नसाम्बाम्बसुतादयोऽपरा याश्चाहता भौमवधे सहस्रशः ॥ २९ ॥
yā vīrya-śulkeṇa hṛtāḥ svayamvare pramathya caidya-pramukhān hi śuṣmīṇaḥ
pradyumna-sāmba-ambasuta-ādayo aparā yāś cāhṛtā bhauma-vadhe
sahasraśaḥ ॥ 29 ॥

When these ladies were talking, Bhagavān just looked at them and smiled.

अजातशत्रुः पृतनां गोपीथाय मधुद्विषः । परेभ्यः शङ्कितः स्नेहात्प्रायुङ्क्त चतुरङ्गिणीम् ॥
३२ ॥
ajātaśatruḥ pṛtanāṁ gopīthāya madhudviṣaḥ | parebhyaḥ śaṅkitaḥ snehāt
prāyuṅkta caturaṅgiṇīm ॥ 32 ॥

Now, the journey from Hastināpur to Dvārakā is a big one - almost 1500 kms. With all these horses it would take almost a month. It would also be dangerous with robbers etc on the way. Therefore, Yudhiṣṭhira, for the safety of Bhagavān sent a sena for the Lord. Though Bhagavān needed no protection, out of extreme concern for the safety of the Lord, Yudhiṣṭhira sent a Chaturangini sena, .

अथ दूरागतान् शौरिः कौरवान् विरहातुरान् । सन्निवर्त्य दृढं स्निग्धान् प्रायात्स्वनगरीं प्रियैः ॥
३३ ॥
atha dūrāgatān śauriḥ kauravān virahāturān | sannivartya dṛḍhaṁ snigdhaṁ
prāyāt sva-nagarīm priyaiḥ ॥ 33 ॥

So as Bhagavān was leaving, they all started following him. This is what happens, when you are too attached. You just don't want to leave. Kṛṣṇa's chariot was leaving and they were also coming and finally Bhagavān had to tell them to go back. The people were miserable because of the pang of separation and finally Bhagavān had to sweetly persuade all of them to go back.

Then Bhagavān started his journey.

कुरुजाङ्गलपाञ्चालान् शूरसेनान् सयामुनान् । ब्रह्मावर्तं कुरुक्षेत्रं मत्स्यान् सारस्वतानथ ॥ ३४ ॥

kuru-jāṅgala-pāñcālān śūrasenān sa-yāmunān | brahmāvartaṁ kuru-kṣetraṁ
matsyān sārasvatān atha || 34 ||

मरुधन्वमतिक्रम्य सौवीराभीरयोः परान् । आनर्तान् भार्गवोपागाच्छ्रान्तवाहो मनाग् विभुः ॥ ३५ ॥
marudhanvam atikramya sauvīrābhīrayoḥ parān | ānartān bhārgavopāḡāc
chrānta-vāho manāg vibhuḥ || 35 ||

On the way, he covered lands of kuru, jāṅgala, pāñcālā, śūrasenā, regions of yāmunā, regions of brahmāvarta, kurukṣetra, matsyān, sārasvatān. There was also a desert to cross over- rājasthan, sauvīrā, abhīrayoḥ and then he reached the land of ānartān. But it was not a continuous journey.

तत्र तत्र ह तत्रत्यैर्हरिः प्रत्युद्यतार्हणः । सायं भजे दिशं पश्चाद्गविष्ठो गां गतस्तदा ॥ ३६ ॥
tatra tatra ha tatratyair hariḥ pratyudyatārhaṇaḥ | sāyaṁ bheje diśaṁ paścād
gaviṣṭho gāṁ gatas tadā || 36 ||

Enroute, here and there people would come with a lot of gifts to get the darshan of the Lord. Everywhere, now and then he would meet them and continue. Finally he reached Dvārakā by evening.

Chapter 11 ॥ एकादशोऽध्यायः ॥

सूत उवाच ।
आनर्तान् स उपव्रज्य स्वरुद्धाञ्जनपदान् स्वकान् । दध्मौ दरवरं तेषां विषादं शमयन्निव ॥ १ ॥
sūta uvāca |
ānartān sa upavrajya svrddhāñjanapadān svakān | dadhmau daravarāṁ teṣāṁ
viṣādaṁ śamāyānn iva || 1 ||

Then after reaching his country, he blew his conch (*Pañcajanya*). And when all the people heard this conch they were so happy. All of them ran and came.

तमुपश्रुत्य निनदं जगद्भयभयावहम् । प्रत्युद्ययुः प्रजाः सर्वा भर्तृदर्शनलालसाः ॥ ३ ॥
tam upaśrutya ninadaṁ jagad-bhaya-bhayāvaham | pratyudyayuḥ prajāḥ sarvā
bhartṛ-darśana-lālasāḥ || 3 ||

To see their Lord all of them came running and did a stuti. We will chant a couple.

नताः स्म ते नाथ सदाङ्घ्रिपङ्कजं विरिञ्चवैरिञ्च्यसुरेन्द्रवन्दितम् । परायणं क्षेममिहेच्छतां परं
न यत्र कालः प्रभवेत्परः प्रभुः ॥ ६ ॥
natāḥ sma te nātha sadāṅghri-pañkajaṁ viriñci-vairiñcya-surendra-vanditam |
parāyaṇaṁ kṣemam iha icchatāṁ paraṁ na yatra kālaḥ prabhavet paraḥ
prabhuḥ || 6 ||

O' Lord, we prostrate unto your lotus feet. That lotus feet which is ever worshiped by Brahmā ji, Shiva, Indira. The most auspicious lotus feet. Bhagavān we worship you. Bhagavān you are our everything.

भवाय नस्त्वं भव विश्वभावन त्वमेव माताथ सुहृत्पतिः पिता । त्वं सद्गुरुर्नः परमं च दैवतं
यस्यानुवृत्त्या कृतिनो बभूविम ॥ ७ ॥

bhavāya naḥ tvaṁ bhava viśva-bhāvana tvaṁ eva mātā atha suhṛt-patiḥ pitā |
tvaṁ sad-gurur naḥ paramaṁ ca daivataṁ yasya anuvṛtṭyā kṛtino babhūvima || 7
||

Bhagavān, you are our mother, father, master, teacher, you are the protector of the whole world. In your service we have attained fulfilment. The moment you go out to see your friends etc in Mathura, Hastinapura, every every moment appears to like millions of years. In this way all those citizens did a stuti of the Lord.

इति चोदीरिता वाचः प्रजानां भक्तवत्सलः । शृण्वानोऽनुग्रहं दृष्ट्या वितन्वन् प्राविशत्पुरीम् ॥
१० ॥

iti codīritā vācaḥ prajānāṁ bhakta-vatsalaḥ | śṛṇvāno 'nugrahaṁ drṣṭyā vitanvan
prāviśat purīm || 10 ||

Bhagavān is a भक्तवत्सलः (bhakta-vatsalaḥ) who loves his devotees so much. He listened to them, blessed all of them by giving a loving glance at all of them. When people heard that Kṛṣṇa has come, immediately everyone became active in decorating the whole city.

गोपुरद्वारमार्गेषु कृतकौतुकतोरणाम् । चित्रध्वजपताकागैरन्तः प्रतिहतातपाम् ॥ १३ ॥
gopura-dvāra-mārgeṣu kṛta-kautuka-toraṇām | citra-dhvaja-patākāgrair antaḥ
pratihatātāpām || 13 ||

At the गोपुर (gopura)- entrance gate and along its path, they put flowers, banners, flags etc. They put so many that even the sunlight could not enter.

सम्मार्जितमहामार्गरथ्यापणकचत्वराम् । सिक्तां गन्धजलैरुप्तां फलपुष्पाक्षताङ्कुरैः ॥ १४ ॥
sammārjita-mahā-mārga-rathyā-pana-kacatvarām | siktām gandha-jalair uptām
phala-puṣpākṣatāṅkuraiḥ || 14 ||

The whole road was swept clean. The streets, the by lanes, the bazaars and they then washed it with fragrant water. There was chandana fragrance everywhere and they decorated the street with auspicious things like fruits, flowers, unbroken rice, tender leaves.

द्वारि द्वारि गृहाणां च दध्यक्षतफलेक्षुभिः । अलङ्कृतां पूर्णकुम्भैर्बलिभिर्धूपदीपकैः ॥ १५ ॥
dvāri dvāri gṛhāṇāṁ ca dadhy-akṣata-phalekṣubhiḥ | alaṅkṛtām pūrṇa-kumbhair
balibhir dhūpa-dīpakaiḥ || 15 ||

People put auspicious things like yogurt, unbroken rice, fruit, sugarcane, poorna kumbha, dhūpa-dīpa in front of their house.

Why is unbroken rice auspicious? Kṣata means broken. Akṣata means unbroken and represents unbroken life, unbroken relationship, unbroken bliss, unbroken auspiciousness. That is why akṣata is considered auspicious. We want everything unbroken. I don't want my relationship with others and God to break.

Pūrṇa-kumbha: There is a pot that is filled with water. Pot represents body, water represents a fulfilled mind.

The coconut used is called pūrṇa phala. Coconut is considered very auspicious. If you see a coconut, there is a hard shell outside, there is a white cream inside and there is water. It represents our body. The hard thing is the physical body. The white thing is the mind and the water is the causal body. The three bodies represent sthūla, sūkṣma, and kāraṇa śarīra. How should our sūkṣma śarīra be? It should be white. White means sattvik.

Coconut water is very very sweet. This is how you should be. That white cream is very very white and represents a sattvik personality. The coconut has 3 eyes. The three eyes represent the two physical eyes and one jñāna chakshu.

In many of the auspicious functions you break the coconut. Breaking coconut means breaking the ego. Break the three bodies and become infinite. Let the inner space merge with the outer space.

In the coconut there is an inner space. Breaking the coconut represents jīvātmā merging with Parāmatma.

Coconut tree also is considered very auspicious because we give dirty water to this coconut tree and it converts that water into sweet nectarian water that it carries on its head as an expression of gratitude. Coconut is a tree where every part is made use of. Coconut stem is used for making poles etc. In villages, the leaf is used for making thatched roofs. Even the stick in between the leaf is used as a broom stick. The outer coconut coil is used for making rope, fuel. The shell is also very good for fuel. It keeps on burning for a long time.

Coconut can be made into oil. Oil has so many benefits. It can be made for cooking, for massaging and has many health benefits. Every part of the coconut tree can be made use of.

So literally, the coconut tree is living for others. Wherever we find this yajña spirit we consider that animal, that being that plant as auspicious. There is nothing which can be wasted there. Every year it keeps giving coconuts. Initially you need some help, after that it just keeps giving.

In the pūrṇa-kumbha we also have mango leaves. Mango leaves remain for a long time. It doesn't dry so fast. In the villages mango leaf is used to brush teeth, Mango leaf is very sacred for Lakṣmī and Ganesha. The five leaves represent

material prosperity, representing the Pancha Mahabhutas. Hence prosperity associated with the five elements and that becomes auspicious.

You know why the cow is considered holy? Wherever there is sacrifice we consider that plant or animal as holy. If you see a cow, it eats the grass which we don't want and gives everything that we want - milk, curd, ghee, cow dung. The male cows/bulls are used for ploughing the land. So in agriculture, the role of a cow or a bull is unimaginable and India is an agricultural country. It gives everything and it is said cow's milk is equivalent to mother's milk. Generally in villages, a cow is considered to be a part of the family. It is a very Sattvik animal. Because of all these reasons, a cow is considered worshipful. It lives in yajña-bhāva. It takes all that we don't need and gives everything that we need. This symbolically is nothing but a life of sacrifice. Therefore a cow is considered holy in our tradition. Yajña-bhāva and sattvika-bhāva.

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Session 13

[Chapter 11 verse 16- Chapter 12 verse 30]

निशम्य प्रेष्ठमायान्तं वसुदेवो महामनाः । अक्रूरश्चोग्रसेनश्च रामश्चाद्भुतविक्रमः ॥ १६ ॥
niśamya preṣṭham āyāntaṁ vasudevo mahā-manāḥ | akrūraś cograsenaś ca
rāmaś cādbhuta-vikramaḥ || 16 ||

Having heard that Kṛṣṇa had come, who was very dear to all these people- they came running. These were Vasudeva (father of Kṛṣṇa), Akroora, Ugrasena (Kamsa's father), Balrama

प्रद्युम्नश्चारुदेष्णश्च साम्बो जाम्बवतीसुतः । प्रहर्षवेगोच्छ्वसितशयनासनभोजनाः ॥ १७ ॥
pradyumnaś cārudeṣṇaś ca sāmba jāmbavatī-sutaḥ |
praharṣa-vegochchvasita-śayanāsana-bhojanāḥ || 17 ||

Pradyuma who was Rukmini and Kṛṣṇa's son, Charudeshnam the second son, Samba, son of Jambavati and Kṛṣṇa. They quickly rushed. Some were sleeping, they got up from their sleep, some were sitting, some eating food. When they heard Kṛṣṇa has come, they all came running.

वारणेन्द्रं पुरस्कृत्य ब्राह्मणैः ससुमङ्गलैः । शङ्खतूर्यनिनादेन ब्रह्मघोषेण चाहताः । प्रत्युज्जग्मू
रथैर्हृष्टाः प्रणयागतसौधवसाः ॥ १८ ॥
vāraṇendraṁ puraskṛtya brāhmaṇaiḥ sa-sumaṅgalaiḥ | śaṅkha-tūrya-ninādena
brahma-ghoṣeṇa cādr̥tāḥ | pratyujjagmu rathair hr̥ṣṭāḥ praṇayāgata-sādhvasāḥ ||
18 ||

Keeping a lordly elephant in front, all the Brahmānas carrying all auspicious things, flowers etc came. Here again there were a lot of instruments - conch, kettle drums etc and chanting of the veda mantras. They all ran towards the Lord in a hurry in their respective chariots.

नटनर्तकगन्धर्वाः सूतमागधवन्दिनः । गायन्ति चोत्तमश्लोकचरितान्यद्भुतानि च ॥ २० ॥
naṭa-nartaka-gandharvāḥ sūta-māgadha-vandināḥ | gāyanti
cottama-śloka-caritāny adbhutāni ca || 20 ||

Actors, dancers, ministers came. Those who come and sing the glory of ancestors, the lineage etc also came. This way, everyone gathered.

भगवांस्तत्र बन्धूनां पौराणामनुवर्तिनाम् । यथाविध्युपसङ्गम्य सर्वेषां मानमादधे ॥ २१ ॥
bhagavāṁs tatra bandhūnāṁ paurāṇām anuvartinām | yathā-vidhy upasaṅgamy
sarveṣāṁ mānam ādadhe || 21 ||

All kinds of people were there- relatives, subjects, some were dependents. He honoured everyone according to their status and relationship.

प्रह्वाभिवादनाश्लेषकरस्पर्शस्मितेक्षणैः । आश्वास्य चाश्वपाकेभ्यो वरैश्चाभिमतैर्विभुः ॥ २२ ॥
prahvābhivādana-āśliṣa-kara-sparśa-smitekṣaṇaiḥ | āśvāsyā cāśva-pākebhyo
varaiś cābhimatair vibhuḥ || 22 ||

He greeted elders and teachers by bowing down. Some he greeted by embracing them. Some were greeted by a handshake and some by a smiling look.

Even the low caste people, the chandalas, śūdras were all honoured. Generally the low caste people become happy when they get some material things or money. So in short, everybody was pleased. Bhagavān made everyone happy and honoured everyone depending upon the relationship. Then he entered the palace of his parents. Kṛṣṇa considered all seven as his own mothers. All hugged him and bathed him in tears of love.

Then he entered the palace of his wives. There were 16,108 and they were all captives of Narakāśura. Narakāśura would kill the kings and make their daughters captive. When he was killed, these ladies had nowhere to go as nobody would marry them. So to restore their dignity, Bhagavān married all of them. Special love and attention was given to each and every one. In Bhāgavatam itself it is clearly said that Bhagavān himself appeared as so many entities and gave special attention to everyone and everybody felt that Bhagavān loves only me. I am his only wife.

The spiritual message is that we are all jīvatmas dependent on Bhagavān. Every jīvatma feels Bhagavān is paying total attention to me. A devotee doesn't feel there are so many devotees so Bhagavān's attention is divided. Especially when you go deep into meditation you will experience that. Start walking bhakti marga and you will start experiencing this. These are all experiential verses, symbolically put. Every devotee feels Bhagavān is with me, he is totally paying attention to me, he is loving me, his attention is never diverted towards anyone. This way every devotee feels as he enters deeper and deeper into his own antakarana. That is symbolically put.

So he entered into the palace of these wives.

उद्दामभावपिशुनामलवल्गुहास- व्रीडावलोकनिहतो मदनोऽपि यासाम् । सम्मुह्य
तापमजहोत्प्रमदोत्तमास्ता यस्येन्द्रियं विमथितुं कुहकैर्न शेकुः ॥ ३६ ॥
Uddāma-bhāva-piśunāmala-valgu-hāsa- vṛṭṭāvalokā-nihato madano 'pi yāsām |
sammuhya tāpam ajahāt pramadottamās tā yasyendriyaṁ vimathitum kuhakair
na śekuḥ || 36 ||

These ladies were extremely beautiful with charming smiles, looks and behaviour. Such were their beauties that even Kāmadeva would be helpless in front of them and would surrender unto them. But these ladies were absolutely incapable of creating any disturbance in the mind of the Lord. Though he was amidst all this, his mind was absolutely unaffected.

तमयं मन्यते लोको ह्यसङ्गमपि सङ्गिनम् । आत्मौपम्येन मनुजं व्यापृण्वानं यतोऽबुधः ॥ ३७ ॥
tam ayaṁ manyate loko hy asaṅgam api saṅginam | ātmaupamyena manujam
vyāpṛṇvānaṁ yato 'budhaḥ || 37 ||

But the ignorant people felt differently.

How do we make conclusions about others? I assume that how I behave and react to situations, the others also behave the same way. (eg: When I eat something that is salty, I imagine others will find it salty too. I eat sugar, it is sweet so everybody would find it sweet. When I am insulted, I become miserable so everybody will become miserable. This is how we imagine the condition of others and conclude about others. In the same way, all these people felt that when I see all these beautiful ladies, what happens to me, the same thing would be happening to Kṛṣṇa also. But Kṛṣṇa was absolutely detached. But ordinary people never understood his glory, they thought Kṛṣṇa is also attached. He is also running after women. This is very clearly written.

एतदीशानमीशस्य प्रकृतिस्थोऽपि तद्गुणैः । न युज्यते सदाऽऽत्मस्थैर्यथा बुद्धिस्तदाश्रया ॥ ३८ ॥
etad īśanam īśasya prakṛti-stho 'pi tad-guṇaiḥ | na yujyate śadā ātma-sthair
yathā buddhis tad-āśrayā || 38 ||

This is the Lordship of the Lord. Remaining in Prakṛti he remains unaffected by Prakṛti. Remaining in these gunas, he remains unaffected by these gunas.

An example is given: just like how the intellect is unaffected by its support. Consciousness supports thoughts. The nature of consciousness is Sat Chit Ānanda. Thoughts exist in consciousness but are unaffected by the properties of consciousness. Our mind is in ānanda svarūpa, it is in consciousness but the mind is totally unaffected by the properties of consciousness.

Consciousness is infinite but the mind experiences finitude. Consciousness is immortal, deathless, pure existence, but the mind experiences mortality. Consciousness is absolute bliss but the mind experiences misery. Just like the mind is unaffected by consciousness, in the same way Bhagavān was in Prakṛti but unaffected by it.

तं मेनिरेऽबला मूढाः स्त्रैणं चानुव्रतं रहः । अप्रमाणविदो भर्तुरीश्वरं मतयो यथा ॥ ३९ ॥
taṁ menire 'balā mūḍhāḥ straiṇaṁ cānuvratam rahaḥ | apramāṇa-vido bhartur
īśvaraṁ matayo yathā || 39 ||

All these ladies thought, I have conquered my husband. My husband will do only what I say. I will rule over him. This is what these ladies thought, not knowing his glory. He is the Lord of the universe but every lady thought, I have conquered him through my love.

For a person who has never studied Vedanta, and doesn't know about consciousness, completely ignores consciousness. In most of our cases, till you study Vedanta, consciousness is never given importance and we don't even pay attention to it. In fact there was a philosopher who said, 'I think therefore I am'. It's a famous statement. Means thinking comes first and then being. Consciousness is a function of thinking. It is a function of intellect, it is a bi-product. What is the main product? Intellect. And what does the intellect think of itself- sense organs function based on the mind and mind is ruled by me. Therefore I am the ultimate ruler. Consciousness is because of me only. Everything is functioning because of me, the intellect. I am the ruler and the decision maker. Unless I tell the mind, the mind cannot function. In this way the intellect thinks not knowing the glory of consciousness. Not knowing that the intellect is functioning because of consciousness. Sentiency is given to intellect by consciousness.

Intellect is inert but it thinks that the consciousness is just there but I only have to do everything. In this way all these ladies thought this Kṛṣṇa is under my control. They thought him to be a slave to the women. Thus they misunderstood the Lord. The point is, Bhagavān never tried to show off his glory. He lived like an ordinary human being. In spite of people telling them that this is Lord, the wives would think how can this be Lord? This is the greatness of the Lord. He always kept his greatness a secret. He was unaffected and untouched but for the external world he appeared very much like a worldly person. This is the Lordship of the Lord.

Then Śaunaka Ṛṣi said, O' Sūta Ṛṣi, I have a question. You spoke about Parīkṣit and he was protected in the womb. I want to know more about it. You just left that topic incomplete. So Śaunaka Ṛṣi would prompt and that is how these stories would come.

I want to know more about that particular story where Parīkṣit was protected in the womb.

Chapter 12 ॥ द्वादशोऽध्यायः ॥

सूत उवाच ।

अपीपलधर्मराजः पितृवद्रञ्जयन् प्रजाः । निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यः कृष्णपादाब्जसेवया ॥ ४ ॥

sūta uvāca |

apīpala-d dharmā-rājaḥ pitṛ-vad rañjayan prajāḥ | niḥsprṛhaḥ sarva-kāmebhyaḥ
kṛṣṇa-pādābja-sevayā || 4 ||

So this was when Yudhiṣṭhira was ruling the kingdom. The war was over. He ruled the kingdom and treated the people like his own children, like a father - affectionate, strict and disciplined. Everyone was pleased with Yudhiṣṭhira.

He ruled the kingdom as a worship of the Lord. That is why they are called Raja Ṛṣi. Raja plus Ṛṣi is Raja Ṛṣi. Ṛṣi is a spiritual person.

When you rule the kingdom as a spiritual sadhana performing your duties as a worship of the Lord, such a person is called a Raja Ṛṣi. He was surrounded by all kinds of comforts and power but his attitude was absolutely free from any kind of attachment or craving. He got it from his devotion. His devotion to the Lord was single pointed and this devotion to the Lord made him completely detached from any of the royal pleasures. Therefore he was an ideal king. A dharmārāja, and an embodiment of righteousness. Like a father he ruled the kingdom treating his subjects like his children.

सम्पदः क्रतवो लोका महिषी भ्रातरो मही । जम्बूद्वीपाधिपत्यं च यशश्च त्रिदिवं गतम् ॥ ५ ॥
sampadaḥ kratavo lokā mahiṣī bhrātaro mahī | jambūdvīpādhipatyam ca yaśaś
ca tridivam gatam || 5 ||

किं ते कामाः सुरस्पर्हा मुकुन्दमनसो द्विजाः । अधिजहुर्मदं राज्ञः क्षुधितस्य यथेतरे ॥ ६ ॥
kiṁ te kāmāḥ śura-spārhā mukunda-manaso | adhijahruḥ mudam rājñāḥ
kṣudhitasya yathetare || 6 ||

He had everything. There was wealth, and he had conducted all the famous yāgas like Aśvamedhayāga etc and therefore had conquered higher worlds. Swarga loka was guaranteed because he had done the yāgas. He had a very good and obedient wife, obedient brothers, and complete lordship over the world. He was the conqueror of the whole world. His fame was such that it had spread all over the world and in the three worlds. Even in Swarga loka. Even the devatas longed to have the kind of life which Yudhiṣṭhira had. The devatas were jealous of him. But his condition was such that all these things did not give him any joy. The external people thought Yudhiṣṭhira is so blessed and he is having a wonderful time but for him, his mind was in the Lord alone.

His condition was like when you are going through intense hunger. When you are very very hungry you will not be pleased by wealth or name and fame. When you are extremely hungry, nothing other than food will satisfy you. In the same way, this spiritual hunger cannot be satiated by worldly food. All this name, fame, power, position cannot satiate the spiritual hunger. It may satiate the egoistic hunger but when spiritual hunger comes, these things have absolutely no meaning. This is called vairāgya and mumukṣutvam. In Tattvabodha we studied the definition of Vairāgya but you see how beautifully through stories these things are brought out.

Dispassion is not hating anything. It is a sense of discontentment. You have everything but that is not truly fulfilling you. There is an intense spiritual need which cannot be fulfilled by all these materialistic possessions. Yudhiṣṭhira's mind was always in the Lord. This way he was ruling the kingdom. Here is one more thing we have to keep in mind. Spirituality has nothing to do with the external surroundings. It is not that spirituality can only be practiced in the āśramas or by sannyāsīs. Sannyāsa is living amidst everything but the mind is not craving for anything. Externally he may be a gr̥hastha but he is a true sannyāsī in the spirit of Bhagavad Gita. This is what is glorified in our scriptures. So running away from the world doesn't make you a sannyāsī. It is the internal renunciation, internal dispassion, the internal intense desire for liberation makes you truly spiritual. This is what we find in Yudhiṣṭhira.

We now come to the topic asked by Śaunaka Ṛṣi- related to the birth of Parīkṣit.

मातुर्गर्भगतो वीरस्स तदा भृगुनन्दन । ददर्श पुरुषं कञ्चिद्दह्यमानोऽस्त्रतेजसा ॥ ७ ॥
mātur garbha-gato vīras tadā bhr̥gu-nāndana | dādarśa puruṣaṁ kañcid
dahyamāno 'stra-tejasā || 7 ||

As we discussed earlier, Aśvatthāmā had released Brahmāstra to cut that family lineage. Abimanyu and Uttarā's baby was growing in the womb. This incident happened roughly around the 10th month. The baby was scorching in the heat of Brahmāstra. It was literally burning him. At that time he saw one being. A human being. He did not know who he was.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रममलं स्फुरत्पुरटमौलिनम् । अपीच्यदर्शनं श्यामं तडिद्वाससमच्युतम् ॥ ८ ॥
aṅguṣṭha-mātram amalaṁ sphurat-puraṭa-maulinam | apīcya-darśanaṁ śyāmaṁ
taḍid-vāsasam acyutam || 8 ||

श्रीमददीर्घचतुर्बाहुं तप्तकाञ्चनकुण्डलम् । क्षतजाक्षं गदापाणिमात्मनः सर्वतो दिशम् ॥ ९ ॥
Śrīmad dīrgha-ṣatur-bāhuṁ tapta-kāñcana-kunḍalam | kṣatajākṣaṁ gadā-pāṇim
ātmanaḥ sarvato diśam || 9 ||

The baby inside the womb saw a being of the size of a thumb. Very pure. His crown was made of shining gold and He was extremely handsome and beautiful.

He was blue as a rain cloud wearing a yellow garment that was shining like lightning. His four Hands were long and earrings were shining like molten gold. His eyes were red carrying a gada, and he was going round and round this baby.

परिभ्रमन्तमुल्काभां भ्रामयन्तं गदां मुहुः अस्त्रतेजः स्वगदया नीहारमिव गोपतिः । विधमन्तं
सन्निकर्षे पर्येक्षत क इत्यसौ ॥ १० ॥
paribhramantam ulkābhāṁ bhrāmāyāntam gadāṁ muhuḥ | astra-tejah
sva-gadayā nīhāram iva gopatiḥ | vidhamantaṁ sannikarṣe paryaikṣata ka
ityasau || 10 ||

This being was going round and round and the gada was shining like a fire stick. He was whirling the gada and as he was doing that, this tejas of Brahmāstra was getting absorbed into it. He was destroying that intense heat of that Brahmāstra. This was just like how in the heat of the sun, the mist disappears. In the same way, by whirling the gada, He was taking away all the tejas of the Brahmāstra. Baby Parīkṣit saw this and wondered, who is this? That is why his name was Parīkṣit. He came out and was searching who was that person who did this.

विधूय तदमेयात्मा भगवान् धर्मगुब्बिभुः । मिषतो दशमास्यस्य तत्रैवान्तर्दधे हरिः ॥ ११ ॥
vidhūya tad ameyātmā Bhagavān dharmā-gur vibhuḥ | miṣato daśamāsyasya
tatraivāntardadhe hariḥ || 11 ||

The comparison of the power of the missile vanishing is like the mist and the sun. Even Brahmāstra is like a droplet of water compared to Bhagavān's tejas. Where is the sun and where is mist. The comparison given is so beautiful. In front of Bhagavān's power, all this Brahmāstra etc is nothing. That Bhagavān of mysterious deeds, that protector of dharmā, after having completely diffused the power of Brahmāstra just disappeared. As this 10 month old baby was looking, Bhagavān just disappeared.

ततः सर्वगुणोदरके सानुकूलग्रहोदये । जज्ञे वंशधरः पाण्डोर्भूयः पाण्डुरिवौजसा ॥ १२ ॥
tataḥ sarvagūṇodarke sānukūlagrahodaye jajñe vaṁśadharāḥ pāṇḍorbhūyaḥ
pāṇḍur ivaujasā || 12 ||

And then at that auspicious time, when all planets were in their auspicious position this baby was born who later continued the Pandu lineage. This baby was so radiant and tejasvī that people thought Pandu himself was born.

तस्य प्रीतमना राजा विप्रैर्धौम्यकृपादिभिः । जातकं कारयामास वाचयित्वा च मङ्गलम् ॥ १३ ॥
tasya prīta-manā rājā viprair dhaumya-kṛpādibhiḥ, jātakam kārayām āsa
vācayitvā ca maṅgalam. || 13 ||

The king was extremely happy. There was somebody to carry on the lineage. He called all the ācāryas. Kripacharya, Dhaumya, all of them came and then they did the post natal ceremony chanting all the purificatory mantras.

हिरण्यं गां महीं ग्रामान् हस्त्यश्वान् नृपतिर्वरान् । प्रादात्स्वन्नं च विप्रेभ्यः प्रजातीर्थे स तीर्थवित् ॥ १४ ॥
hiranyaṁ gāṁ mahīm grāmān hastyasvān nṛpatirvarān | prādātsvannaṁ ca
viprebhyaḥ prajātīrthe sa tīrthavit || 14 ||

This verse talks about the king who knew the importance of giving gifts and charity on such auspicious occasions.

These are all the teachings given. Through Bhāgavatam, Veda Vyāsa tells us how to live. All these are indications. On auspicious occasions we all must do

charity according to our strength, capabilities etc. Such a king who knew the importance of giving charity on such auspicious occasions gave gold, cows, land, villages, elephants. Maintenance of elephants is a big headache. So when you give an elephant you should also give the means to sustain the elephant. Only then it is proper charity otherwise the person will only curse you.

So, elephants were given, horses, the best ones were given. Also very tasty food was offered to Brahmānas. Generally, the higher you go, the lesser your demands are. These Brahmānas were the poorest in those times because they would serve without expecting anything. They would not ask anything. Whatever comes, fine and sometimes people don't even give but that doesn't stop these Brahmānas. They go on serving.

Brahmānas are not supposed to bargain. They are the best, so they need to be a role model. All their service to society is supposed to be free. So all these things were given to them.

तमूचुर्ब्राह्मणास्तुष्टा राजानं प्रश्रयान्वितम् । एष ह्यस्मिन् प्रजातन्तौ पुरुषां पौरवर्षभ ॥ १५ ॥
tamūcurbrāhmaṇāstuṣṭā rājānaṁ praśrayānvitam | eṣa hyasmin prajātanta
purūṇāṁ pauravarṣabha || 15 ||

दैवेनाप्रतिघातेन शुक्ले संस्थामुपेयुषि । रातो वोऽनुग्रहार्थाय विष्णुना प्रभविष्णुना ॥ १६ ॥
daivenāpratighātena śukle saṁsthāmupeyuṣi | rāto vo'nugrahārthāya viṣṇunā
prabhaviṣṇunā || 16 ||

These Brahmānas were very happy with the way in which charity was given. Both with what was given and with what attitude it was given. Both are important. Even when the king was giving all these things, he was very humble, very cordial and respectful.

In all this humility when these Brahmāns saw this king they were extremely happy and told something to this king that till then nobody was aware of. Whatever we discussed, the child knew but could not say. Bhagavān knew but Bhagavān was not there so who will say? Then these Brahmānas said this baby of yours who is going to continue this lineage had actually died. No one can change the law of karma. Whatever prārabdha karma is there, you have to just go through it. According to that prārabdha karma this baby was supposed to die. So, this child is literally a gift to you. This is the second life of this child. You have given so much charity to us O' Yudhiṣṭhira but actually this child is a charity by the Lord to you. He is the all powerful who can do anything.

They were living a life of righteousness so they had that power and thus they told him.

तस्मान्नाम्ना विष्णुरात इति लोके बृहच्छ्रवाः । भविष्यति न सन्देहो महाभागवतो महान् ॥ १७ ॥

tasmanñāmnā viṣṇurāta iti loka bṛhacchravāḥ | bhaviṣyati na sandeho
mahābhāgavato mahān || 17 ||

Therefore since he was gifted, blessed and given by the Lord therefore he will be known all over the world as Viṣṇu rāta - protected by Viṣṇu, blessed by Viṣṇu, gifted by Viṣṇu. So Viṣṇu rāta is the second name of Parīkṣit. No doubt this child will become a great devotee of the Lord.

युधिष्ठिर उवाच ।

अप्येष वंश्यान् राजर्षीन् पुण्यश्लोकान् महात्मनः । अनुवर्तिता स्विद्यशसा साधुवादेन सत्तमाः ॥
१८ ॥

yudhiṣṭhira uvāca |

apyeṣa vaṁśyān rājarṣīn puṇyaślokān mahātmanah | anuvartitā svidyaśasā
sādhuvādena sattamāḥ || 18 ||

Yudhiṣṭhira asked, O' Brāhmaṇāḥs he is the one who will continue the lineage. Will he follow the footsteps of his ancestors? Because this vaṁśa is very prestigious. Will he be good and righteous? Will he keep up the name or will he bring a bad name. That worry is always there when a child is born. Will he follow the footsteps of his ancestors? Will he bring good fame? The wise people in the society should praise that person. What the sadhus are talking about this person is important. This concern was there.

ब्राह्मणा ऊचुः ।

पार्थ प्रजाविता साक्षादिक्ष्वाकुरिव मानवः । ब्रह्मण्यः सत्यसन्धश्च रामो दाशरथिर्यथा ॥ १९ ॥
brāhmaṇā ūcuḥ |

pārtha prajāvitā sāksādikṣvākuriva mānavah | brahmaṇyaḥ satyasandhaśca
rāmo dāśarathiryaṭhā || 19 ||

The glory of Parīkṣit is mentioned, taking one by one the reference to his ancestors. With respect to protecting the Prajā he will be like Mānavah (Manu puta is called Mānavah). We are all called Manava because we are the descendants of Manu. In English also we say man. He will show extreme reverence to holy men. He will walk the path of righteousness like Rama, the son of Dāśaratha.

एष दाता शरण्यश्च यथा ह्यौशीनरः शिबिः । यशो वितनिता स्वानां दौष्यन्तिरिव यज्वनाम् ॥
२० ॥

eṣa dātā śaraṇyaśca yathā hyauśīnarah śibiḥ | yaśo vitanitā svānām
dauṣyantiriva yajvanām || 20 ||

In charity, in protecting the refugees, he will be like Śibi the King of Uśīnara.

Śibi was very famous for charity and protecting refugees. One day Indra and Agni devata decided to test him. So Indra took the form of a hawk and Agni took the form of a small dove. The hawk started chasing the dove and the dove came

to Śibi and said, please protect me. This hawk is going to kill me and eat me. Śibi told the hawk, anyone who takes shelter unto me, it is my duty to protect. What do you want? So the Hawk said this is my food why are you unnecessarily interfering.

There are certain laws, so just allow. Śibi said no, this dove has come to me, it is my duty to protect it. Tell me what do you want? So the hawk said, I want my food, I am hungry. Śibi said, don't worry how much ever this dove weighs, I will give you that much flesh from my body. Thus, he weighed the dove and just took a knife, cut the flesh from his thigh. Flesh was kept, it was weighed and given. He did not care about his own life. Immediately the Hawk and the dove gave up their disguise and came in front and said we just wanted to test your sense of righteousness and charity and we are very pleased. That is the story of Śibi.

As far as spreading fame is concerned, doing all the yajñas etc. Aśvamedhayajña is one common one that spreads the fame of the king in so many places. Because in Aśvamedhayajña a horse is sent. Anyone who has any problem with the emperor ties up the horse. Others should not touch it. Not touching means we accept your rulership. In spreading fame, he will be like Dauṣyanti. The son of Duṣyanta, was Bharata. In fact our country is named Bharat because of Bharata only. He united the whole continent under his rule therefore the country is called Bharata. So in spreading fame he will be like Bharata.

धन्विनामग्रणीरेष तुल्यश्चार्जुनयोर्द्वयोः । हुताश इव दुर्धर्षः समुद्र इव दुस्तरः ॥ २१ ॥
dhanvināmagraṇīreṣa tulyaścāṛjunayordvayoḥ | hutāśa ivā durdharṣaḥ samudra
iva dustaraḥ || 21 ||

Among the archers he will be foremost like the two Ārjunas. Pāṇḍava Ārjuna and kārtavīryārjuna. The glory of Pāṇḍava Arjuna we know but the glory of kārtavīryārjuna is that he had thousand hands and was very very powerful. There is a story in tulsī Ramāyāna. One day he saw Rāvaṇa with ten hands. He just caught hold of him and put him in a zoo. So he defeated Rāvaṇa and defeated Indra also. He was considered a person who could defeat and fight anyone and he became extremely proud and arrogant because of that strength.

One day he went to Jamadagni (Parāshurama's father). Jamadagni had kāmadhenu at that time and kārtavīryārjuna said, I want it, give it. Jamadagni did not give it. So Kārtavīryārjuna killed Jamadagni and took away kāmadhenu.

When Parāshurama came to know about this, he thought all these kings had become arrogant because of their power. I am going to teach them a lesson. That is how Parāshurama starts destroying the warrior race. The Kṣatriya Parāmpara was destroyed for 21 generations.

So Parāshurama kills kārtavīryārjuna. This kārtavīryārjuna at one time was very powerful and no one could match him. So as far as archers are concerned he will be like Pāṇḍava Arjuna and kārtavīryārjuna.

He will be formidable, like Hutāśa. Fire is called Hutāśa. हुतम् अश्नाति इति हुताशः (hutam aśnāti iti hutāśaḥ). The name itself is constructed in such a way that it tells you what it is. It means the one who eats anything that is offered to it. He is fire. That is how the name is constructed. Very strong and powerful which evokes fear, admiration, respect. That is called durdharṣa.

He will be unsurpassable like the ocean.

मृगेन्द्र इव विक्रान्तो निषेव्यो हिमवानिव । तितिक्षुर्वसुधेवासौ सहिष्णुः पितराविव ॥ २२ ॥
mrgendra iva vikrānto niṣevyo himavāniva | tītikṣurvasudhevāsau sahiṣṇuḥ
pitarāviva || 22 ||

He will be valorous like mrgendra- lion, the king among all animals. Lordly like the Himalayas. In forbearance he will be like mother Earth. In forgiving he will be like parents.

पितामहसमः साम्ये प्रसादे गिरिशोपमः । आश्रयः सर्वभूतानां यथा देवो रमाश्रयः ॥ २३ ॥
pitāmahasamaḥ sām्यe prasāde giriśopamaḥ | āśrayaḥ sarvabhūtānāṁ yathā
devo ramāśrayaḥ || 23 ||

In impartiality, he will be like Brahmā ji because all are his children and he is impartial to all his children, be it devatās or asurās.

He will be quickly pleased like Lord Shiva and he will give protection to all just like Viṣṇu (where रमा (ramā) takes āśrayaḥ- ramā is Lakshmi).

सर्वसद्गुणमाहात्म्ये एष कृष्णमनुव्रतः । रन्तिदेव इवोदारो ययातिरिव धार्मिकः ॥ २४ ॥
sarvasadguṇamāhātmye eṣa kṛṣṇamanuvrataḥ | rantideva ivodāro yayātiriva
dhārmikaḥ || 24 ||

In all noble virtues he will be like Kṛṣṇa. Very charitable like Rantideva. Rantideva's charity is very famous. There was a famine in the country. Rantideva stayed there with his wife and children. Due to the famine everyone was starving. At that time, some Brahmāna came and took pity upon him and gave him a lot of rice, ghee, water etc. The wife was very happy and started cooking all that and they sat down to eat. At that time, they heard a knock at the door. They opened. There was a Brahmāna who said, I am very hungry. So one portion of the food was given.

Again they sat to eat and again another knock. One śūdra came and said, I am very hungry. So another portion was given. Again they sat. At that time a caṇḍāla came with a lot of dogs and said I have nothing and these dogs also have not

eaten. To feed all these they gave everything and nothing was left. Finally they thought, at least God you have given water we can at least drink water. At that time again somebody came. That water was also taken away and they were preparing to die.

At that time Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheshwara came they said we only came in different forms and they blessed him. This is the greatness of Rantideva. They said we have come to bless you, what do you want? He said, Lord, give us devotion unto your lotus feet. Let the pain of each and everyone be my pain. When somebody suffers let me feel it as my suffering. So Rantideva was considered a great personality.

He will be righteous like Yayāti. Yayāti was another famous king. But he was famous for taking the youth of his son and indulging in all sense pleasures. Finally he understood his mistake and returned the youth to his son. But how was he righteous, we don't know. There are so many stories that are no longer available.

धृत्या बलिसमः कृष्णे प्रह्लाद इव सद्ग्रहः । आहर्तैषोऽश्वमेधानां वृद्धानां पर्युपासकः ॥ २५ ॥
 dhṛtyā balisamaḥ kṛṣṇe prahlāda iva sadgrahaḥ |
 āhartaiṣo'śvamedhānāṁ vṛddhānāṁ paryupāsakaḥ || 25 ||

In courage and firmness, he will be like Maharaja Bali. Even when his Guru said Viṣṇu is coming to cheat you in a Vamana form, Bali said, I have given a vow, whoever asks I will give. That is dhairyam.

With respect to devotion to Kṛṣṇa, he will be like Prahlāda. He will perform so many Aśvamedha yāgas, he will be a support for all the elderly people.

These are the values of a king and the standards and ideals you have to follow based on the scriptures. Such a person then becomes a Rajaṛṣi.

राजर्षीणां जनयिता शास्ता चोत्पथगामिनाम् । निग्रहीता कलेरेष भुवो धर्मस्य कारणात् ॥ २६ ॥
 rājarṣīṇāṁ janayitā śāstā cotpathagāminām |
 nigrahītā kalereṣa bhuvo dharmasya kāraṇāt || 26 ||

He will be a father of rājarṣis, and a punisher for all evil doers. He will check the advent of kali and live for the sake of Earth and dharmā and protect them from the advent of kali.

तक्षकादात्मनो मृत्युं द्विजपुत्रोपसर्जितात् । प्रपत्स्यत उपश्रुत्य मुक्तसङ्गः पदं हरेः ॥ २७ ॥
 takṣakādātmano mṛtyuṁ dvijaputropasarjitāt | prapatsyata upaśrutya
 muktasaṅgaḥ padam hareḥ || 27 ||

Finally, he will be cursed by the son of Brahmāna that he will die in seven days by the biting of takṣaka. He will then renounce everything and take refuge at the lotus feet of the Lord.

जिज्ञासितात्मयाथात्म्यो मुनेर्व्याससुतादसौ । हित्वेदं नृप गङ्गायां यास्यत्यद्धाकुतोभयम् ॥
२८॥

jijñāsītātmayāthātmyo munervyāsasutādasau | hitvedam nṛpa gaṅgāyām
yāsyatyaddhākutobhayam || 28 ||

Finally, he will be given the highest knowledge by the son of Vyāsa, Śuka Brahmā Rṣi. He will ask about self knowledge. This self knowledge will be given by Śuka Brahmā Rṣi and he will give up this body at Ganga and then attain that state of fearlessness.

Imagine what astrologers they must be! Everything they predicted from birth to death as it is. Here, one more thing we have to see. For Parīkṣit, according to his prārabdha karma he was supposed to die in the womb. But devotion for God can even efface our prārabdha karma. These are some of the things we have to notice.

It is said दैवेन अप्रतिघातेन (daivena apratighātena). It is true, prārabdha karma cannot be changed. But there is something which the grace of God can do. That is why astrologers say this time is not good for you but go to this temple, do this pūjā. There is an option- invoke the grace of God.

Prārabdha karma is not final. With the grace of God it can be effaced, affected. Bhagavān is all powerful. He is sarvaśaktimān and can efface the prārabdha karma of somebody. It is possible.

इति राज्ञ उपादिश्य विप्रा जातककोविदाः । लब्धापचितयः सर्वे प्रतिजग्मुः स्वकान् गृहान् ॥ २९ ॥
iti rājña upādīśya viprā jātakakovidāḥ | labdhāpacitayaḥ sarve pratijagmuḥ
svakān gṛhān || 29 ||

In this way, the masters of astrology, after predicting the future of the child, got rich presents from the king and all of them returned to their homes.

स एष लोके विख्यातः परीक्षिदिति यत्प्रभुः । गर्भे दृष्टमनुध्यायन् परीक्षेत नरेष्विह ॥ ३० ॥
sa eṣa loke vikhyātaḥ parīkṣiditi yatprabhuḥ | garbhe drṣṭamanudhyāyan
parīkṣeta nareṣviha || 30 ||

This baby grew up and was famously known as Parīkṣit as all the time he was remembering and meditating upon what he saw in the womb. Parīkṣit was doing Pariksha and Pariksha means test. He was always constantly checking, was this the man that I saw in that thumb sized puruṣam? Therefore his name became Parīkṣit.

स राजपुत्रो ववृधे आशु शुक्ल इवोदुपः । आपूर्यमाणः पितृभिः काष्ठाभिरिव सोऽन्वहम् ॥ ३१ ॥
sa rājaputro vavṛdhe āśu śukla ivoḍupaḥ | āpūryamāṇaḥ pitṛbhiḥ kāṣṭhābhiriva
so'nvaham || 31 ||

This baby Parīkṣit started growing up very fast. He was well fed and well taken care of by all the Pāṇḍavas. This is the advantage of a joint family. He had no father, but mother was there. All Pāṇḍavas were there, grandmother and great grandmother were also there. See how many layers of protection. All his personalities were taken care of. Physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual. He grew very fast like how the moon grows from new moon to full moon. He learnt everything - 64 kalas, arts, sciences everything. He grew to lead the entire nation and would make the candravamśa lineage proud.

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Session 14

[Chapter 12 verse 32- Chapter 13 verse 24]

यक्ष्यमाणोऽश्वमेधेन जातिद्रोहजिहासया । राजालब्धधनो दध्यावन्यत्र करदण्डयोः ॥ ३२ ॥
yakṣyamāṇo'śvamedhena jñātidrohajihāsayā | rājālabdhadhano dadhyāvanyatra
karadaṇḍayoḥ || 32 ||

This was when the war was over. The economy of the country was in shambles. Especially after a war, the condition of a country is pathetic. Raja had a great desire to do aśvamedha yāga as an act of atonement - prāyaścitta karma as so many friends and relatives were dead. So that guilt was there, conscious prick was there. But unfortunately he did not have any money to do Aśvamedha yāga. A lot of money and expenditure is needed in doing it. The only wealth he had was the money that you get from tax and punishment. The government has only two sources of money- taxes and fines and if the people are very righteous, there is no fine only. He did not know what to do, he had no idea where the money would come from. He was completely helpless. He wanted to do this yāga but at the same time there was no money. The करदण्ड (karadaṇḍa) available was only sufficient for running the country. For extra expenses he did not have any money. He was completely helpless as a lot of money was needed. Then he surrendered to Bhagavān and Bhagavān has his own ways.

तदभिप्रेतमालक्ष्य भ्रातरोऽच्युतचोदिताः धनं प्रहीणमाजहुरुदीच्यां दिशि भूरिशः ॥ ३३ ॥
tadabhipretamālakṣya bhrātaro'cyutacoditāḥ | dhaṇam prahīṇamājahrurudīcyaṁ
diśi bhūriśaḥ || 33 ||

Bhagavān understood the need of Yudhiṣṭhira. Even before we have a desire, a need, Bhagavān knows it. And especially a person like Yudhiṣṭhira who will never spend any money unwantedly, in the wrong place. Bhagavān decided to fulfill it.

There was once a great king in their own lineage whose name was Maruta. He was a very rich king who did a lot of Aśvamedha yāga. To such an extent he was popular and rich that Indra himself came as ṛtvik in his yāga. Such was the glory of King Maruttaḥ. But he did not have any children and therefore he was very sad. So whatever wealth he had, he went to the Himalayas and offered it to Himavān. He had a mountain heap of gold, jewellery, vessels, all made of gold and he put everything in the cave. This was not known to many but Bhagavān knew it. Veda Vyāsa Ṛṣi and Markandeya Ṛṣi also knew it. Then Bhagavān said you will get the money. Go to the Himalayas and send your brothers there. The brothers went and did a search. It was kept buried. They took the money and came back. From unexpected quarters devotees are protected. There is no logic.

If Bhagavān has decided, the money will come. Especially for a king like Yudhiṣṭhira. Unexpectedly they got a huge amount of money.

तेन सम्भृतसम्भारो धर्मपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः । वाजिमेधैस्त्रिभिर्भूतो यज्ञैः समयजद्धरिम् ॥ ३४ ॥
tena sambhṛtasambhāro dharmaputro yudhiṣṭhirah | vājimedhaistribhirbhūto
yajñaiḥ samayajaddharim || 34 ||

With that wealth, he procured all materials for conducting the yāga. Yudhiṣṭhira who even now had that conscious prick, as some sin must have been done knowingly or unknowingly in the war. The solution provided by ancestors was that Aśvamedha yāga should be done. Not one yāga, he did three and Aśvamedha yāga was done as a worship to the Lord.

आहूतो भगवान् राजा याजयित्वा द्विजैर्नृपम् । उवास कतिचिन्मासान् सुहृदां प्रियकाम्यया ॥
३५ ॥
āhūto bhagavān rājā yājayitvā dvijairnṛpam | uvāsa katicinmāsān suhṛdām
priyakāmyayā || 35 ||

So when this yāga was done Yudhiṣṭhira had invited Kṛṣṇa. So it was Bhagavān himself who made Yudhiṣṭhira do all the yāga and it was Bhagavān himself who appointed all the priests. Thus, Bhagavān made Yudhiṣṭhira do the yāga and Bhagavān remained with them for a few months to please and console them.

ततो राजाभ्यनुज्ञातः कृष्णया सहबन्धुभिः । ययौ द्वारवतीं ब्रह्मन् सार्जुनो यदुभिवृतः ॥ ३६ ॥
āhūto bhagavān rājā yājayitvā dvijairnṛpam | uvāsa katicinmāsān suhṛdām
priyakāmyayā || 35 ||

Finally after everything was done, permitted by the king along with the relatives, Bhagavān returned to Dvārakā accompanied by Arjuna.

Chapter 13 ॥ त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः ॥

सूत उवाच ।

विदुरस्तीर्थयात्रायां मैत्रेयादात्मनो गतिम् । ज्ञात्वागाद्धास्तिनपुरं तयावाप्तविवित्सितः ॥ १ ॥
sūta uvāca |
vidurastīrthayātrāyām maitreyādātmano gatim | jñātvāgāddhāstinapuram
tayāvāptavivitsitaḥ || 1 ||

What was Vidura (dāsīputra) doing at that time? Vidura was very wise and righteous. Satyavatī had two children - Citrāṅgada and Vicitravīrya. Citrāṅgada was killed by another Citrāṅgada who was a gandharva. He was the elder brother. He died so Vicitravīrya became the king. But unfortunately Vicitravīrya happened to be impotent. So mother was concerned, who would rule the kingdom. So we had Ambika and Ambalika and mother called Vyāsa Ṛṣi. Vyāsa Ṛṣi was also son of Satyavatī through Parāshara Ṛṣi. Then she said you have to

do Niyoga. When the husband is not capable in the family you call someone to ensure that the lineage is there.

Vyāsa Ṛṣi was in intense tapas at that time. Intense tapas means massive matted locks, not taken a bath for so many days, stinking because he didn't care about the body and his state was at a different level. That is the time when Vyāsa Ṛṣi was called. In fact Vyāsa Ṛṣi had absolutely no interest in all this. But it is mother's command what can you do? So Vyāsa Ṛṣi told mother, what child will be born will depend upon the attitude, the reaction of the lady.

Satyavati then called Ambika. Looking at Vyāsa Ṛṣi, Ambika closed her eyes and united with Vyāsa Ṛṣi. Thus was born Dhṛtarāṣṭra, blind. Then came Ambalika, she became pale. Just imagine that Ṛṣi. So the son born was pale and hence the name Pandu. Pandu means white. Then Satyavati realised the mistake and asked Ambika to go again but Satyavati refused and she sent her servant. That dāsī had tremendous amount of reverence for Vyāsa Ṛṣi and she knew his greatness. This is the greatness of a person - do you see the external imperfection or the internal perfection. That lady was highly mature and a great devotee and she knew the greatness of Vyāsa Ṛṣi so with all reverence all devotion she united with Vyāsa Ṛṣi and thus was born this great personality called Vidura so we can say that literally Vyāsa Ṛṣi's greatness descended into Vidura.

When the war was decided, he tried his level best to prevent the war but when it became unavoidable Vidura said I will not be a party to this, I am going away. He just went on a pilgrimage. There he met Maitreya Ṛṣi. That portion comes in the third canto. There Vidura asks a lot of questions and Maitreya Ṛṣi starts answering them. Having gained the knowledge of the Self from Maitreya Ṛṣi, he returned to Hastinapura. Whatever he wanted to know he knew, he was satisfied, he was fulfilled.

यावतः कृतवान् प्रश्नान् क्षत्ता कौषारवाग्रतः । जातैकभक्तिर्गोविन्दे तेभ्यश्चोपरराम ह ॥ २ ॥
yāvataḥ kṛtavān praśnān kṣattā kauṣāravāgrataḥ | jātāika-bhaktir govinde
tebhyaś copararāma ha || 2 ||

The interesting thing is, he had asked many questions to Maitreya Ṛṣi but the moment his heart was filled with devotion for God, he did not wait to get answers for other questions. Now all my questions appear so stupid and insignificant. This is what happens in spirituality. In the beginning there are big questions, but slowly you come to know that the questioner himself doesn't exist. Why am I giving importance to the questions of a non-existent questioner. He stopped and returned. His heart filled with Bhagavān's love and that's all that matters.

तं बन्धुमागतं दृष्ट्वा धर्मपुत्रः सहानुजः । धृतराष्ट्रो युयुत्सुश्च सूतः शारद्वतः पृथा ॥ ३ ॥
taṁ bandhumāgataṁ dr̥ṣṭvā dharmaputrah sahanūjah | dhṛtarāṣṭro yuyutsuśca
sūtaḥ śāradvataḥ pr̥thā || 3 ||

गान्धारी द्रौपदी ब्रह्मन् सुभद्रा चोत्तरा कृपी । अन्याश्च जामयः पाण्डोर्जातयः ससुताः स्त्रियः ॥
४॥

gāndhārī Draupadī brahman subhadra cottarā krpī | anyāśca jāmayaḥ
pāṇḍorjñātayaḥ sasutāḥ striyaḥ || 4 ||

And when everyone came to know that Vidura has come back, all of them came running. They had not seen Vidura for a long time.

Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Yuyutsu, Sūtaha (Sanjaya the charioteer of Dhṛtarāṣṭra), Kripacharya, Gandhari, Draupadī, Subhadra, Uttara, Kripī (Droṇācārya's wife), all relatives of Pandu and acquaintances. Women along with children all came. This shows how much they loved and revered Vidura.

प्रत्युज्जग्मुः प्रहर्षेण प्राणं तन्व इवागतम् । अभिसङ्गम्य विधिवत्परिष्वङ्गाभिवादनैः ॥ ५॥
pratyujjāgmuḥ praharṣeṇa prāṇaṁ tanva ivāgatam | abhisangamy vidhivat
pariṣvaṅgābhivādanaiḥ || 5 ||

मुमुचुः प्रेमबाष्पौघं विरहौत्कण्ठ्यकातराः । राजा तमर्हयाञ्चक्रे कृतासनपरिग्रहम् ॥ ६॥
mumucuḥ premabāṣpaughaṁ virahautkaṇṭhyakātarāḥ | rājā tamarhayāñcakre
kṛtāsanaparigraham || 6 ||

When Vidura came, there was so much joy in the hearts of all. When life comes into a dead body, all the pranas become active. In the same way, Vidura's coming was like life infused into a dead body. Everybody became alive with joy. Some prostrated to Vidura, some embraced him. There was a flood of tears in their eyes. They loved him and were miserable due to the sorrow of his absence.

He was made to sit on a respectable āsana and they all sat and worshipped him. Vidura was the son of a dāsī putra but just see the love, respect and reverence he commanded from the people. This is the truth of life. Who cares about who your father and mother are? What is important is who you are. A society will respect you based on your contribution towards the society, depending on your virtues.

तं भुक्तवन्तं विश्रान्तमासीनं सुखमासने । प्रश्रयावनतो राजा प्राह तेषां च शृण्वताम् ॥ ७॥
taṁ bhuktavantaṁ viśrāntamāsīnaṁ sukhamaśane | praśrayāvanato rājā prāha
teṣāṁ ca śṛṇvatām || 7 ||

Immediately they didn't start asking questions. Only after he ate properly and took rest and after that when he was seated comfortably, Yudhiṣṭhira approached him with all humility and respect. He sat at Vidura's feet and the king asked in such a way that everybody could hear.

Yudhiṣṭhira's character was so great and everywhere he was so humble. We have to learn how to be humble like him.

युधिष्ठिर उवाच ।

अपि स्मरथ नो युष्मत्पक्षच्छायासमेधितान् । विपद्गणाद्विषाग्न्यादेर्मोचिता यत्समातृकाः ॥ ८ ॥

yudhiṣṭhira uvāca ।

api smaratha no yuṣmatpakṣacchāyāsamedhitān । vipadgaṇādvīṣāgnyādermocitā
yat samātrkāḥ ॥ 8 ॥

O' father, do you remember how you used to protect all of us and our mother? The example used here is, just like a bird taking all its babies in its wings. The moment the mother sees an eagle, her eyes bulge out and she makes a warning sound and spreads her wings. All the babies understand there is danger and run inside the wings and she closes it.

O' father there was a time when our father was not there and our mother was very young and a lot of atrocities were happening to us. On one side there were a hundred rowdies, unrighteous people and here we were only five, without a father. We had nobody other than a young mother. At that time you were the one who protected us from so many dangers.

You protected us from viṣam: kauravāḥs used to bully Pāṇḍavas. At that time the only one who would give back was Bhima and they were all scared of Bhima. He would beat them left and right and no one had the courage to go anywhere near him. So everybody thought this fellow should be killed otherwise there is a problem. He loved food. So they prepared nice food and put kālakūṭa viṣaya in it and gave him. He ate and became unconscious. They then tied his hands and legs and threw him in the ganga. Other Pāṇḍavas did not know. When the Pāṇḍavas came back they saw Bhima is missing. They panicked. But actually Bhima was saved. He reached nāgaloka and there, the snake started biting him and that bite became a blessing that took away all the poison. Then he reached the king of nagas, Vasuki. Vasuki recognised him and he was royally treated and was given something to drink. With that drink he became strong and got the strength of ten thousand elephants. That is how he comes back. By then, it was Vidura who was consoling everybody. There was panic and Vidura was there as a fatherly figure who told them not to worry. He has a lot of things to do in future, nothing will happen to him. Vidura was none other than Dharmāraj who had come because of a curse.

Let me tell the story of how Dharmāraj (Yamaraj) was born as Vidura.

There was a great Ṛṣi called Māṇḍavya Ṛṣi who was doing tapas in his kuṭiyā. Some thieves had stolen from the royal treasury and were running and were chased by the soldiers. They came to the āśram of Māṇḍavya Ṛṣi. They knew they will be caught so they took all the stolen items and put inside the hut of the Ṛṣi and ran away. Later the soldiers came while the Ṛṣi was sitting in meditation. They started searching and found all goods inside the hut and concluded that this

R̥ṣi is a fake one and has stolen everything and now is sitting. So they caught him and told the king that everything was found in his hut.

Without even investigating further, the king decided to punish him. The punishment was that a spear will be pierced and he will be left to die. So he was hanging alive in that pierced condition and left to die. Generally a person dies in 2-3 days but months passed and the R̥ṣi still did not die. The king understood there had been some mistake. All of them prostrated to the R̥ṣi and they started removing the spear. As they removed the spear it broke and one part got left inside and there was extreme pain. His name became Śūla-Māṇḍavya. That in whom part of the spear got stuck. Anyways the king said, O' R̥ṣi please forgive us, don't curse. But that R̥ṣi did not curse the king because as far as the king was concerned, he was righteous, but the R̥ṣi was so powerful. He went to Yamadharmāraj in Yama loka and asked why did you give this punishment to me. So then Yamaraj said when you were a child, you had caught an insect and pierced it with grass. Therefore for that pāpa done, karma has come back as karma phala. Then Māṇḍavya R̥ṣi said, this was when I was a small child and when such sins are done in ignorance because at that time there is no ego. Karma phala can come only when there is Karma. Karma is actions done when there is a sense of doership. As a small child there is no sense of doership. How can you punish me? Since you have given this punishment without proper thought, you must also suffer. Therefore I curse you that you will be born upon earth for a hundred years and you will live as a son of a servant.

That is how Dharmāraj became Vidura where he was ignored and disrespected. He led this life because of the curse from Māṇḍavya R̥ṣi.

Therefore, throughout his life, Vidura was virtuous and righteous as those qualities were there in him. Therefore you will find that Bhagavān also loved him so much.

There is a story which is very famous. Once when Bhagavān came as a messenger, he did not go to Duryodhana's palace. He went to Vidura's house. Vidura's wife, Sulabha was an extremely devoted and pious lady. She was so happy when Bhagavān came that she peeled the banana and started feeding the peel! Bhagavān also did not remind her to give him the banana. He ate the peel. So, Vidura was great and his wife was also great.

Vidura always supported Pāṇḍavas because they were very good children. Very righteous, very well behaved. While the others were bullies. So this was about Visha, poison.

The second episode referenced is about Agni (fire): This was the lākṣāgrha incident. Duryodhana knew I can't fight them and in some wicked way I have to kill them. Then he planned that all of them should be burnt alive in a palace. So he said there is a wonderful festival going on and all of you must stay here.

Duryodhana's assistant was Virochana. So a house made of lac was built which could easily catch fire. Vidura came to know of this. Indirectly through coded message Vidura told Yudhiṣṭhira - escape like a rat or a serpent. Even when there is fire, make a hole and escape. Start building it. He made all the arrangements. Externally people were made to believe some construction work was happening but internally they were made to dig a huge tunnel which would go from the palace into the forest. It was Vidura who made every arrangement for them. Pāṇḍavas were literally saved because of Vidura only.

Even while playing dice, Vidura said stop it but Yudhiṣṭhira could not stop. Even before this started, Vidura said stop, this is very inauspicious. Finally Yudhiṣṭhira lost everything, Draupadī was humiliated. Again Vidura told Dhṛtarāṣṭra, don't do this, one curse of this woman will destroy everything. This is when Dhṛtarāṣṭra told Draupadī to ask for a boon and Draupadī said whatever we have lost, give it back.

So, many times Vidura would stand courageously in front of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and say this is wrong. He was not scared of anyone. That was the greatness of Vidura.

Even when Pāṇḍavas went for exile, Vidura was in constant touch with Pāṇḍavas through his spies. He used to identify the safe areas in the forest and ask them to just stay there and not go to dangerous places. He was constantly guiding them.

Whenever they were discouraged, it was Vidura who encouraged them to walk the path of righteousness. Go on walking the path of righteousness, you will be protected. Do not deviate. There will be a lot of temptation to deviate because when adharmic people do adharmā there is a tendency to say they are adharmic. Why should we do dharmā? So it was Vidura who would say no you must follow only the path of dharmā, don't deviate. That was the greatness of Vidura and therefore Bhagavān loved Vidura so much. Others gained inspiration, solace, strength from Vidura but it was all happening silently. Therefore Pāṇḍavas loved him so much.

O' father we can never forget you and are ever indebted to you. From our childhood itself how many times you saved us and our mother. Literally you have been a father to us. Do you remember?

कया वृत्त्या वर्तितं वश्चरद्भिः क्षितिमण्डलम् । तीर्थानि क्षेत्रमुख्यानि सेवितानीह भूतले ॥ ९ ॥
kayā vṛtṭyā vartitaṁ vaścaradbhiḥ kṣitimaṇḍalam | tīrthāni kṣetramukhyāni
sevitānīha bhūtale || 9 ||

O' father, how did you survive all these days? How did you support yourself, we never heard anything from you. What places of pilgrimage and worship did you go to?

भवद्विधा भागवतास्तीर्थभूताः स्वयं विभो । तीर्थोऽकुर्वन्ति तीर्थानि स्वान्तःस्थेन गदाभूता ॥ १० ॥

bhavadvidhā bhāgavatāstīrthabhūtāḥ svayaṃ vibho | tīrthīkurvanti tīrthāni
svāntaḥsthena gadābhṛtā || 10 ||

This is a very nice and famous statement. Yudhiṣṭhira said, people like you who are devotees of the Lord are an embodiment of holiness, therefore actually you don't have to go to any teerthakṣetra.

तीर्थीकुर्वन्ति तीर्थानि (tīrthīkurvanti tīrthāni) All the places of worship itself don't have any sanctity but when people like you visit such places then these places become holy. And this is true. A place on its own has no sanctity. It is the Mahātmās who make this place very sacred.

Before the birth of Ramakṛṣṇa Parāmahansa, nobody even knew about Dakṣiṇeśvara. But today, thousands of people go there. Kāladi is the birthplace of Śaṅkarācārya. Thousands of people go there.

Earlier also Kāladi, Shiridi, Siddabari, Uttarkashi were there but some great Mahātmā was born or did some tapas in these places and they became famous. This is true for all places.

People like you give sanctity to give tīrthakṣetrās. In fact it is said in tīrthakṣetrās, all the pāpis come and therefore tīrthakṣetrās become very impure then one Mahātmā comes and clears off everything.

You are an embodiment of holiness because all the time you carry the Lord within you. Where is Bhagavān? In the heart of everyone but only a few people know and feel the presence of Bhagavān in their heart.

Bhagavān is always residing in your heart. In this way, wherever you go, the place becomes holy. You can imagine how much Yudhiṣṭhira revered Vidura. That is why they did all the worship etc and now he is sitting at his feet.

अपि नः सुहृदस्तात बान्धवाः कृष्णदेवताः । दृष्टाः श्रुता वा यदवः स्वपुर्या सुखमासते ॥ ११ ॥
vidhūya tad ameyātmā Bhagavān dharmā-gur vibhuḥ | miṣato daśamāsyasya
tatraivāntardadhe hariḥ || 11 ||

After all that Yudhiṣṭhira asked, O' father how are our relatives, the Yadavas? Have you seen them, have you heard anything about them? For a long time we have not heard anything from them. The Yadavas for whom Kṛṣṇa is everything have you heard anything about them? Are all of them happy in Dvārakā? Is everything fine?

इत्युक्तो धर्मराजेन सर्वं तत्समवर्णयत् । यथानुभूतं क्रमशो विना यदुकुलक्षयम् ॥ १२ ॥
ity ukto dharmā-rājena sarvaṃ tat samavarṇayat | yathānubhūtaṃ kramaśo vinā
yadukula-kṣayam || 12 ||

Whatever questions Yudhiṣṭhira had asked, all of that Vidura explained. But one thing he did not tell was that by then all the Yadavas had fought amongst themselves and killed one another. It was over. Only one or two were remaining, He did not tell that.

Yadavas had become very arrogant because they had power, money and they had no rivals. Slowly they became so arrogant and proud that they started making fun of the Ṛṣi munis also. That is how their end came.

Some Ṛṣis were going along and all these children of Kṛṣṇa were there- Sāmba, Pradyumna, Cārudeṣṇa. They said let us test these Ṛṣis. Sāmba dressed as a beautiful pregnant woman. There was some iron rod kept inside. All of them approached the Ṛṣis. Nārada Ṛṣi, Duruvasa Ṛṣi all of them were there. So they said, O' Ṛṣi can you please tell what kind of baby that will be born. Will it be a boy or a girl? This way, they made fun.

You can't play with these Ṛṣis so the Ṛṣis said, the one within will be the cause of your destruction. This way they were cursed. Now the kids were all scared so they powdered the iron and threw it in the ocean. But the powder came and it is said that a particular grass started growing that later became the weapon with which they started fighting. One bigger piece was there which later became the arrow for the hunter to kill Kṛṣṇa. This is the story.

Anyways Sāmba, Pradyumna, Cārudeṣṇa, Sātyaki, Kṛtavarmā, and all of them got drunk, started fighting, started blaming each other for some silly issue. The fight started and they all died. Akrūra and Uddhava were not there. All devotees escaped. So all this had already happened. Vidura knew it, but he did not tell.

नन्वप्रियं दुर्विषहं नृणां स्वयमुपस्थितम् । नावेदयत्सकरुणो दुःखितान् द्रष्टुमक्षमः ॥ १३ ॥
nanv apriyaṁ durviṣahaṁ nṛṇāṁ svayam upasthitam | nāvedayat sakaruṇo
duḥkhitān draṣṭum akṣamaḥ || 13 ||

Vidura knew that if I tell this, the whole environment will get spoilt because it is very unpleasant news and the Pāṇḍavas will not be able to bear it.

Vidura was extremely compassionate. He was not able to see their sorrow therefore he did not take up this topic. He knew anyway after sometime they would know. Let them know at their own pace. Let me not initiate it.

कञ्चित्कालमथावात्सीत्सत्कृतो देववत्सुखम् । भ्रातुर्ज्येष्ठस्य श्रेयस्कृत्सर्वेषां प्रीतिमावहन् ॥
१४ ॥

kañcit kālam athāvātsīt satkṛto deva-vat sukham | bhrātuḥ jyeṣṭhasya śreyas-kṛt
sarveṣāṁ prītim āvahan || 14 ||

For some days Vidura stayed with them. Everybody loved him, he was treated like God. There was a purpose for which Vidura had come. He wanted to do

good to his brother, Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He did not tell his purpose and was just with all of them, and made them happy by receiving their love and respect.

अबिभ्रदर्यमा दण्डं यथावदघकारिषु । यावद्धार शूद्रत्वं शापाद्वर्षशतं यमः ॥ १५॥
abibhrad aryamā daṇḍam yathāvad agha-kāriṣu | yāvad dadhāra śūdratvaṁ
śāpād varṣa-śataṁ yamaḥ || 15 ||

When Vidura was none other than Dharmārāja, and had come due to the curse of Māṇḍavya Rṣi, who was managing the affairs there? Yamarāj has a very busy portfolio. Aryamā was managing in the interim and the sinful were punished accordingly. Here the curse was for a 100 years so Vidura had to remain here.

युधिष्ठिरो लब्धराज्यो दृष्ट्वा पौत्रं कुलन्धरम् । भ्रातृभिर्लोकपालाभैर्मुमुदे परया श्रिया ॥ १६॥
yudhiṣṭhiro labdha-rājyas tu drṣṭvā pauṭraṁ kula-dharam | bhrātr̥bhiḥ
loka-pālābhair mumude parayā śriyā || 16 ||

Yudhiṣṭhira was extremely happy. He was going through his blissful days, everything was perfect. Kingdom was there, disciplined obedient brothers were there. He was ruling like guardian deities, all power and also, now that he had seen his grandson, he was extremely happy that someone will be there to continue the lineage. Thus there was happiness and prosperity.

एवं गृहेषु सक्तानां प्रमत्तानां तदीहया । अत्यक्रामदविज्ञातः कालः परमदुस्तरः ॥ १७॥
evaṁ gr̥heṣu saktānām pramattānām tadīhayā | atyakramad avijñātaḥ kālaḥ
parama-dustaraḥ || 17 ||

The same Yudhiṣṭhira who had a lot of Vairāgya had become completely attached to family, kingdom, administration and became completely careless about the purpose of life. He was completely engrossed in worldly duties, responsibilities and relationships. One after the other, responsibilities kept coming. It is not that you do it and everything is over. The moment one thing is over another thing will pop up, it goes on and on. There is no end. Time just went past, unnoticed. This is how time goes. Especially when you are happy, time goes very fast.

They were extremely blissful. Everything was fine and time started moving. Nobody can surpass time, no one can transcend time. They were all so busy in so many things, they forgot the purpose of life. There was only one person who was fully alert- Vidura. He was ever alert, ever vigilant.

विदुरस्तदभिप्रेत्य धृतराष्ट्रमभाषत । राजन् निर्गम्यतां शीघ्रं पश्येदं भयमागतम् ॥ १८॥
viduras tad abhipretya dhṛtarāṣṭram abhāṣata | rājan nirgamyatām śīghraṁ
paśyedaṁ bhayaṁ āgataṁ || 18 ||

One day Vidura approached his brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra when he was alone. Come on, we should leave this place immediately. The fearful time has come. Bad times have come. What is a bad time? It is the time of death.

प्रतिक्रिया न यस्येह कुतश्चित्कर्हिचित्प्रभो । स एव भगवान् कालः सर्वेषां नः समागतः ॥ १९ ॥
pratikriyā na yasyeha kutaścīt karhicit prabho | sa eṣa bhagavān kālaḥ sarveṣāṃ
naḥ samāgataḥ || 19 ||

That kāla has come. The time spirit has come. For that there is no remedy in this world. No one has any remedy for the spirit of time that has come as death now. There is no solution for death. It has come for all of us. Vidura could see the future. But Dhṛtarāṣṭra was dumb. Therefore Vidura started increasing the intensity. Seeing how he was completely unaffected, he slowly started increasing the intensity so Dhṛtarāṣṭra could get up and do something. That was the love that Vidura had for Dhṛtarāṣṭra. His words were harsh but behind the harsh words, we must see the love that Vidura had for his brother. It was that love that was making him speak like this.

येन चैवाभिपन्नोऽयं प्राणैः प्रियतमैरपि । जनः सद्यो वियुज्येत किमुतान्यैर्धनादिभिः ॥ २० ॥
yena caivābhipanno 'yaṁ prāṇaiḥ priyatamair api | janaḥ sadyo viyujyeta kim
utānyair dhanādibhiḥ || 20 ||

O' dear brother, in this world, what is the most beloved of ours? It is our life breath. But when the time of death comes we have to give up that life breath. We have to get separated from it. Then what to talk of wealth, house, and relatives. Forget about other things, your own body you have to leave and go. Even your prana you have to leave, what to talk of others. That time has come. Come on get up. But there was no effect on Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

पितृभ्रातृसुहृत्पुत्रा हतास्ते विगतं वयः । आत्मा च जरया ग्रस्तः परगेहमुपाससे ॥ २१ ॥
pitṛ-bhrāṭṛ-suhṛt-putrā hatās te vigataṁ vayah | ātmā ca jarayā grastah
para-geham upāsase || 21 ||

O' brother your condition is pitiable. Everybody is dead- your fathers have gone, brothers are no more, well wishers and friends are all dying. Your own children are also gone. You yourself have become so old. What a pitiable condition! You know what all you have done to these people?

अहो महीयसी जन्तोर्जीविताशा यथा भवान् । भीमापवर्जितं पिण्डमादत्ते गृहपालवत् ॥ २२ ॥
aho mahīyasī jantoḥ jīvitāśā yathā bhavān | bhīmā-pavarjitaṁ piṇḍam ādatte
gr̥ha-pāla-vat || 22 ||

Wonder of wonders how strong is this desire in people to live long. Even when the body is old, eyes can't see, ears can't hear, can't sit, can't stand, all kinds of organs are failing, they don't allow it to go. No. I want to live.

The desire to live even when nothing is functioning is remarkable. Vidura was literally hitting him with words. This is called mohamudgaraḥ. Mudgaraḥ means hammer. Even then Dhṛtarāṣṭra was sitting, nothing was happening.

Brother your condition is like that of a dog. Feeding on पिण्डम् (piṇḍam) rice balls. Generally when people are dead we offer rice balls - piṇḍa dāna. You are living here like a dead person and with so much disrespect food is given. Vidura also references Bhima. As far as Yudhiṣṭhira was concerned, he was treating Dhṛtarāṣṭra as his father only. But Bhima was not like him and Dhṛtarāṣṭra had also wanted to kill Bhima.

There was an episode earlier when Dhṛtarāṣṭra was embracing everybody. He knew Duryodhana was killed by Bhima. So he was waiting for Bhima. So what Bhagavān did was, gave him an iron statue and Dhritarastra embraced the statue and crushed it. That was the power and the vengeance he had for Bhima. Bhima also never liked him. So he says what a pitiable condition yours is. You are staying here and all your sons are gone, everybody is gone. Who is taking care of you? These Pāṇḍavas and especially Bhima who is throwing rice balls at you and you are eating it. What a pathetic condition!

तस्यापि तव देहोऽयं कृपणस्य जिजीविषोः । परैत्यनिच्छतो जीर्णो जरया वाससी इव ॥ २४ ॥
tasyāpi tava deho 'yaṁ kṛpaṇasya jijīviṣoḥ | paraiti anicchato jīrṇo jarayā vāsasī
iva || 24 ||

And on top of that you have already become old and want to hang on to this old body and don't want to leave it. Whether you like it or not, please understand that you have to leave that body. Your permission will not be asked. It will be taken against your will. And it will go on becoming dilapidated just like a piece of cloth, you cannot stop it.

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Session 15

[Chapter 13 verse 25- Chapter 13 verse 59]

गतस्वार्थमिमं देहं विरक्तो मुक्तबन्धनः । अविज्ञातगतिर्जह्यात्स वै धीर उदाहृतः ॥ २५ ॥
gata-svārtham imam dehaṁ virakto mukta-bandhanaḥ | avijñāta-gatir jahyāt sa
vai dhīra udāhṛtaḥ || 25 ||

Such a person alone is a wise man who has understood that this physical body has served its purpose and now it can serve me no more. Fully dispassionate, he should just leave his home without informing anyone and abandon the body. This is what a wise person should do. Once you know the body is old, dilapidated, no sadhana can be done, then without telling anybody leave the house, dispassionate, free from all attachment and give up the body.

यः स्वकात्परतो वेह जातनिर्वेद आत्मवान् । हृदि कृत्वा हरिं गेहात्प्रव्रजेत्स नरोत्तमः ॥ २६ ॥
yaḥ svakāt parato vā iha jāta-nirveda ātmavān | hṛdi kṛtvā hariṁ gehāt pravrajat
sa nara-uttamaḥ || 26 ||

He is the best among human beings who has become dispassionate - either by himself or because of someone telling him. Fully self controlled, installing the Lord in one's own heart, he should leave home. Total sannyāsa. These are the two words of advice given to all of us. The final years of our life should be a life of renunciation.

The four āśramas are brahmācharya āśrama, gr̥hastha āśrama, vānaprastha āśrama, sannyāsa āśrama. After gr̥hastha āśrama once the duties are fulfilled, one must fully prepare oneself for sannyāsa āśram. Vānaprastha is only a preparation for sannyāsa āśrama. Because now you have come to the evening of life, everything you have seen. They say the moment you have seen the face of your grandchild, get ready for vānaprastha. That is the indication. Again don't be busy with baby sitting and all that. This is what even Pāṇḍavas were doing. Vidura was the only wise man.

I am not against baby sitting. What I am saying is, be serious about life. After gr̥hastha āśrama slowly you must develop dispassion and renunciation. Because at the time of death we have a very very big responsibility. In the heart we must be able to hold on to the Lord steadily.

If you think saying Nārāyaṇa will be possible, it will not. At the time of death when the throat is choked, there is so much of pain, there is suffering and suffocation, at that time no Nārāyaṇa will come. Preparation must be done. Slowly retire from

too much worldly activity. Immerse yourself more and more in spiritual sadhana. Śravaṇam, mananam, nididhyāsanam, and develop spiritual saṃskārās.

As far as leaving home and all is concerned, once upon a time there were a lot of forests and leaving home was possible. Vānaprastha means prasthānam towards vanam. Nowadays you don't have to do all that but withdraw from the active worldly life. This is the most important thing. The mind should be more and more God-ward, not world-ward. This has to be done so that in the evening of one's life, effortlessly the mind turns towards God. By then the mind is free from rāga-dveṣa, ahaṃkāra-mamakāra. Jñāna and vairagya are there, and there is effortlessness. To the extent you prepare the mind, to that extent the final days will be beautiful. And even if some saṃskaras are there, the next birth will also be beautiful.

This is the whole message of Bhāgavatam. You will find that every king, every emperor just left everything and completely immersed into devotional activities. You will find this everywhere. In Bhāgavatam Mahatmyam, what did Ātmadeva do? Ātmadeva in the final years attained the highest.

This way Dhṛtarāṣṭra was told and did it have an effect? Of course it did. Dhṛtarāṣṭra became serious.

अथोदीचीं दिशं यातु स्वैरजातगतिर्भवान् । इतोऽर्वाक् प्रायशः कालः पुंसां गुणविकर्षणः ॥ २७ ॥
atho udīcīm diśaṃ yātu svairajāta-gatir bhavān | ito 'rvāk prāyaśaḥ kālaḥ
puṃsām guṇa-vikaṣaṇaḥ || 27 ||

Brother, let us leave towards the northern direction to the Himalayas. Without telling anybody we have to leave. Because, from here onwards the times are going to be very bad. There will be a steady decline in characteristics, the virtues and values of human beings. The times are going to be very bad. So let us leave.

एवं राजा विदुरेणानुजेन प्रजाचक्षुर्बोधित आजमीढः । छित्त्वा स्वेषु स्नेहपाशान् द्रढिम्नो
निश्चक्राम भ्रातृसन्दर्शिताध्वा ॥ २८ ॥
evaṃ rājā vidureṇānujena prajācākṣur bodhita ājamīḍhaḥ | chittvā sveṣu
sneha-pāśān dṛḍhān niścakrāma bhrātr-sandarśitādhvā || 28 ||

In this way Dhṛtarāṣṭra was enlightened with this knowledge by Vidura, his younger brother. Those words really had an impact. Cutting off all chords of attachment he had for the family, he just left on the path shown by his brother.

पतिं प्रयान्तं सुबलस्य पुत्री पतिव्रता चानुजगाम साध्वी । हिमालयं न्यस्तदण्डप्रहर्षं
मनस्विनामिव सत्सम्प्रहारः ॥ २९ ॥
patiṃ prayāntaṃ subalasya putrī pativratā cānujagāma sādhvī | himālayaṃ
nyasta-daṇḍa-prahṛṣṭaṃ manasvinām iva sat-samprahāraḥ || 29 ||

When the daughter of Subala - Gāndhārī heard her husband was going, she also decided to go. She was a pativrata and very devoted and virtuous. Thus, all the three started walking towards the Himalayas, that abode which gives joy to renunciates. Just like a fierce battle gives joy to courageous warriors, in the same way the abode of Himalayas gives joy to the renunciates. Towards those Himalayas, all the three started walking.

Gāndhārī was an amazing lady. When she came to know her husband was blind, what did she do? She said, a wife should share everything that belongs to husband. Therefore I am going to share his darkness also. She tied her eyes. Because of that tapas, she developed intense power. She never opened her eyes. Whenever a sense organ is closed, you develop power. Any sense organ when disciplined, whatever the reason may be, you start developing power. And among all the five sense organs, eyes are the most powerful. She said from now onwards I don't want to see anything. That is why after the war she cursed Kṛṣṇa. She said just like Yadavas saw how the Kuruvamsha brothers fought with one another and killed themselves, in the same way I curse you. Let Yadavas also fight with each other and die. She cursed Kṛṣṇa.

These were all the powers of Gāndhārī. Also, just before the war it is said Duryodhana was asked to come naked in front of her. Because she wanted to make him invincible. She wanted to make his body strong like a diamond. So she said go take a bath and come naked. For the first time she was going to open the band that covered her eyes. At that time Kṛṣṇa appeared. After bath when Duryodhana was going to Gāndhārī, Kṛṣṇa said where are you going in this birthday suit? What are you doing going naked and shameless in front of your mother?

Duryodhana also thought what Kṛṣṇa is saying is right and he put a cloth around his waist that covered his thigh and private parts. When Gāndhārī opened her eyes, it is said the entire body of Duryodhana became strong like diamond except the parts which he had covered and it is there Kṛṣṇa asked Bhima to hit because that was his weak point. In how many ways Kṛṣṇa helped Pāṇḍavas. The point is the power of her austerity.

All the three proceeded towards the Himalayas.

अजातशत्रुः कृतमैत्रो हुताग्नि- विप्रान्नत्वा तिलगोभूमिरुक्मैः । गृहं प्रविष्टो गुरुवन्दनाय न
चापश्यत्पितरौ सौबली च ॥ ३०॥

ajāta-śatruḥ kṛta-maitraḥ hutāgniḥ viprān natvā tila-go-bhūmi-rukmaiḥ |
grhaṁ praviṣṭo guru-vandanāya na cāpaśyat pitaraur saubalīm ca || 30 ||

Every morning, Yudhiṣṭhira, after the worship of fire (agnihotra) and after bowing to all Brahmānas and giving them dakshina, sesame seeds, cows, land, gold he would come to the palace of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī to take blessings.

On that day he did not see Vidura or Dhṛtarāṣṭra or Gāndhārī. So he went into a panic mode.

तत्र सञ्जयमासीनं पप्रच्छोद्विग्नमानसः । गावल्गणे क्व नस्तातो वृद्धो हीनश्च नेत्रयोः ॥ ३१ ॥
tatra sañjayaṁ āsīnaṁ papracchodvigna-mānasaḥ | gāvalgaṇe kva nas tāto
vṛddho hīnaś ca netrayoḥ || 31 ||

अम्बा च हतपुत्राऽऽर्ता पितृव्यः क्व गतः सुहृत् । अपि मय्यकृतप्रजे हतबन्धुः स भार्यया ।
आशंसमानः शमलं गङ्गायां दुःखितोऽपतत् ॥ ३२ ॥
ambā ca hata-putrā ārtaḥ pitṛvyaḥ kva gataḥ suhṛt | api mayy akṛta-prajñe
hata-bandhuḥ sa bhāryayā | āśaṁsamānaḥ śamalaṁ gaṅgāyām duḥkhito 'patat
|| 32 ||

He went to the palace and saw Sañjaya sitting there and no one else was there. He was perturbed. Where are my fathers? Where is my father Dhṛtarāṣṭra? He is already old and is blind. Where has he gone? Even my mother Gāndhārī is not seen. She is extremely miserable because of the death of all her sons. Where is Vidura? Nobody is seen!

Yudhiṣṭhira thought, definitely I must have done something wrong. I am such an unintelligent immature person. Unknowingly I must have spoken or done something. Already they are miserable because of the death of their children and the disrespect from Bhima etc must also be happening. On top of it, I must have done something because of which I must have broken their heart and they must have gone and fallen in Ganga and killed themselves.

See the greatness of Yudhiṣṭhira. Always finding fault with oneself. Not even once did he blame Dhṛtarāṣṭra. The whole war was because of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the attachment to his sons. Not even once Yudhiṣṭhira mentioned that. See the greatness of this man. All the time the mind thinking, of only goodness and if at all he was finding fault, it was always 'I am wrong'. What happened was my mistake.

पितर्युपरते पाण्डौ सर्वान् नः सुहृदः शिशून् । अरक्षतां व्यसनतः पितृव्यौ क्व गतावितः ॥ ३३ ॥
pitāry uparate pāṇḍau sarvān naḥ suhṛdaḥ śiśūn | arakṣatām Vyāsanataḥ
pitṛvyau kva gatāv itaḥ || 33 ||

Where has our father Vidura gone? Throughout our life he has been such a great support. Where has he gone? In this way he was miserable and asked Sañjaya.

Sañjaya was always there with Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

सूत उवाच ।
कृपया स्नेहवैक्लव्यात्सूतो विरहकर्षितः । आत्मेश्वरमचक्षाणो न प्रत्याहातिपीडितः ॥ ३४ ॥
sūta uvāca |

krpayā sneha-vaiklavāt sūto viraha-karśitaḥ | ātmīśvaram acakṣāṇo na
pratyāhātīpīḍitaḥ || 34 ||

Saṅjaya was extremely miserable. He was tormented by the pang of separation. Because of that intense attachment to his master. He was not only his trusted charioteer but he was always there with Dhṛtarāṣṭra and was very attached to him. Because of that intense attachment, he was miserable. He could not speak and was in tears.

विमृज्याश्रूणि पाणिभ्यां विष्टभ्यात्मानमात्मना । अजातशत्रुं प्रत्युचे प्रभोः पादावनुस्मरन् ॥ ३५ ॥
vimṛjyāśrūṇi pāṇibhyāṁ viṣṭabhyātmānam ātmānā | ajāta-śatruṁ pratyūce
prabhoḥ pādāv anusmaran || 35 ||

Finally wiping his tears and controlling himself with great difficulty and remembering the feet of his master, he spoke these words to Yudhiṣṭhira..

सञ्जय उवाच ।
नाहं वेद व्यवसितं पित्रोर्वः कुलनन्दन । गान्धार्या वा महाबाहो मुषितोऽस्मि महात्मभिः ॥ ३६ ॥
saṅjaya uvāca |
nāhaṁ veda vyavasitaṁ pitror vaḥ kula-nandana | gāndhāryā vā mahā-bāho
muṣito 'smi Mahātmābhiḥ || 36 ||

O' King I have absolutely no idea where they have gone. They have not informed me at all. I am absolutely ignorant of their intentions also. All the three have left without informing anyone about anything.

Yudhiṣṭhira and Saṅjaya were miserable and the whole environment was miserable. At that time came Nārada ji.

(The last time when Nārada Ṛṣi came was when Vyāsa Ṛṣi was miserable and did not know what to do. In the same way, he came now. When the road feels like a dead end and someone has to clear the path, that is when Nārada ji comes)

अथाजगाम भगवान् नारदः सह तुम्बुरुः । प्रत्युत्थायाभिवाद्याह सानुजोऽभ्यर्चयन्निव ॥ ३७ ॥
atha ājagāma Bhagavān nāradaḥ saha tumburūḥ | pratyutthāyābhivādyāha
sānujobhyaṛcayan iva || 37 ||

At that time, Nārada came with his tumburu. Everybody got up and prostrated unto him. They did not do any worship but their prostration was equal to worship. See when there is a lot of sorrow you don't sit and worship a person. The sorrow was so much and they bowed down to Nārada Ṛṣi,

युधिष्ठिर उवाच ।
नाहं वेद गतिं पित्रोर्भगवन् क्व गतावितः । अम्बा वा हतपुत्राऽऽर्ता क्व गता च तपस्विनी ॥ ३८ ॥
yudhiṣṭhira uvāca |

nāhaṁ veda gatiṁ pitror Bhagavān kva gatau itaḥ | ambā vā hata-putrārtā kva
gatā ca tapasvinī || 38 ||

O' Bhagavān, we don't know where these three have gone. Please guide us.

कर्णधार इवापारे भगवान् पारदर्शकः । अथाबभाषे भगवान्नारदो मुनिसत्तमः ॥ ३९ ॥
kaṇadhāra ivā pāre Bhagavān pāradarśakaḥ | athābabhāṣe Bhagavān nārado
muni-sattamaḥ || 39 ||

Nārada Ṛṣi who is the कर्णधार (kaṇadhāra) the captain of a ship in a shoreless ocean of saṁsāra. He takes us across the ocean of saṁsāra as the captain of the ship. This is the image of Nārada Ṛṣi in the purāṇas. The best amongst the munis. Nārada spoke thus:

मा कञ्चन शुचो राजन् यदीश्वरवशं जगत् । लोकाः सपाला यस्येमे वहन्ति बलिमीशितुः ।
स संयुनक्ति भूतानि स एव वियुनक्ति च ॥ ४० ॥
mā kañcana śuco rājan yad īśvara-vaśaṁ jagat | lokāḥ sapālā yasye me vahanti
balim īśituḥ | sa saṁyunakti bhūtāni sa eva viyunakti ca || 40 ||

O' King, there is nothing to grieve. This world is ईश्वरवशम् (īśvara-vaśaṁ) - under the complete control of the Lord. There is nothing to worry as everything in this world happens by the command of the Lord; by the will of the Lord; under the supervision of the Lord and by the knowledge of the Lord.

Everybody in this world, every entity in the world- inert or sentient; jīvatmas or guardian deities are carrying out the worship of the Lord. Every entity in this world is carrying out the will of the Lord.

When water is flowing from higher to the lower plane, it is worshipping the Lord and is obeying the law of gravity. The law of gravity is the law of the Lord and obeying the law of God itself is the worship of God. Everyone in this world, even if you are an atheist, unconsciously and unknowingly you are worshipping the Lord alone.

Is an atheist going through karmaphala? That also is worship of the Lord only. He has done some sinful activity and because of that he is worshipping the Lord. Who has any freedom? That is the point here. Everything is īśvara-vaśaṁ. He alone brings everybody together and he alone takes away everybody. Union is because of Him, separation is also decided by Him. Therefore, O' king, don't grieve.

यथा गावो नसि प्रोतास्तन्त्यां बद्धाश्च दामभिः । वाक्तन्त्यां नामभिर्बद्धा वहन्ति बलिमीशितुः
॥ ४१ ॥
yathā gāvo naṣi proktāḥ tantyāṁ baddhāś ca dāmabhiḥ | vāktantyāṁ nāmabhir
baddhā vahanti balim īśituḥ || 41 ||

All these cows, bulls, ox, are mighty beings, and are very strong. When they are little calves you can handle them but once they grow up, it becomes very difficult. So when these animals start growing up, they take one iron needle, make it red hot and pierce the center part of the nose. It's very painful. Then they tie a nose string नसि प्रोतास्तन्त्या (naṣi proktāḥ). If this is referenced in Bhāgavatam means in those times also it must have been there. So once this is done, they tie a big thick rope.

First there is a string and then a big rope. So now if you want to control this beast, a little bit of pulling is enough. It will just obey.

No matter how strong that beast is, it becomes a rat. Helpless, because there is pain. In the same way, don't think it is only the cows that are controlled like that. The Lord has put a rope and nose string for everyone. Nobody has any freedom in this world.

Everybody is tied by their varna āśrama dharmās. (brahmācharya will have one duty, gr̥hastha āśrama will have one duty, vānaprastha another duty, sannyāsa another duty) This way all āśramas are given different duties.

There is also Varna dharmā - Brahmāna, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudhra. There are many duties under each and in that duty also, if you are a Brahmāna or Kshatriya, there are some do's and don'ts. That forms the main rope.

The moment you are doing something wrong, a heart pain comes and you get miserable. As far as a cow is concerned it is tied to the nose, as far as the evolved being is concerned, the tying is at the heart. You see how Vyāsa Ṛṣi was miserable. He did one lakh verses, imagine the effort that was put into writing Mahābhārata. It is five times bigger than Bhāgavatam. But when he did not do what he was supposed to do, he was miserable.

So, what happened? The same pull. This is called conscience prick. Whenever there is a conscience prick, understand that Bhagavān is pulling the rope. It is the guilt feeling and you don't have a choice. Everybody is helpless. Everybody is an animal only here and full of animalistic tendencies - kāma, krodha, lobha, moha and Bhagavān is in full control.

यथा क्रीडोपस्कराणां संयोगविगमाविह । इच्छया क्रीडितुः स्यातां तथैवेशेच्छया नृणाम् ॥ ४२॥
yathā krīḍopaskarāṇāṁ saṁyoga-vigamāv iha | icchayā krīḍituḥ syātām
tathaiveśecchayā nṛṇām || 42 ||

Just like in a game of chess, the player just brings all coins and starts playing and dismantles out of his own self will. It is the player's will to put the coins wherever he wants. Who are the coins to ask the player? In the same way, by His will we come together and by His will we are separated. We have no choice.

यन्मन्यसे ध्रुवं लोकमध्रुवं वा न चोभयम् । सर्वथा न हि शोच्यास्ते स्नेहादन्यत्र मोहजात् ॥ ४३ ॥
yan manyase dhruvaṁ lokam adhruvaṁ vā na cobhayam |sarvathā na hi śocyās
te snehād anyatra mohajāṭ || 43 ||

Therefore, O' king, your sorrow is your own making. Whatever be your philosophy of life, if you are miserable you alone are the cause. There is a law in place and everything is happening based on this law. Obey the law and be free from misery. Disobey the law and be ready to be miserable. There can be various philosophies. Some may say, life is perishable. True, if you look at the body, the body has to perish someday or the other.

The body may die and go from one birth to another. Even if you pay attention to the Self, the consciousness there is no death. Jīvatma is a mix of consciousness and matter. All the philosophies are fine, but if you are miserable, it is only because of your extreme attachment born out of delusion. Whatever be the cause of misery with regard to the near and dear ones it is due to attachment and that attachment is delusional. Delusion is ignorance.

From ignorance there is delusion, from delusion there is attachment. From attachment comes sorrow.

तस्माज्जह्यङ्ग वैक्लव्यमज्ञानकृतमात्मनः । कथं त्वनाथाः कृपणा वर्तेरंस्ते च मां विना ॥ ४४ ॥
tasmāj jahy aṅga vaiklavyaṁ ajñāna-kṛtam ātmanaḥ | katham tv anāthāḥ kṛpaṇā
varteraṁs te ca māṁ vinā || 44 ||

Therefore, O' king, give up this sorrow, this misery, this attachment which is born out of ignorance. Give it up. If you are thinking that they have gone and who will look after them and protect them because he is blind and old and who will feed them, then listen..

O' King, this body is made of five elements. But what made the five elements come and create this body? There are three factors. It came from time. Somewhere in the past I did some karma because of which, there is prārabdha karma. The body is given a certain number of years to exist. This is called kālādhiya.

What created this body are past actions. Therefore the whole world is made of three gunas. So this body must also be made of the three gunas, therefore it has to come to an end. You are saying, how will I protect my father? Do you know your condition? You yourself are inside the jaws of a python called time. A person who is himself being eaten by the python called time is thinking of how to protect the other person? You are not able to protect yourself and you are thinking of protecting someone else?

Everybody is in a queue into the open jaws of the python called time. We discussed this previously also, how we are slowly digested by the python of time.

Some have just entered, some are midway with grey hair and some are almost done. We are all getting digested by the digestive juice of the python of time. This is our condition and now I am trying to save somebody else. First try to save yourself. This is the answer to how will they protect themselves?

अहस्तानि सहस्तानामपदानि चतुष्पदाम् । फल्गूनि तत्र महतां जीवो जीवस्य जीवनम् ॥ ४६ ॥
ahastāni sahasstānām apadāni catuṣpadām | phalgunī tatra mahataṁ jīvo jīvasya
jīvanam || 46 ||

This world is full of food only. Those beings without hands are the food for the beings with hands. Animals are food for human beings. Those without legs are the food for beings with four legs. Plants are the food for the four legged beings. The small beings are the food for big beings. Therefore जीवो जीवस्य जीवनम् (jīvo jīvasya jīvanam). Life exists upon life. Don't worry about food. The world is full of food only. Therefore Yudhiṣṭhira, don't be miserable. Pay attention to that reality.

तदिदं भगवान् राजन्नेक आत्माऽऽत्मनां स्वदृक् । अन्तरोऽनन्तरो भाति पश्य तं माययोरुधा ॥
४७ ॥
tad idaṁ Bhagavān rājan eka ātmā ātmanāṁ sva-dṛk | antar o 'nantaro bhāti
paśya taṁ māyāyorudhā || 47 ||

O' king, shift the attention to that one reality, the Self shining, that pure consciousness which is shining inside and outside. That one reality which has become many. That consciousness has taken different forms but actually there is only one. This is the only way to get rid of delusion, ignorance. Shift your attention upon the reality, Don't get deluded by the names and forms. This is the only way.

सोऽयमद्य महाराज भगवान् भूतभावनः । कालरूपोऽवतीर्णोऽस्यामभावाय सुरद्विषाम् ॥ ४८ ॥
so 'yam adya mahārāja Bhagavān bhūta-bhāvanah | kāla-rūpo 'vatīrṇo 'syām
abhāvāya sura-dviṣām || 48 ||

That very same Lord who is the self of all beings, is the origin of all, at present he has taken an avatāra as the spirit of time. That Lord of construction is now in the mode of destruction.

निष्पादितं देवकृत्यमवशेषं प्रतीक्षते । तावद्युयमवेक्षध्वं भवेद्यावदिहेश्वरः ॥ ४९ ॥
niṣpāditam deva-kṛtyam avaśeṣaṁ pratīkṣate | tāvad yūyam avekṣadhvaṁ
bhaved yāvad iha īśvaraḥ || 49 ||

Most of the work is over, little more destruction work is left. Wait till then. That Bhagavān who has taken avatāra, has destroyed most of the evil doers. A few more are left. Therefore please wait till that work is over.

As far as Gāndhāri and Dhṛtarāṣṭra are concerned, I will tell you.

धृतराष्ट्रः सह भ्रात्रा गान्धार्या च स्वभार्यया । दक्षिणेन हिमवत ऋषीणामाश्रमं गतः ॥ ५० ॥
dhṛtarāṣṭraḥ saha bhrātrā gāndhāryā ca svabhāryayā |
dakṣiṇena himavata ṛṣīṇāmāśramaṃ gataḥ || 50 ||

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī and Vidura are at present in the southern region of the Himalayas. They are in an āśrama where so many Ṛṣis are there.

स्रोतोभिः सप्तभिर्या वै स्वर्धुनी सप्तधा व्यधात् । सप्तानां प्रीतये नाना सप्तस्रोतः प्रचक्षते ॥
५१ ॥
srotobhiḥ saptabhir yā vai svardhunī saptadhā vyadhāt | saptānāṃ prītaye nānā
saptasrotaḥ pracakṣate || 51 ||

At that place in the southern region of Himalayas is a place called saptasrotaḥ where Ganga has divided herself into seven streams in order to please the Saptarṣis. They have reached there.

स्नात्वानुसवनं तस्मिन् हुत्वा चाग्नीन् यथाविधि । अब्भक्ष उपशान्तात्मा स आस्ते विगतैषणः ॥
५२ ॥
snātvānusavanam tasmin hutvā cāgnīn yathāvidhi | ab-bhakṣa upaśāntātmā sa
āste vigata-eṣaṇaḥ || 52 ||

Taking bath 3 times a day and doing the rituals, Dhṛtarāṣṭra has now given up food and is surviving only on water. His mind is peaceful, free from the three eṣaṇaḥs- putreṣaṇā, vitteṣaṇā, lokeṣaṇā.

Putreṣaṇā- desire for family, progeny. Vitteṣaṇā - desire for wealth, Lokeṣaṇā- desire for name and fame. Now free from all worldly desires he is seated there, surviving only on water.

This is unbelievable. We are talking of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. What happens to different people with different life experiences, we just don't know.

जितासनो जितश्वासः प्रत्याहृतषडिन्द्रियः । हरिभावनया ध्वस्तरजःसत्त्वतमोमलः ॥ ५३ ॥
jitāsano jita-śvāsaḥ pratyāhṛta-ṣaḍ-indriyaḥ | hari-bhāvanayā
dhvasta-rājas-sattva-tamo-malaḥ || 53 ||

He is able to sit without moving body for a long time. His breathing is very steady, deep, slow (breath in control). All his six sense organs are fully restrained - 5 sense organs + mind. He is literally cut off from the world. The mind is fully withdrawn.

All the impurities of the mind are gone (sattva, rājas, tamas) by constant meditation on Hari. With that intense devotion for the Lord, sincere long meditation on the Lord, the mind has totally become free from all the impurities.

विज्ञानात्मनि संयोज्य क्षेत्रज्ञे प्रविलाप्य तम् । ब्रह्मण्यात्मानमाधारे घटाम्बरमिवाम्बरे ॥ ५४॥
vijñānātmani saṁyojya kṣetrajñe pravilāpya tam |
brahmaṇyātmānamādhāre ghaṭāmbaramivāmbare || 54 ||

ध्वस्तमायागुणोदको निरुद्धकरणाशयः । निवर्तिताखिलाहार आस्ते स्थाणुरिवाचलः ।
तस्यान्तरायो मैवाभूः संन्यस्ताखिलकर्मणः ॥ ५५॥
dhvastamāyāguṇodāko niruddhakarhaṇāśayaḥ |
nivartitākhilāhāra āste sthāṇurivācalaḥ |

With that pure mind due to devotion of the Lord विज्ञानात्मनि संयोज्य क्षेत्रज्ञे प्रविलाप्य तम् (vijñānātmani saṁyojya kṣetrajñe pravilāpya tam) This is a beautiful sequence actually.

The first instruction in meditation is citāsana - learn to sit motionless in a place. Once the body is motionless, from annamāyā kosha go to Pranamāyā kosha, concentrate on your breathing. Make it slow and steady. As you are doing Prāṇāyāma, fix your attention on the breath and in this way you withdraw attention from the world. See to it that the mind is here and now and not worrying about something external. Once the mind has come to that state, think of Bhagavān's līlās and fill the mind with devotion. Hari bhāvana has to be there. This is the first stage. Prāṇāyāma alone won't help. Prāṇāyāma will take you somewhere but again you are stuck. There is a joy of prāṇāyāma only to some extent. After that the higher joy is the joy of the mind. The emotional personality has to be involved. The best emotion is devotion. Hari bhāvana is the next stage. Fill the heart with love for the Lord. Then what will happen? Rājas and tamas will go. To do this much your intellect has to be active.

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् । ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥
yato yato niścarati manaś cañcalam asthiram | tatas tato niyamyatad
ātmany eva vaśam nayet [Bhagavad Gita 6.26]

Next, with the intellect ensure that the mind is thinking of God. In this way, purify the mind and shift the attention to the witness who is witnessing everything. There you merge. It's step by step and finally you reach the witnessing consciousness. What to do after that?

ब्रह्मण्यात्मानमाधारे घटाम्बरमिवाम्बरे (brahmaṇyātmānamādhāre ghaṭāmbaramivāmbare) After that you don't have to do anything. If you can remain as that witnessing consciousness, the state is called savikalpa samādhi. Sa + vikalpa : There is a division. It's a 'see'er' and 'seen' division. Slowly get rooted in that witnessing state. Getting rooted in that kṣetragnya is savikalpa samādhi. After that Nirvikalpa samādhi happens. We don't have a choice. Just like going to sleep, we don't have a choice. Just like you can lie down but to sleep you don't have a choice. That Brahmān, that pure consciousness which is the substratum has to merge into the Brahmān. Just like the pot space merges with total space. So Yudhiṣṭhira, now Dhṛtarāṣṭra is in that state. His vasanas are

all burnt away because of which the inner instrument has become completely restrained.

If the mind is restrained and sense organs are quiet there will be no desire for the organs to perceive. Sense objects are the food for sense organs. There is no desire for the sense organs to indulge.

He is now seated motionless like a pillar. Therefore don't go and disturb him now. He has renounced everything. He is in that state now.

स वा अद्यतनाद्राजन् परतः पञ्चमेऽहनि । कलेवरं हास्यति स्वं तच्च भस्मीभविष्यति ॥ ५६ ॥
sa vā adyatanādrājan parataḥ pañcame'hani | kalevaram hāsyati svaṁ tacca
bhasmībhaviṣyati || 56 ||

From today onwards in the next five days, he will give up his body. He will just invoke the yogāgni from his naval and burn the body down.

दह्यमानेऽग्निभिर्देहे पत्युः पत्नी सहोदजे । बहिः स्थिता पतिं साध्वी तमग्निमनुवेक्ष्यति ॥ ५७ ॥
dahyamāne'gnibhirdehe patyuh patnī sahoṭaje |
bahih sthitā patiṁ sādhvī tamagnimanuvekṣyati || 57 ||

As the body burns the hut made of grass leaves etc will start burning. Gāndhārī seeing this from outside will also enter the fire. The pativratā lady will attain sati along with the husband.

विदुरस्तु तदाश्चर्यं निशाम्य कुरुनन्दन । हर्षशोकयुतस्तस्माद्गन्ता तीर्थनिषेवकः ॥ ५८ ॥
vidurastu tadāścaryaṁ niśāmya kurunandana | harṣaśokayutastasmādgantā
tīrthanīṣevakah || 58 ||

Vidura will be full of wonder looking at how Dhṛtarāṣṭra leaves his body in Yoga Agni! Absolutely unexpected from Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He will be happy and sorrowful. There is joy that my brother has attained the highest and there is sorrow that my brother is no more. Thus, he will leave for teerthakṣetras and stay there. Because he has no choice he has to stay for 100 years due to his prārabdha karma.

इत्युक्त्वाथारुहत्स्वर्गं नारदः सहतुम्बुरुः । युधिष्ठिरो वचस्तस्य हृदि कृत्वाजहाच्छुचः ॥ ५९ ॥
ityuktvāthāruhat svargaṁ nāradaḥ sāhatumburuḥ | yudhiṣṭhiro vacastasya hr̥di
kṛtvājahācchucaḥ || 59 ||

After saying this, Nārada left the place and ascended to swarga loka and Yudhiṣṭhira listening to these words became free from all sorrows.

For Dhṛtarāṣṭra the sorrow of so many children all dead must have made him intensely dispassionate. Sorrows in life prepare us for spiritual life. Remember in Bhāgavatam Mahatmyam, Atmadev's son Dhundukari gave so much sorrow.

That sorrow because of one's own wicked son made him dispassionate. Many times worldly sorrows are a great blessing in disguise. It prepares one for moksha.

As far as the world is concerned, everyone curses Dhṛtarāṣṭra for the war that happened. But as far as Dhṛtarāṣṭra is concerned, he is liberated. We are all still stuck blaming him. So let us not find faults with anyone. Who is who we just don't know. One mistake may make a person. That remorse, that suffering can liberate him also.

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Session 16

[Chapter 14 verse 1 - Chapter 15 verse 9]

Chapter 14॥ चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः ॥

सूत उवाच ।

सम्प्रस्थिते द्वारकायां जिष्णौ बन्धुदिदृक्षया । ज्ञातुं च पुण्यश्लोकस्य कृष्णस्य च विचेष्टितम् ॥
१ ॥

sūta uvāca ।

samprasthite dvārakāyaṁ jiṣṇau bandhudidṛkṣayā | jñātum ca puṇyaślokasya
kṛṣṇasya ca viceṣṭitam || 1 ||

व्यतीताः कतिचिन्मासास्तदा नायाततोऽर्जुनः । ददर्श घोररूपाणि निमित्तानि कुरूद्वहः ॥ २ ॥
vyatītāḥ katicinmāsāstadā nāyātato'rjunaḥ | dadarśa ghorarūpāṇi nimittāni
kurūdvahaḥ || 2 ||

Remember when Kṛṣṇa had gone to Dvārakā, who was along with him? Arjuna had gone along with him. Now it was almost six months since Kṛṣṇa left with Arjuna. There was no information about them so Yudhiṣṭhira was worried. At the same time all kinds of terrible, evil, inauspicious omens were seen everywhere.

कालस्य च गतिं रौद्रां विपर्यस्तर्तुधर्मिणः । पापीयसीं नृणां वार्तां क्रोधलोभानृतात्मनाम् ॥ ३ ॥
kālasya ca gatiṁ raudrāṁ viparyastartudharmināḥ | pāpīyasīṁ nṛṇāṁ vārtāṁ
krodhalobhānṛtātmanām || 3 ||

Everywhere there was an indication of bad times. Seasons were behaving in a very peculiar and contrary way. Lives of men were filled with anger, greed, and untruthfulness.

जिहमप्रायं व्यवहृतं शाठ्यमिश्रं च सौहृदम् । पितृमातृसुहृद्भ्रातृदम्पतीनां च कल्कनम् ॥ ४ ॥
jihmaprāyaṁ vyavahṛtaṁ śāthyamiśraṁ ca sauhṛdam |
pitṛmāṭṛsuhṛdbhrāṭṛdampatīnāṁ ca kalkanam || 4 ||

All the transactions were becoming deceitful. There was lack of trust in relationships and mutual quarrels between father, mother, friends, relatives, brothers, married couples. Yudhiṣṭhira was observing all this.

निमित्तान्यत्यरिष्टानि काले त्वनुगते नृणाम् । लोभाद्यधर्मप्रकृतिं दृष्ट्वोवाचानुजं नृपः ॥ ५ ॥
nimittānyatyariṣṭāni kāle tvaṇugate nṛṇām | lobhādyadharmaprakṛtiṁ
dṛṣṭvovācānujaṁ nṛpaḥ || 5 ||

Seeing this de-generation of human characters and values everywhere, one day Yudhiṣṭhira went to his younger brother Bhima and spoke these words...

युधिष्ठिर उवाच ।

सम्प्रेषितो द्वारकायां जिष्णुर्बन्धुदिदक्षया । ज्ञातुं च पुण्यश्लोकस्य कृष्णस्य च विचेष्टितम् ॥
६॥

yudhiṣṭhira uvāca |

sampreṣito dvārakāyāṃ jiṣṇurbandhudidṛkṣayā | jñātum ca puṇyaślokasya
kṛṣṇasya ca viceṣṭitam || 6 ||

गताः सप्ताधुना मासा भीमसेन तवानुजः । नायाति कस्य वा हेतोर्नाहं वेदेदमञ्जसा ॥ ७॥
gatāḥ sapṭādhunā māsā bhīmasena tavānujaḥ | nāyāti kasya vā hetornāhaṃ
vededamañjasā || 7 ||

O' Bhīmasena, what happened to your younger brother? He went along with his close friend Bhagavān to see his līlās and to be with him. Now seven months have passed and there is no update. He has not come back and I am not clear why he has not come back.

अपि देवर्षिणाऽऽदिष्टः स कालोऽयमुपस्थितः । यदाऽऽत्मनोऽङ्गमाक्रीडं भगवानुत्तिसृक्षति ॥
८॥

api devarṣiṇā'ḍiṣṭaḥ sa kālo'yamupasthitaḥ | yadā'tmano'ṅgamākṛīḍaṃ
bhagavānutsisṛkṣati || 8 ||

Has that time come which Nārada Ṛṣi had indicated?

Nārada Ṛṣi had said O' King, Bhagavān is here for some more time, most of his work is over, little more is to be done and then he is going to leave the body, till then you also remain. At the back of Yudhiṣṭhira's mind this was running. Did that time come which Nārada Ṛṣi had indicated? He had said that Bhagavān will drop the body that he has taken up as a sport. Did that time come?

यस्मान्नः सम्पदो राज्यं दाराः प्राणाः कुलं प्रजाः । आसन् सपत्नविजयो लोकाश्च यदनुग्रहात् ॥
९॥

yasmānnaḥ sampado rājyaṃ dārāḥ prāṇāḥ kulaṃ prajāḥ | āsan sapatnavijayo
lokāśca yadanugrahāt || 9 ||

It is only because of that Lord that we got everything in life - wealth, kingdom, wife, life, glory of the lineage, children, victory over the enemies, higher worlds (through Aśvamedha yāga). Literally for Pāṇḍavas everything came from Bhagavān only. It is only by God's grace that we got everything in life.

पश्योत्पातान् नरव्याघ्र दिव्यान् भौमान् सदैहिकान् । दारुणान् शंसतोऽदूराद्भयं नो बुद्धिमोहनम्
॥ १०॥

paśyotpātān naravyāghra divyān bhaumān sadaihikān | dāruṇān
śamsato'dūrādbhayaṃ no buddhimohanam || 10 ||

Bhima, look at this world. There are so many evil and inauspicious omens that I am seeing. There is a big list of omens that are going to be discussed. So let us discuss a little bit about omens.

In this world, there is a mystic way in which individuals are connected. All the individual minds are connected by the one cosmic mind or total mind. Therefore when two individuals are extremely attached to each other and love each other intensely, purely, unconditionally then whatever happens to one person, the other person knows it. In fact, that cosmic mind ensures that what happens in one place is made aware in the other place. This, in the modern language, is called telepathy. There is intuitive communication. For example when the child is in pain and is intensely crying, the child is unable to express it. There is no language there but the mother knows it. If the mother is fully attached to the child and tuned to the child, she will know. How a mother knows, don't ask that but she will just know.

Many times we see that the children are in the US and parents are in India and the son or daughter feels that I must go. And when they go, within a few minutes or 1-2 days the parent passes away. How will you answer this? The more our hearts are pure, we are able to receive this communication. An intuitive indication comes. The same thing happens while dying also. If a person has lived a pure life, a clean life full of devotion, full of discipline. He knows the time of death. And then he is able to ask his family to come. In fact he is able to skip food and water as he knows time is up.

Intuitively you are informed what is going to happen. The more and more we hold on to external communications, this mystic ability goes away. Many times we say in kaliyuga we are so smart, we can contact each other using a mobile phone. Remember you are giving up better means and taking up inferior means. That is why kaliyuga people are not considered intelligent.

One more thing, the communications from the cosmos will come according to your belief system. For example if you strongly believe that a black cat crossing the road is not good, then when an indication has to come that something bad will happen then a black cat will cross. It is not for everybody. Those who believe in that, the cosmos will communicate in that language.

Now, we are going to see a series of such omens. And Yudhiṣṭhira is seeing these omens. Remember Yudhiṣṭhira is extremely attached to Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa. Everything he gained is because of Bhagavān so if anything is happening to Bhagavān, it is Bhagavān's responsibility to indicate to his devotees.

So now, let us see a few.

ऊर्वक्षिबाहवो महयं स्फुरन्त्यङ्ग पुनः पुनः । वेपथुश्चापि हृदये आराद्दास्यन्ति विप्रियम् ॥ ११ ॥

ūrvakṣibāhavo mahyaṃ sphurantyaṅga punaḥ punaḥ | vepathuścāpi hr̥daye
ārāddāsyanti vipriyam || 11 ||

Bhima, my left thigh, my left eye and my left hand are trembling which is not a good sign. There is a palpitation which I am experiencing in my heart. These all indicate some misfortune is going to come.

शिवैषोद्यन्तमादित्यमभिरौत्यनलानना । मामङ्ग सारमेयोऽयमभिरेभत्यभीरुवत् ॥ १२ ॥
śivaiṣodyantamādityamabhiraityanalānanā | māmaṅga
sārameyo'yamabhirebhatyabhīruvat || 12 ||

This śiva (female jackal) is looking at the rising sun and howling. (Generally the animals howl when the sun sets). Here the rising sun is as though spitting fire. This dog is fearlessly looking at me and barking.

शस्ताः कुर्वन्ति मां सव्यं दक्षिणं पशवोऽपरे । वाहांश्च पुरुषव्याघ्र लक्षये रुदतो मम ॥ १३ ॥
śastāḥ kurvanti mām savyaṃ dakṣiṇaṃ paśavo'pare | vāhāṃśca puruṣavyāghra
lakṣaye rudato mama || 13 ||

All these superior animals like cows are going anticlock wise around me. Whereas the animals that are considered inferior, are going clockwise. This is inauspicious. My horses are looking at me and neighing, they are crying.

We may laugh at all these now, but maybe all these things were prevalent at that time.

मृत्युदूतः कपोतोऽयमुलूकः कम्पयन् मनः । प्रत्युलूकश्च कुहवानैरनिद्रौ शून्यमिच्छतः ॥ १४ ॥
mṛtyudūtaḥ kapoto'yamulūkaḥ kampayan manaḥ | pratyulūkaśca
kuhvānairanidrau śūnyamicchataḥ || 14 ||

The white dove is considered a messenger of peace whereas a black dove is a messenger of death. I see the black dove and the owl is screeching and trembling the mind. During the day, when the owl cannot see properly, the crow attacks the owl. Both these owls and crows are screeching without stopping as though pralaya is going to come.

धूम्ना दिशः परिधयः कम्पते भूः सहाद्रिभिः । निर्घातश्च महांस्तात साकं च स्तनयित्नुभिः ॥ १५ ॥
dhūmrā diśaḥ paridhayaḥ kampate bhūḥ sahādrībhiḥ | nirghātaśca mahāṃstāta
sākaṃ ca stanayitnubhiḥ || 15 ||

Everywhere I see smoke. The vision is blocked by the smoke and we can hear lightning and thunder in the cloudless sky. The wind is raising dust everywhere and the sun is not shining properly. The planets seem to fight with each other.

The rivers and lakes everywhere are agitated, including the minds of the people. Even on putting ghee, the fire is not burning properly. The calves are not drinking

milk from the udders of their mothers. The mother is also not interested in feeding the calf. And I see tears in the eyes of the cows. The bulls also seem to be very depressed. In the temples the deities appear to be weeping, sweating and trembling. The villages and towns, āśrams and gardens don't seem to have the auspiciousness. There is no joy anywhere. What is happening?

मन्य एतैर्महोत्पातैर्नूनं भगवतः पदैः । अनन्यपुरुषश्रीभिर्हीना भूर्हतसौभगा ॥ २१ ॥
manya etairmahotpātāinūnaṁ bhagavataḥ padaiḥ | ananyapuruṣaśrībhīrhinā
bhūrhatasaubhagā || 21 ||

From all these, I feel that this Earth has become deprived of its former glory because Bhagavān is no longer treading the Earth with His holy feet. He is not walking upon this earth.

When Bhagavān was born just the opposite was seen. There was celebration everywhere as though the whole universe was ready to rejoice and welcome the Lord. If that is true then this also must be true. Bhagavān is leaving and the whole cosmos is sad.

इति चिन्तयतस्तस्य दृष्टारिष्टेन चेतसा । राज्ञः प्रत्यागमदब्रह्मन् यदपुर्याः कपिध्वजः ॥ २२ ॥
iti cintayatastasya drṣṭāriṣṭena cetasā | rājñāḥ pratyāgamadbrahman yadupuryāḥ
kapidhvajaḥ || 22 ||

In this way, when Yudhiṣṭhira was thinking and talking to Bhima, at that time Arjuna comes.

तं पादयोर्निपतितमयथापूर्वमातुरम् । अधोवदनमब्बिन्दून् सृजन्तं नयनाब्जयोः ॥ २३ ॥
taṁ pādayornipatitamayathāpūrvamāturam | adhovadanambindūn sṛjantaṁ
nayanābjayoḥ || 23 ||

विलोक्योद्विग्नहृदयो विच्छायमनुजं नृपः । पृच्छति स्म सुहृन्मध्ये संस्मरन् नारदेरितम् ॥ २४ ॥
vilokyodvignahrdayo vicchāyamanujaṁ nṛpaḥ | prcchati sma suhr̥dmadhye
saṁsmaran nāradetiram || 24 ||

Arjuna came and fell at the feet of Yudhiṣṭhira. But his behaviour was very different. He was not the Arjuna which everybody knew. He was extremely miserable. His head was held down and tears flowing from his eyes. He was joyless. Seeing this Yudhiṣṭhira became anxious.

All others were there listening and remembering the words of Nārada, Yudhiṣṭhira asked Arjuna.

युधिष्ठिर उवाच ।
कच्चिदानर्तपुर्या नः स्वजनाः सुखमासते । मधुभोजदशार्हार्हसात्वतान्धकवृष्णयः ॥ २५ ॥
yudhiṣṭhira uvāca |

kaccidānartapuryām naḥ svajanāḥ sukhāmāṣate |
madhubhojadaśārharhasātvatāndhakavṛṣṇayaḥ || 25 ||

Arjuna, is everything fine in Dvārakā? Are Yadavas all fine and living happily? Are Madhu, Bhoja, Daśārha, Araha, Sātvata, Andhaka, Vṛṣṇi fine? There is a big list of people that he is enquiring about. How is Śūrasena, our maternal grandfather, how are Vāsudeva and Devakī and his other six wives and their children? How is our Ugrasena the king and the cousins of Kṛṣṇa - Hṛdīka, Kṛtavarmā, Akrūraḥ, Jayantaḥ, Gadaḥ are they all fine?

What about the leaders of Yadu - Śatrujit, Balarāma? Are they good? And what about the children of Kṛṣṇa? Pradyumna and his son Aniruddha? What about Suśeṇa, father of Satyabhāmā? What about Cārudeṣṇaḥ, Rṣabhaḥ, Uddhavaḥ, Sunandanaḥ, Nandaḥ. There is a big list given. Do they remember us? Are they all fine? They are so lucky to be protected by Kṛṣṇa and Rama. Yudhiṣṭhira was going on telling this but there was no reaction from Arjuna.

Then finally he asked..

कच्चित्तेऽनामयं तात भ्रष्टतेजा विभासि मे । अलब्धमानोऽवज्ञातः किं वा तात चिरोषितः ॥ ३९॥
kaccit te'nāmayam tāta bhraṣṭatejā vibhāsi me | alabdhāmāno'vajñātaḥ kiṃ vā
tāta cirositaḥ || 39 ||

O' dear one what happened to you? Are you ok healthwise? Are you suffering from any disease or something? Why do you look so dull? Did anyone dis-respect you? Because it is possible since you have been there for six- seven months. It is possible. For a long time when you stay with your relatives, the first day there is hyper excitement. Slowly all the excitement goes away. Then you wonder when is this person going to go away? That is why you should not stay for long in a relative's place. All these things are possible. They don't take you seriously.

All that which is given is an indirect teaching to mankind.

कच्चिन्नाभिहतोऽभावैः शब्दादिभिरमङ्गलैः । न दत्तमुक्तमर्थिभ्य आशया यत्प्रतिश्रुतम् ॥ ४०॥
kaccit te'nāmayam tāta bhraṣṭatejā vibhāsi me | alabdhāmāno'vajñātaḥ kiṃ vā
tāta cirositaḥ || 39 ||

Did anyone hurt you with unkind words? Has anyone been rude to you or is it that you gave a promise to someone and could not fulfill that promise?

See how the values are inculcated in the society through stories.

कच्चित्त्वं ब्राह्मणं बालं गां वृद्धं रोगिणं स्त्रियम् । शरणोपसृतं सत्त्वं नात्याक्षीः शरणप्रदः ॥ ४१॥
kaccit tvam brāhmaṇam bālaṃ gāṃ vṛddham rogiṇam striyam | śaraṇopasṛtaṃ
sattvaṃ nātyākṣīḥ śaraṇapradah || 41 ||

Is it that one of these came to take refuge and you were not able to protect them? If a Brahmāna, a child, cow, old people, sick people, women or anyone who takes refuge, a Kshatriya is supposed to protect them. Is it that you were not able to protect any of these people?

अपि स्वित्पर्यभुङ्क्थास्त्वं सम्भोज्यान् वृद्धबालकान् ।
जुगुप्सितं कर्म किञ्चित्कृतवान् न यदक्षमम् ॥ ४३ ॥
api svit paryabhuṅkthāstvaṁ sambhojyān vṛddhabālakān | jugupsitaṁ karma
kiñcit kṛtavān na yadakṣamam || 43 ||

Or did you eat before giving food to the old people or the children? So, whenever you have food, whom should you feed? Helpless and powerless people you should feed first and then only you should have food.
Or did you do something because of which there is a guilt feeling which is unforgivable? I don't think you will ever do that.

My strong gut says, the reason for your misery could be this..

कच्चित्प्रेष्ठतमेनाथ हृदयेनात्मबन्धुना । शून्योऽस्मि रहितो नित्यं मन्यसे तेऽन्यथा न रुक् ॥
४४ ॥
kaccit preṣṭhatamenātha hṛdayenātmabandhunā | śūnyo'smi rahito nityaṁ
manyase te'nyathā na ruk || 44 ||

Is it because of the vacancy created by the absence of your bosom friend? I think that is the reason. There cannot be any other reason why you can be sad.

Chapter 15 ॥ पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः ॥

सूत उवाच ।

एवं कृष्णसखः कृष्णो भ्रात्रा राजा विकल्पितः । नानाशङ्कास्पदं रूपं कृष्णविश्लेषकर्षितः ॥ १ ॥
Sūta uvāca |

evam kṛṣṇasakhaḥ kṛṣṇo bhrātrā rājñā vikalpitaḥ | nānāśaṅkāspadam rūpaṁ
kṛṣṇaviśleṣakarṣitaḥ || 1 ||

शोकेन शुष्यद्वदनहृत्सरोजो हतप्रभः । विभुं तमेवानुध्यायन्नाशक्नोत्प्रतिभाषितुम् ॥ २ ॥
śokena śuṣyadvadanahr̥tsarojo hataprabhaḥ | vibhuṁ
tamevānudhyāyannāśaknotpratibhāṣitum || 2 ||

When Yudhiṣṭhira was asking all these questions and giving various alternatives and possibilities, Arjuna was grieving because of separation from Kṛṣṇa. He was very dull and unenergetic, without any enthusiasm because of intense sorrow. His face had dried up like a dry lotus. There was no emotion in his heart. Everything had become dry and for a long time he was not even able to speak. His mind was so rooted in Bhagavān because of that grief. With great difficulty he controlled himself and tried to speak.

कृच्छ्रेण संस्तभ्य शुचः पाणिनाऽऽमृज्य नेत्रयोः । परोक्षेण समुन्नद्धप्रणयौत्कण्ठ्यकातरः ॥ ३ ॥
kr̥cchreṇa saṁstabhya śucaḥ pāṇinā'āmr̥jya netrayoḥ
parokṣeṇa samunnaddhapraṇayautkaṇṭhyakātarāḥ ॥ 3 ॥

सख्यं मैत्रीं सौहृदं च सारथ्यादिषु संस्मरन् । नृपमग्रजमित्याह बाष्पगद्गदया गिरा ॥ ४ ॥
sakhyaṁ maitrīṁ sauhṛdaṁ ca sārathyādiṣu saṁsmaran
nr̥pam agrajam ity āha bāṣpa-gadgadayā girā ॥ 4 ॥

With great difficulty he stopped his tears. He wiped the tears with his hands. His condition was miserable because of the grief due to the intense love for Kṛṣṇa. He was thinking of his companionship and friendship with Kṛṣṇa. How he was his well wisher, how he was his charioteer. With his voice choked in emotion, and eyes filled with tears he spoke these words..

अर्जुन उवाच ।
वञ्चितोऽहं महाराज हरिणा बन्धुरूपिणा । येन मेऽपहृतं तेजो देवविस्मापनं महत् ॥ ५ ॥
arjuna uvāca
vañcito'haṁ mahārāja hariṇā bandhurūpiṇā | yena me'pahṛtaṁ tejo
devavismāpanaṁ mahat ॥ 5 ॥

O' King, I have been completely duped and fooled. He came like a friend. I thought he was my friend, but he was Bhagavān himself. I never paid serious attention to him, took Him to be an ordinary friend, my dear bosom friend. He completely duped me.

Not only did he go, he took everything that belonged to him. All my abilities, talents, strength, even devatas were amazed looking at my power. That power, that strength, everything is gone. I foolishly thought that everything belonged to me. He has duped me completely.

यस्य क्षणवियोगेन लोको ह्यप्रियदर्शनः । उक्थेन रहितो ह्येष मृतकः प्रोच्यते यथा ॥ ६ ॥
yasya kṣaṇaviyogena loko hyapriyadarśanaḥ | ukthena rahito hyeṣa mṛtakaḥ
procyate yathā ॥ 6 ॥

When a person dies, your attitude towards the dead body becomes repulsive. In the same way, as long as Kṛṣṇa was there with me, I thoroughly enjoyed life and the world was beautiful. Now in a moment that Bhagavān has gone, this world has become repulsive for me. I don't want to live.

Arjuna remembers, throughout my life, all my achievements, Kṛṣṇa was there and he did it and every time I thought I did it. A big list is now given for which Mahābhārata stories are necessary and whatever is needed, I will be providing it.

यत्संश्रयाद्द्रुपदगेहमुपागतानां राज्ञां स्वयंवरमुखे स्मरदुर्मदानाम् । तेजो हतं खलु मयाभिहतश्च
मत्स्यः

सज्जीकृतेन धनुषाधिगता च कृष्णा ॥ ७ ॥

yat-saṁśrayād drupada-geham upāgatānām rājñām svayaṁvara-mukhe
smara-durmadānām | tejo hṛtaṁ khalu mayābhihataś ca matsyaḥ sajjīkṛtena
dhanuṣādhiगतā ca kṛṣṇā || 7 ||

This is the incident of Draupadī's svayaṁvaraḥ.

The lākṣāgrha incident had just happened and kauravās tried to burn the Pāṇḍavas alive in that house of lac. They escaped because of Vidura's intelligent intervention. After that the kauravās thought Pāṇḍavas were dead and did all the śraddhākarma etc. Pāṇḍavas escaped and were roaming in Brahmāna clothes. So, Veda Vyāsa told them to go to Pañcāla-deśa where there was a svayaṁvaraḥ happening. He asked them to check what was happening in Drupada's palace in Pañcāla-deśa. Pañcālī was Drupada's daughter and Dhṛṣṭadyumna was the son. Both had come out from that yāga that was done by Drupada.

All kings had come because Draupadī was so beautiful and everybody wanted to get married to Draupadī. Many kings including Duryodhana, Karṇa, Śiśupālāḥ, had come. In fact it is said, devatās and gandharvās were watching this svayaṁvaraḥ. Everybody tried.

What was to be done was, the person had to lift the bow and tie the string. There was a rotating fish and one had to shoot 5 arrows into the eye of the fish. Most of them could not even lift the bow. Some of them could lift the bow but they could not string it. Drupada wanted Arjuna only to do it but he did not know where Arjuna was and according to him, Arjuna was also dead. Nobody knew that the Pāṇḍavas had just come to watch the svayaṁvaraḥ.

Everybody came one by one. It was only Karna who could lift it, tie the string and the moment he lifted to shoot, Draupadī said I will not marry a sūta-putraḥ. So then he just stepped back, So there was nobody there in the entire assembly who could do it. At that time, Arjuna taking the permission of his brother, stepped forward. All the kings were filled with lust and arrogance. Arjuna easily lifted the bow and before anybody could see, he just shot five arrows straight into the eye of that rotating fish. Even before people knew what was happening, things were over.

When this happened, all the kings sitting there felt humiliated. One Brahmāna has done this and we Kṣatriyās could not do it. They felt insulted and everybody ganged up and said we should kill him. They were about to attack them and that was when Bhima and Arjuna fought and silenced them.

Now Arjuna remembered that episode. At that time, I thought I was the one who shot the arrow. But it was because of the grace of the Lord that I did it. It is not only the story of Arjuna, it is the story of each and everyone of us. Everytime we are awarded, rewarded, praised, recognised, promoted, we think I did it.

So, this is the answer for all such foolish notions. Arjuna is saying all that Bhagavān made me do and I never understood his value. I thought I did it.

यत्सन्निधावहमु खाण्डवमग्नयेऽदा- मिन्द्रं च सामरगणं तरसा विजित्य ।
लब्धा सभा मयकृतोद्भूतशिल्पमाया दिग्भ्योऽहरन् नृपतयो बलिमध्वरे ते ॥ ८ ॥
yat-sannidhāv aham u khāṇḍavam agnaye 'dām indraṁ ca sāmara-gaṇaṁ
tarasā vijitya |
labdhā sabhā maya-kṛtādbhuta-śilpa-māyā digbhyo 'haran nṛpatayo balim
adhvare te || 8 ||

This incident is of Khandava forest burning.

The story is, one day Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were in the forest when they were approached by a Brahmāna. With the look of the Brahmāna they understood that he is highly tejasvī. He is not an ordinary Brahmāna. So they got up and said what is it that we can do for you? The Brahmāna said, I am actually Agni devatā, and I want some help from you.

He said I am at present very weak because there was a king named Śvetakiḥ who loved doing yāgas. One after the other he would go on doing it so much so that the Brahmānas were also fed up. One yāga would be for twelve years and the other for a hundred years. He would give a lot of dakṣiṇā also. So I was constantly drinking ghee and my digestive system has become weak and my powers etc are also going off. So, I went to Lord Brahmā and he said I need to burn the entire Khandava forest and only then I can come back to my normal self. So Agni devatā tried to burn the Khandava forest. But Indra devatā would not allow it.

Everytime he would set fire, it would just rain and Indra would put off everything because Indira's friend, takṣakaḥ used to stay in the forest. He tried six or seven times and became miserable. So again he went to Lord Brahmā. Lord Brahmā suggested to take the help from Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna.

So Agni devatā disguised as a Brahmāna approached Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. He gave them the background and asked for help. At that time Arjuna had said we are ready but we don't have any weapons. Devatās have celestial weapons and we don't have anything. At that time, Agni Devatā provided them with everything. He gave Arjuna the gāṇḍīva. That is why this episode is very important. Gāṇḍīva, ratha, the inexhaustible quiver was given by him. Infact, Sudarśana to the lord was also given by Agni Devatā. Kaumodakī gadā was also given.

All these were very powerful weapons. For example no one could break the gāṇḍīva. A ratha also was given which could go at the speed of the mind! The white horse and Hanuman ji's Kapidhwaja, were all given by Agni devatā to fight the devatās, especially Indra Devatā. Thus, fully armed, they asked Agni devatā to burn. So Agni devatā started burning the khandava forest. Takṣakaḥ was not there at that time. Only his family members were there. He was in Kurukṣetra. As the forest started blazing, Indira immediately came and it started raining. Arjuna started shooting arrows and created a covering because of which the rain could not come and Bhagavān was also doing his part.

The entire forest was getting burnt. In the forest there was an āsura called māyāsura. He was the architect of Dānavas. Just like Viśvakarmā was the architect of devatās, Māyāsura was the architect of the dānavas. He happened to be in takṣakaḥ's palace. He was coming out and the fire started chasing him and Bhagavān's sudarśana also started chasing him. He immediately went and surrendered to Arjuna. The duty of a kṣatriyā is that you have to protect so Arjuna said I protect you.

Bhagavān withdrew his chakra and Agni devatā also left him. So this Māyāsura was extremely grateful to Arjuna and promised to do anything for Arjuna. Then Arjuna told Māyāsura to ask Bhagavān. As Māyāsura was an architect, Bhagavān asked him to build a beautiful sabha for Yudhiṣṭhira in Indiraprastha. Māyāsabha was where rājasuya yajña happened. The entire place was such that land appeared as water and water appeared as land. This was the place where Duryodhana fell into water.

There is a very popular incident that someone added. According to the episode, when Duryodhana was lifting his cloth and walking, Draupadī said - andhe ka putra andha because of which Duryodhana did the entire disrobing etc. There is no such mention in the original Mahābhārata.

That Māyāsabha was built because he was grateful to Arjuna. In that huge sabha were huge trees, lakes, gardens. That incident is spoken here.

I could defeat Indira and all the devatās. It was because of His grace. I thought it was my power but actually it was Bhagavān. We got that beautiful sabha made by Māyāsura where rājasuya yajña happened. It is all because of that Lord.

यत्तेजसा नृपशिरोऽङ्घ्रिमहन् मखार्थे आर्योऽनुजस्तव गजायुतसत्त्ववीर्यः । तेनाहताः
प्रमथनाथमखाय भूपा यन्मोचितास्तदनयन् बलिमध्वरे ते ॥ ९ ॥
yat-tejasā nṛpa-śiro-'ṅghrim ahan makhārthe āryo 'nujas tava
gajāyuta-sattva-vīryaḥ | tenāhṛtāḥ pramatha-nātha-makhāya bhūpā yan-mocitās
tad anayan balim adhware te || 9 ||

This episode talks about the killing of Jarāsandha.

The story of Jarāsandha is also interesting. There was a king called Brihadhrata. He was the king of Magada. He had two wives and no children so he was very sad. One day he heard that a great Ṛṣi was coming. He went with his two queens. The Ṛṣi's name was Chandakaushika. He went, prostrated and said, O' Ṛṣi please bless us we need somebody for the future. They were sitting under a mango tree and exactly at that time a mango fell. A ripe mango. The Ṛṣi chanted a mantra and said, you give it to the queens and you will have a child. The king cut the mango into two pieces and gave it to both his wives. At the right time, both of them became pregnant and the child was born and when the child came out there was only one half. They got so scared and just threw away the lump of flesh.

They thought it was dead flesh so they threw it. There was a rakshasi whose name was Jara. She was a flesh eating rakshasi. She smelt the flesh and came. She found one piece and then saw another piece also. She looked at them - they looked similar and the moment she joined it, it came to life. Because Jara joined it, and Sandha means joining, that is why the child was named Jarāsandha - the one who is united by Jara. When this child came to life she did not want to eat the child. She was also extremely grateful to the king for allowing her to remain in that area. She went to the king and said, I got a gift for you. You were struggling without a child. They were all amazed seeing the child. Jarāsandha was a great devotee of Lord Shiva. He was very powerful, no one could defeat him and he grew up to be the king.

Once, he decided to offer hundred heads of kings as a bali to Lord Shiva. He would fight with the king, defeat him, capture and put him in a cave on the top of a mountain. He would just hold them captive. He was waiting for a hundred kings and had captured eighty six. He was just waiting for fourteen more to do his offering.

It was at that time that rājasuya yajña was happening. In the rājasuya yajña the condition is, there should not be any emperor who challenges you. Jarāsandha was a problem and moreover 86 kings were simply rotting in the prison.

Bhagavān said, he must be eliminated and all the kings must be freed and that is necessary for that rājasuya yajña also. So all the three - Arjuna, Bhima and Kṛṣṇa came in a Brahmāna form. They went to Jarāsandha and said we want a fight with you. Jarāsandha was a very decent person. He immediately understood, you don't look like Brahmānas. They told the truth and said you can choose any one of us. Jarāsandha looked and said, you all look very weak and chose to fight with Bhima. Before the war, both of them touched each other's feet. They started and the fight continued for thirteen days. No food, no sleep, no rest. Bhima was also getting tired. Bhima himself had the strength of ten thousand elephants. So you can imagine the strength of Jarāsandha.

Finally he was getting tired. At that time Bhagavān just indicated- he took a leaf and tore it apart indicating to Bhima what had to be done. Then Bhima lifted him, whirled him and tore him apart and threw both the pieces in different directions. That is how Jarāsandha was killed.

Bhima's strength came from Bhagavān. Bhima's victory also came from Bhagavān. In how many ways Bhagavān saved them because only Bhagavān knew how he was born. Jarāsandha was killed and Kṛṣṇa appointed Jarāsandha's son Sahadeva as the king. All the 86 kings were freed.

So in the rājasuya yajña these 86 kings came with tributes. Sahadeva also brought tributes. In the Kurukṣetra war, Sahadeva was with the Pāṇḍavas. He was killed by Karna.

Jarāsandha got killed because of Bhagavān's grace only. All the eighty six kings after they were released brought tributes and that also happened only because of the Lord.

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Session 17

[Chapter 15 verse 10- 51]

पत्न्यास्तवाधिमखक्लृप्तमहाभिषेक- श्लाघिष्ठचारुकरं कितवैः सभायाम् । स्पृष्टं विकीर्य पदयोः
पतिताश्रुमुख्या यस्तत्त्रियोऽकृतहृतेविमुक्तकेशाः ॥ १० ॥

Patnyāstavādhimakhakṣiptamahābhiṣeka- ślāghiṣṭhacārukabaram kitavaiḥ
sabhāyām |
sprṣṭam vikīrya padayoḥ patitāśrumukhyā yastatstriyo'kṛtahateśavimuktakeśāḥ ||
10 ||

It was only because of God's grace that we could take revenge for the humiliation that our wife experienced.

Those wicked ones who disheveled the hair of Draupadī, God disheveled the hairs of the wives of those wicked ones. This is the essence of the verse.

पत्न्यास्तवाधिमखक्लृप्तमहाभिषेक- श्लाघिष्ठचारुकरं
(Patnyāstavādhimakhakṣiptamahābhiṣeka- ślāghiṣṭhacārukabaram) Draupadī had beautiful long hair which was praised by everyone. That hair which was sanctified by the waters of rājasuya yajña, the moment that hair was touched by those wicked ones and she fell at your feet with disheveled hair and tears in her eyes, what did Bhagavān do?

That Lord killed all those wicked ones and made their wives dishevel their hair. (We have to understand the custom wherein, when a husband dies and the woman becomes a widow, she opens her hair).

Here what is being said is Bhima had taken a lot of vows when this episode was going on:

1. When Draupadī was disrobed, Duryodhana started slapping his thigh, indicating Draupadī to come and sit there. At that time Bhima took a vow to smash his thigh and break it.
2. Duṣṣāsana, the main person behind this, Bhima took a vow that I will tear open his heart and drink the blood
3. Draupadī had taken a vow that I will not tie this hair unless it is bathed by the blood of this wicked one. This was the third vow.
4. Bhima took a vow to kill Śakuni, who was again the main person. This was the fourth vow.
5. There were so many kauravās who were laughing and ridiculing. Bhima took the vow, I will kill all of them.

All these vows were fulfilled. Whatever was promised, everything was fulfilled. So Arjuna says, it was only because of Bhagavān, we could fulfil all these vows. We thought, we did it. It was the Lord doing it and we never knew. We misunderstood that because of our valour and strength we did it.

यो नो जुगोप वनमेत्य दूरन्तकृच्छ्रा- ददुर्वाससोऽरिचितादयुताग्रभुग् यः ।
शाकान्नशिष्टमुपयुज्य यतस्त्रिलोकीं तृप्ताममंस्त सलिले विनिमग्नसङ्घः ॥ ११ ॥
śokena śuṣyad-vadana-hṛt-sarojo hata-prabhaḥ vibhuṃ tam evānudhyāyan
nāśaknot pratibhāṣitum ॥ 11 ॥

Through so many dangerous situations the Lord helped. The episode of Durvāsā Ṛṣi when he came with ten thousand disciples is now narrated.

Durvāsā Ṛṣi came at the lunch time when all had finished lunch. Draupadī had an akṣayapātra given by Sūrya Bhagavān. The rule was, as long as Draupadī didn't eat, it could feed any number of people. But once she ate, everything was over. And Durvāsā Ṛṣi came exactly after Draupadī had finished. Actually Durvāsā Ṛṣi was sent by Duryodhana. Draupadī panicked.

Durvāsā Ṛṣi said we will take bath and come back by then keep everything ready. Draupadī remembered Bhagavān. Bhagavān came, he said I am very hungry, give me something. Draupadī said, O' Lord, are you making fun of me? Bhagavān said, bring that pot, let me see. There was one grain left and Bhagavān ate it and the stomachs of all beings in the world became extremely filled. Durvāsā Ṛṣi who was taking a bath suddenly felt his stomach extremely full, in fact full till the neck. He was burping.

They didn't know what was happening. They looked at each other, they were all very full. They thought what do we do, the Pāṇḍavā's would be waiting for us for lunch. They were all scared. Going there and not eating would be an insult so all of them ran away. When Sahadeva came to invite them, nobody was seen.

So, that Lord saved them. In fact Durvāsā Ṛṣi was scared because he had an Ambarīṣa episode earlier. These devotees are dangerous. If they get disturbed, Bhagavān will beat me up so he ran away from there along with his ten thousand disciples.

In that forest he saved us. In how many ways he saved us.

यत्तेजसाथ भगवान् यद्धि शूलपाणि- विस्मापितः सगिरिजोऽस्त्रमदान्निजं मे । अन्येऽपि
चाहममुनैव कलेवरेण प्राप्तो महेन्द्रभवने महदासनार्धम् ॥ १२ ॥
yattejasāthabhāgavānyudhiśūlapāṇirvismāpitaḥsagirijo'stramadānnijam|
Anye'picāhamamunaivakalevareṇaprāptomahendrabhavanemahadāsanārdham
||12||

It was because of His grace that I became a recipient of the grace of Lord Shiva.

This episode is very famous.

Arjuna went to do tapas in the Himalayas. He was troubled by a wild bore. He shot an arrow and exactly at the same time another arrow came and this bore was dead. Arjuna saw a hunter. He thought it was an ordinary hunter so both of them started claiming for the bore. There was a fight and Arjuna was stunned. Whatever arrows he shot, the hunter would catch it very easily and finally he started attacking the hunter with a sword and the sword was broken and thrown into pieces. The bows, arrows were broken and he just could not do anything.

Again Arjuna did not leave, he kept on fighting as per the kṣatriya dharmā. Then he came and started doing dvandva yuddha. The hunter just caught him, twisted him and smashed him. Arjuna was stunned. He had never seen such a powerful person before. Immediately he understood this way things will not work. Even at the time of death Arjuna did not run away.

He just sat there, made a Shiva linga and started worshiping Lord Shiva with flowers. Wonder of wonders, those flowers directly fell at the feet of the hunter. That is when Arjuna understood, this was not an ordinary hunter, it was Lord Shiva himself. He immediately went to Lord Shiva and prostrated. Lord Shiva was very happy with Arjuna because of this valour. Even when he was losing, he did not run away. Bhagavān Shiva was extremely pleased and he gave Pāśupatāstra, a very powerful missile.

He was tempted to use Pāśupatāstra many times against Jayadrata, against Karna and Bhagavān said no. It was very powerful. So in an emergency, he had a nuclear weapon with him with which he could destroy the whole world. Such was the power. He got all those weapons only because of the Lord. Not only this he could get so many other weapons also going to Svargaloka. That portion will come later.

He got so many missiles and also with a human body, he could go to Svargaloka. What is the necessary qualification to go to Svargaloka? You have to die. Here Arjuna with the physical body, went there and shared the simhāsana of Indra by sitting next to him. It was all because of that Lord.

तत्रैव मे विहरतो भुजदण्डयुग्मं गाण्डीवलक्षणमरातिवधाय देवाः । सेन्द्राः श्रिता
यदनुभावितमाजमीढ तेनाहमद्य मुषितः पुरुषेण भूम्ना ॥ १३ ॥
tatraiva me viharato bhuja-daṇḍa-yugmaṁ gāṇḍīva-lakṣaṇam arāti-vadhāya
devāḥ sendrāḥ śritā yad-anubhāvitam ājamīḍha tenāham adya muṣitaḥ puruṣeṇa
bhūmnā ॥ 13 ॥

Why did Arjuna go to Svargaloka?

Indira was troubled by a group of demons called Nivātakavacas. These Nivātakavacas were demons residing under the ocean. They had a boon from Brahmā that devatās, dānavās, gandharvās could not kill them. Only a human being could kill them. This was the boon. Therefore Indra wanted a human being to come and the right person was Arjuna. That is why Arjuna was invited to Svargaloka.

To fight these demons you need divine weapons, therefore all the dignities gave their weapons.

Vajrāstra and Aindrāstra were given by Indra, Nāgāstra was given by Varuna devatā, Dandastra by Yamarāj, Antardhānāstra by Kubera, Vāyavyāstra by Vayu, Gandharvāstra by Gandharvās. In this way he got so many divine weapons and it is with these weapons that he attacked Nivātakavaca. It is here that he used Pāśupatāstra.

There was another group of demons called Kālakeya against them also he used Pāśupatāstra. Thus he vanquished all the demons and stayed in Svargaloka for five years. Remember Indra was Arjuna's father.

Indra was very happy. It is here where he gains a blessing in disguise from Urvashi. Urvashi approached him but he prostrated to Urvashi saying you are like my mother. I should see you only as my mother.

Urvashi then cursed him that he become a eunuch. But this curse became a blessing later during ajñātavāsa. In fact Indra was so happy that Arjuna could withstand that temptation. He also blessed him.

So, such was my strength that even the devatas invited me to Svargaloka to kill their enemies. Devatas inviting a Manava to fight is unheard of. It's always the reverse. That was the power which I had which Bhagavān had given. I thought it was my power. But it was all his power.

यद्बान्धवः कुरुबलाब्धिमनन्तपार- मेको रथेन ततरेऽहमतार्यसत्त्वम् ।
प्रत्याहृतं बहुधने च मया परेषां तेजास्पदं मणिमयं च हृतं शिरोभ्यः ॥ १४ ॥
yad-bāndhavaḥ kuru-balābhim ananta-pāram eko rathena tatara 'ham
atārya-sattvam pratyāhṛtaṁ bahu-dhanaṁ ca mayā pareṣāṁ
tejāspadaṁ maṇimayaṁ ca hṛtaṁ śirobhyaḥ

This episode happens in the virāṭa-parva. During the exile incognito, all the five were staying in matsya-deśa. In that one year during ajñātavāsa, they had to live in disguise and not be found. If they were found out then the whole thing would have to start from the beginning.

That was the time when Arjuna had become a eunuch, by the name Brhannalā. The king was Virāṭa and the son's name was Uttar Kumar and the sister's name was Uttara. At that time kīcaka was killed by Bhima. The kīcaka was a great support for matsya-deśa. He was very powerful. When they heard this kīcaka was killed by a gandharvā, because ordinary human beings cannot kill them. At that time Duryodhana thought it to be the best time to attack them and take all the cattle wealth.

Cattle meant big wealth during those times. So, all of them came to attack matsya-deśa. Bhīṣma, Drona, Duryodhana, Karṇa, Duṣṣāsana, Kriya (Kṛpācārya), Śalya, Aśvatthāmā, everybody was there.

Then a message came that they are taking away their cattle. So Uttar Kumar said I can fight with them. The problem is I don't have a good charioteer.

All the ladies were there and he was just 'beating his drum'. At that time Draupadī was there and she said, Brhannalā is a very good charioteer. You can take his help. He was there with Arjuna and has gone in big battles and he is well experienced. So if you want a charioteer he is the right person. Thus Brhannalā became the charioteer and Uttar started getting ready. Arjuna told Uttar Kumar, I know you are going to win so bring all your nice clothes, and the crown etc. Uttar said yes I'll take care of all of that.

The moment he saw the kauravā army, he started trembling. Bhīṣma, Drona, each one invincible. Uttar Kumar was a nobody. Infact, in the Kurukṣetra war the first day itself he died. He was a little boy and he started running away. Then Brhannalā (Arjuna) caught hold of him. Where are you running? Better die, don't run. Then he said, don't worry, I will fight. You be the charioteer. He was confused. What are you going to fight? He said I am Arjuna. That is when he got some solace and he said first let us go to that tree. Everything is tied there - my gāṇḍīva etc. So both of them went there and he climbed the tree and took all the divine weapons. By then Arjuna had all the divine weapons with him. He had already gone to Svarga and single handedly was fighting with everyone. In the virāṭa-parva, it was Arjuna who fought. Nobody was there. With that fight itself they understood that it cannot be anyone other than Arjuna. Because only Arjuna could do this. Drona immediately understood.

Duryodhana was very happy that yes we have caught hold of him. But then Bhīṣma calculated. Sorry, already an extra five months have passed. Pāṇḍavas will never break the law.

So he defeated all of them and finally released one arrow called mohanāstra. With that, everybody felt unconscious and then Uttar was asked to take all the jewels and crown and clothes etc from them. So he collected everything and returned.

Virāṭa thought, my God! I can't believe my son did this, it was such a big army! Arjuna was quiet. Yudhiṣṭhira was there, always with him playing dice. So he said Br̥hannalā was there, that is why. Two or three times Yudhiṣṭhira said this. Virāṭa became so angry. He just threw the dice onto his face.

Later, Virāṭa just fell at his feet when he came to know that it is Yudhiṣṭhira and Br̥hannalā was none other than Arjuna.

That episode is what is being described here. Single handedly I could defeat the entire kauravā forces, it is all because of Him.

यो भीष्मकर्णगुरुशल्यचमूष्वदभ्र- राजन्यवर्यरथमण्डलमण्डितासु ।
अग्रेचरो मम विभो रथयूथपाना- मायुर्मनांसि च दृशा सह ओज आच्छत् ॥ १५॥
yo bhīṣma-karṇa-guru-śalya-camūṣv adabhra-
rājanya-varya-ratha-maṇḍala-maṇḍitāsu agrecharo mama vibho
ratha-yūthapānām āyur manāṁsi ca dr̥ṣā saha oja ārcchat

Even in the Kurukṣetra war also, the army was beautifully arrayed in front of me. Bhīṣma, Drona, Karṇa, Śalya, the great warriors and different formats. Padmavyūham , Cakravyūham. At that time Bhagavān went in front, he looked at them and took away their life span, their mind, just by His look. I could defeat them only because of Bhagavān. By the very look he took away their life. It's a fact. Bhagavān makes it very clear in Bhagavad Gita also. Arjuna I have killed all of them. निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् (nimitta-mātraṁ bhava savyasācin) You just be a nimitta, I have killed all of them. It's a fact.

यददोषु मा प्रणिहितं गुरुभीष्मकर्ण- नप्तृत्रिगर्तशलसैन्धवबाह्लिकाद्यैः ।
अस्त्राण्यमोघमहिमानि निरूपितानि नोपस्पृशुर्नृहरिदासमिवासुराणि ॥ १६॥
yad-dohṣu mā praṇihitaṁ guru-bhīṣma-karṇa-
napṭṛ-trigarta-śala-saindhava-bāhlikādyaiḥ astrāṇy amogha-mahimāni nirūpitāni
nopa-spr̥śur nr̥hari-dāsam ivāsurāṇi

All these mighty warriors, Dhrona, Bhīṣma, Karna, Bhūriśravāḥ, Trigarta, Śalya, Saindhava (Jayadrata), Bāhlika (brother of Shantanu imagine him fighting the war, you can say he is like the father of Bhīṣma), how many generations were there. All these people had such invincible weapons but they just could not touch me. Just like the weapons of the asuras of Hiraṇyakaśipu could not touch Prahlāda, in the same way, all these missiles could not touch me. It was all because of His grace.

सौत्ये वृत्तः कुमतिनाऽऽत्मद ईश्वरो मे यत्पादपद्ममभवाय भजन्ति भव्याः ।
मां श्रान्तवाहमरयो रथिनो भुविष्ठं न प्राहरन् यदनुभावनिरस्तचित्ताः ॥ १७॥
sautye vṛtaḥ kumatina-ātma-da īśvaro me yat-pāda-padmaṁ abhavāya bhajanti
bhavyāḥ mām śrānta-vāham arayo rathino bhuvi-ṣṭhaṁ na prāharan
yad-anubhāva-nirasta-cittāḥ

Even in moments when I was so vulnerable, when the horses were tired and I had to stop and get down, even at that time they just could not attack me.

They were simply paralyzed because of Bhagavān's power. Remember after Abhimanyu's death there was only adharmā everywhere. Nobody followed rules. Therefore easily Arjuna could have been attacked but then they just stood there transfixed and paralysed only because of God's grace.

There were so many such situations when I was very vulnerable and others could have easily attacked but nobody could attack me. Only because of Him.

What a tragedy! Wise people meditate at the lotus feet of this Lord and look at what I have done! I engaged that Lord in becoming my charioteer. That Lord who gives himself to his devotees, I asked Him to become my charioteer. What a dull witted person I am!

And what a personality Kṛṣṇa is...

नर्मण्युदाररुचिरस्मितशोभितानि हे पार्थ हेऽर्जुन सखे कुरुनन्दनेति । सञ्जल्पितानि नरदेव
हृदिस्पृशानि
स्मर्तुर्लुठन्ति हृदयं मम माधवस्य ॥ १८ ॥
narmāṇy udāra-rucira-smīta-śobhitāni he pārtha he'rjuna sakhe kuru-nandaneti
sañjalpitāni nara-deva hṛdi-sprśāni smartur luṭhanti hṛdayaṁ mama mādhasya

That Bhagavān would crack jokes. Even the jokes that were full of humour, it never belittled anyone, never insulted or ridiculed anyone. He always had a spiritual message. Even in casual talks he would give so much of respect, so much of love. Even a casual discussion would be heart touching.

Never even once by mistake did he disrespect me. He would always address me as hey partha, hey Arjuna, hey sakhe, hey kurunandana. This we find especially in Bhagavad Gita. Anagha, Mahābāho, Kaunteya. Never we find Bhagavān using any bad term.

Every moment this is the way one should speak- with so much love and sweetness. And Arjuna says when I think of all that, my heart breaks.

And what is the way I used to talk to him...

शय्यासनाटनविकत्थनभोजनादि- श्वैक्यादवयस्य ऋतवानिति विप्रलब्धः ।
सख्युः सखेव पितृवत्तनयस्य सर्वं सेहे महान् महितया कुमतेरघं मे ॥ १९ ॥
Śayyāsanāṭana-vikatthana-bhojanādi- śvaikyād vayasya ṛtavān iti vipralabdhah
sakhyuḥ sakheva pitṛvat tanayasya sarvaṁ sehe mahān mahitayā kumater
aghaṁ me

On one hand Bhagavān used to give so much love, so much respect, with so much sweetness in his words. On the other hand, I just took him for granted as my close friend. We were always together - while lying down and sleeping, sitting, strolling, eating, talking I just took him to be my close friend and many times I would make sarcastic remarks. Sometimes careless remarks and hurting words. O' you are a very truthful fellow- this way I used to talk to Him.

But all my impermanence, my trespasses, he endured with his large heartedness. He did not take it seriously at all. He never took these to heart and just forgave me like one friend forgiving the other or like a father forgiving all the stupidities of the son. This is the way Bhagavān treated me.

I am a dull-witted fool who did not even know how to behave! Bhagavān was always sweet. Even by mistake he never said any bad or insulting words. But I was very careless. I took everything for granted.

Now O'king let me tell you what happened when I was coming back.

सोऽहं नृपेन्द्र रहितः पुरुषोत्तमेन सख्या प्रियेण सुहृदा हृदयेन शन्यः ।
अध्वन्युरुक्रमपरिग्रहमङ्गं रक्षन् गोपैरसद्भिरबलेवं विनिर्जितोऽस्मि ॥ २० ॥
so'haṁ nṛpēndra rahitaḥ puruṣottamena sakhyā priyeṇa suhṛdā hṛdayena
śūnyaḥ | adhvaṇy urukrama-parigrahaṁ aṅga rakṣan
gopair asadbhira balēva vinirjito'smi || 20 ||

As I was coming back, I was given the responsibility to take care of Kṛṣṇa's family, his wives etc. and protect them. But on the way some immoral, wicked cowherds, just conquered me. I was helpless. I just could not protect Kṛṣṇa's family. These were just some cowherd boys!

तद्वै धनुस्त इषवः स रथो हयास्ते सोऽहं रथी नृपतयो यत आनमन्ति ।
सर्वं क्षणेन तदभूदसदीशरिक्तं भस्मन् हुतं कुहकराद्धमिवोप्तमूष्याम् ॥ २१ ॥
tadvai dhanusta iṣavaḥ sa ratho hayāste so'haṁ rathī nṛpatayo yata ānamanti |
sarvaṁ kṣaṇena tadabhūdasadīśariktaṁ bhasman hutaṁ
kuhakarāddhamivoptamūṣyām || 21 ||

Everything was the same. The very same gāṇḍīva, the same arrows, same chariot, horses and the occupant of this chariot. When Kṛṣṇa was there everybody would come and bow down to me. Such was the respect and reverence I carried. In one moment everything became useless. The absence of this one man made all the difference.

A few cowherd boys easily defeated me and I just could not do anything. The number one archer in the world! It was a humiliating defeat. I did not lose in front of some warriors, it was cowherd boys!

It is like doing a yajña without fire. It is like charity - everything is there but you come to know that the person is not deserving at all. He will take your charity and misuse it somewhere.

Or you want to sow a seed - sunlight is there, water is there, manure is there, seed is very good but the land is barren. Just like the absence of one thing spoils everything, in the same way because of the absence of Bhagavān I am a nobody.

You see how Bhagavān is puncturing the ego of Arjuna. This is a very important point here. The one thing which was preventing Arjuna from gaining that highest knowledge was his ego. So Bhagavān had to remove that ego. That is why Arjuna is made to go through this experience.

O' King all the people you mentioned, nobody is there now..

राजंस्त्वयानुपृष्टानां सुहृदां नः सुहृत्पुरे । विप्रशापविमूढानां निघ्नतां मुष्टिभिर्मिथः ॥ २२ ॥
rājaṁstvayānupṛṣṭānāṁ suhr̥dāṁ naḥ suhr̥tpure |
vipraśāpavimūḍhānāṁ nighnatāṁ muṣṭibhirmithaḥ || 22 ||

वारुणीं मदिरां पीत्वा मदोन्मथितचेतसाम् । अजानतामिवान्योन्यं चतुःपञ्चावशेषिताः ॥ २३ ॥
vāruṇīṁ madirāṁ pītvā madonmathitacetaśāṁ |
ajānatāmivānyonyāṁ catuḥpañcāvaśeṣitāḥ || 23 ||

All those people you asked, nobody is alive. Just four or five are alive. They fought with each other, drank too much liquor and they fought like strangers and killed each other. Nobody is left.

प्रायेणैतद्भगवत ईश्वरस्य विचेष्टितम् । मिथो निघ्नन्ति भूतानि भावयन्ति च यन्मिथः ॥ २४ ॥
prāyeṇaitad bhagavata īśvarasya viceṣṭitaṁ mitho nighnanti bhūtāni bhāvayanti
ca yan mithaḥ || 24 ||

When people come together in love and respect, in co-operation there is prosperity. But when people come together with hostile feelings there is only destruction. This is the law of the cosmos. In fact I see only Bhagavān's hand in this destruction also because...

जलौकसां जले यद्वन्महान्तोऽदन्त्यणीयसः । दुर्बलान् बलिनो राजन् महान्तो बलिनो मिथः ॥ २५ ॥
jalaukasāṁ jale yadvanmahānto'dantyaṇīyasah | durbalān balino rājan mahānto
balino mithaḥ || 25 ||

एवं बलिष्ठैर्यदुभिर्महद्भिरितरान् विभुः । यदून् यदुभिरन्योन्यं भूभारान् सञ्जहार ह ॥ २६ ॥
evaṁ baliṣṭhāir yadubhir mahadbhir itarān vibhuḥ | yadūn yadubhir anyonyāṁ
bhū-bhārān sañjahāra ha || 26 ||

Just like in the ocean, the big fish eats the small fish, and the strong one kills the weaker one. And finally one the big one and the strong one that fight with each other and kill themselves.

This is exactly what Bhagavān did with Yādavas. He made Yādavas strong and killed all the other wicked people. Finally, these Yādavas became arrogant, and he made them fight amongst themselves and killed all of them thus unburdened mother earth.

देशकालार्थयुक्तानि हृत्तापोपशमानि च । हरन्ति स्मरतश्चितं गोविन्दाभिहितानि मे ॥ २७ ॥
deśa-kālārtha-yuktāni hṛt-tāpopaśamāni ca | haranti smarataś cittam
govindābhihitāni me || 27 ||

The one thing which is giving me peace is गोविन्दाभिहितानि (govindābhihitāni) whatever the Lord has spoken. All the pain in my heart is completely vanquished by remembering those words which Bhagavān spoke. Those words which made so much sense.

सूत उवाच ।
एवं चिन्तयतो जिष्णोः कृष्णपादसरोरुहम् । सौहार्देनातिगाढेन शान्ताऽसीद्विमला मतिः ॥ २८ ॥
sūta uvāca |
evam cintayato jiṣṇoḥ kṛṣṇa-pāda-saroruham | sauhārdenātigāḍhena śāntā'sīd
vimalā matiḥ || 28 ||

In this way, Arjuna started thinking of the lotus feet of the Lord. His heart was filled with intense emotion of love towards Bhagavān and because of the intense love, the mind became very pure. With the intensity of devotion the mind became quiet.

वासुदेवाङ्घ्र्यनुध्यानपरिवृत्तिरंहसा । भक्त्या निर्मथिताशेषकषायधिषणोऽर्जुनः ॥ २९ ॥
vāsudevāṅghry-anudhyāna-paribṛmḥita-ramhasā | bhaktyā
nirmathitāśeṣa-kaṣāya-dhiṣaṇo'rjunah || 29 ||

Because of that intense devotion for God and meditating upon the lotus feet of the Lord, all the impurities of the mind in that churning became very clean and pure.

गीतं भगवता ज्ञानं यत्तत्सङ्ग्राममूर्धनि । कालकर्मतमोरुद्धं पुनरध्यगमत्विभुः ॥ ३० ॥
gītam bhagavatā jñānam yat tat saṅgrāma-mūrdhani | kāla-karma-tamo-ruddham
punar adhyagamat vibhuḥ || 30 ||

In that pure clean peaceful mind, he recollected all the knowledge of Bhagavad Gita that he had heard in the battlefield. At that time the knowledge was suppressed, it was buried because the time was not proper. It was not proper due to kāla, karma and tamas. The environment was not conducive then but it was conducive now.

It became conducive because ego was gone. There was intense devotion and total surrender. Till now surrender was not there. If I achieved something it is because of me. My strength is my glory. Bhagavān punctured that 'I' and 'mine'. He made him lose the battle with some cowherd boys. All Bhagavān's līlā. In our life also it will happen. You may be a big fellow, old age will puncture all those big egos. There is a purpose.

Now the mind was free from all that ego and stupidity. He had become very very humble. He understood, what I had gained nothing was mine, it was all God's only. I am a nobody. At that time, all these teachings came up.

विशोको ब्रह्मसम्पत्त्या सञ्छिन्नद्वैतसंशयः । लीनप्रकृतिनैर्गुण्यादलिङ्गत्वादसम्भवः ॥ ३१ ॥
viśoko brahmasampattyā sañcchinnavadwaitasaṁśayaḥ |
līnaprakṛtinairguṇyādaliṅgatvādasambhavaḥ || 31||

He attained that greatest wealth- the wealth of Brahmān.

All the doubts- I am there, the world is there were all gone. There was only advaita. Dvaita saṁśaya was gone. Exactly like waking from a dream. I and the dream world, once you wake up, only I am there.

Naturally when Dvaita is gone and there is only Advaita, Bhagavān alone is, consciousness alone is, rest everything is prakṛti, matter. The body, intellect, everything is prakṛti. There is nothing called prakṛti, there is only pure consciousness. Therefore there are no gunas, no sattva, rājas, tamas. Therefore there is no gross body, no subtle body, no causal body. Thus, Arjuna went beyond the birth- death cycle. He attained that supreme state.

Many times this question is asked, after Bhagavad Gita did Arjuna attain all that? No, after Bhagavad Gita he was convinced. His doubts were cleared but that supreme state was not attained. He attains it here.

Now he was in total bliss. Total peace. Yudhiṣṭhira was watching him.

निशम्य भगवन्मार्गं संस्थां यदुकुलस्य च । स्वःपथाय मतिं चक्रे निभृतात्मा युधिष्ठिरः ॥ ३२ ॥
niśamya bhagavanmārgaṁ saṁsthāṁ yadukulasya ca | svahpāthāya matim
cakre nibhṛtātmā yudhiṣṭhiraḥ || 32||

When he heard that Bhagavān is gone and all the Yadavas are gone, Yudhiṣṭhira became single- pointed. Enough is enough. Arjuna attained it, let me also attain it.

पृथाप्यनुश्रुत्य धनञ्जयोदितं नाशं यदूनां भगवद्गतिं च ताम् । एकान्तभक्त्या भगवत्यधोक्षजे
निवेशितात्मोपरराम संसृतेः ॥ ३३ ॥
prthāpy anuśrutya dhanañjayoditaṁ nāśaṁ yadūnāṁ bhagavad-gatiṁ ca tām |

ekānta-bhaktyā bhagavaty adhokṣaje niveśitātmopararāma saṁsr̥teḥ || 33 ||

Kunti was also hearing all this. When she heard Bhagavān is gone and he has left his body, she was in intense sorrow. When one is in intense sorrow, single pointed focus upon God becomes very easy. This is what was happening now in everybody.

Arjuna's mind became single focussed because now there is nowhere else. No attraction to the world, no attraction towards anything. There is only one support and that is God. She also became free from saṁsāra. Already the mind was prepared, just one push was all that was needed. Bhagavān dropped the body and they were all pushed into the infinite.

As far as Bhagavān was concerned, dropping the body was nothing.

ययाहरद्भुवो भारं तां तनुं विजहावजः । कण्टकं कण्टकेनेव द्वयं चापीशितुः समम् ॥ ३४ ॥
yayāharad bhuvo bhāraṁ tān tanuṁ vijahāv ajaḥ | kaṇṭakam kaṇṭakeneva
dvayam cāpīśituḥ samam || 34 ||

यथा मत्स्यादिरूपाणि धत्ते जह्याद्यथा नटः । भूभारः क्षपितो येन जहौ तच्च कलेवरम् ॥ ३५ ॥
yathā matsyādi-rūpāṇi dhātte jahyād yathā naṭaḥ |
bhū-bhāraḥ kṣapito yena jahau tac ca kalevaram || 35 ||

As far as Bhagavān was concerned, Just as you remove thorns. When there are so many thorns, you take one thorn, remove all other thorns and then throw this thorn. In the same way, Bhagavān took one physical body, removed all the wicked people and finally dropped the body also.

All bodies are the same only. How does it matter, his body or my body? All are made of five elements. He took one body, cleaned up the whole thing and threw away that body also.

Just like an actor takes up different roles, different movies, different costumes and drops them once the role is done. He is not attached to any costume. In the same way, Bhagavān had come, did his work and without any attachment just dropped that role, dropped that body.

It is said, the moment Bhagavān left the Earth, Kali started strengthening its hold and Yudhiṣṭhira saw it. In the city, in the kingdom, at home, in oneself. The sway of Kali was clearly seen. Fighting, quarrel, mistrust and all these things were seen.

So Yudhiṣṭhira said, I must also leave. Enough. But then there were some responsibilities and his grandson was ready.

स्वराट् पौत्रं विनयिनमात्मनः सुसमं गुणैः । तोयनीव्याः पतिं भूमेरभ्यषिञ्चद्गजाह्वये ॥ ३८ ॥

svarāṭ pautram vinayinam ātmanaḥ susamaṁ guṇaiḥ | toya-nīvyāḥ patiṁ bhūmer
abhyaṣiṅcad gajāhvaye || 38 ||

The pautram Parīkṣit, was an embodiment of virtues. He found Parīkṣit very capable. He handed over the kingdom, made him the Samrath and did his abhiṣeka.

Mathura also had to be taken care of.

मथुरायां तथा वज्रं शूरसेनपतिं ततः । प्राजापत्यां निरूप्येष्टिमग्नीनपिबदीश्वरः ॥ ३९ ॥
mathurāyām tathā vajraṁ śūrasena-patiṁ tataḥ | prājāpatyām nirūpyeṣṭim agnīn
apibad īśvaraḥ || 39 ||

In Mathura, Vajranābha the grandson of Kṛṣṇa was made the king of the Śūrasena. Then Yudhiṣṭhira took formal sannyāsa.

विसृज्य तत्र तत्सर्वं दुकूलवल्यादिकम् । निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः सञ्छिन्नाशेषबन्धनः ॥ ४० ॥
visṛjya tatra taṭ sarvaṁ dukūla-valayādikam | nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ
sañcchinna-aśeṣa-bandhanaḥ || 40 ||

Yudhiṣṭhira gave up everything- the silk dress, gold ornaments. He was free from 'I' ness and 'my' ness and gave up all relations.

वाचं जुहाव मनसि तत्प्राण इतरे च तम् । मृत्यावपानं सोत्सर्गं तं पञ्चत्वे ह्यजोहवीत् ॥ ४१ ॥
vācaṁ juhāva manasi tat prāṇa itare ca tam | mṛtyāv apānaṁ sotsargaṁ taṁ
pañcatve hy ajohavīt || 41 ||

त्रित्वे हुत्वाथ पञ्चत्वं तच्चैकत्वेऽजुहोन्मुनिः । सर्वमात्मन्यजुहवीद्ब्रह्मण्यात्मानमव्यये ॥ ४२ ॥
tritvḥ hutvātha pañcatvaṁ taḥ caikatve'juhon muniḥ | sarvaṁ ātmany ajuhavīd
brahmany ātmānam avyaye || 42 ||

The literal translation of this verse is, first he merged speech into the mind, mind he merged into prāṇa. Prāṇa he merged into apāna. Apāna he merged into mṛtyu, mṛtyu he merged into five. Five he merged into three and three he merged into one and one he merged into the supreme self.

Speech into mind means stop talking and slowly shift the attention to the mind, the inner world. Prāṇa apāna means breathing slowly, shift your attention to breathing. Once the mind has really become focussed, then merge that into mṛtyu. Pay attention to death. The mind becomes serious when you start meditating upon death.

Everybody is dead, I am also going to die, this is not a permanent place to settle. I have to leave the body and need to prepare. Analyse mṛtyu. What is mṛtyu? It is nothing but the body merging with the five elements. Five means pañcamahābhūtas. This body has to be dropped. No choice. Five merging to

three. Three are the three guṇas. Three merging into one- I am the sākṣī of these three guṇas. One merging into the supreme self.

As you meditate on to the sākṣī, that sākṣī merges with the supreme self which is सर्वमात्मन्यजुहवीद्ब्रह्मण्यात्मानमव्यये (sarvam ātmany ajuhavīd brahmaṇy ātmānam avyaye) That imperishable self, that pure consciousness. Slowly come and merge with consciousness and abide there. I am consciousness.

Then what was his lifestyle?

चीरवासा निराहारो बद्धवाङ्मुक्तमूर्धजः । दर्शयन्नात्मनो रूपं जडोन्मत्तपिशाचवत् ॥ ४३ ॥
cīravāsā nirāhāro baddhavāṅ muktamūrdhajah | darśayann ātmano rūpaṁ
jaḍonmattapiśācavat || 43 ||

He had given up all silk clothes and was now wearing the bark of a tree. He gave up food, talking, hair was disheveled. He resembled a dull fellow and looked like a drunk person, a ghost.

अनवेक्षमाणो निरगादशृण्वन् बधिरो यथा । उदीचीं प्रविवेशाशं गतपूर्वा महात्मभिः । हृदि ब्रह्म
परं ध्यायन् नावर्तत यतो गतः ॥ ४४ ॥
anavekṣamāṇo niragād aśṛṇvan badhiro yathā | udīcīṁ praviveśāśaṁ
gata-pūrvāṁ mahātmabhiḥ | hṛdi brahma param dhyāyan nāvarteta yato gataḥ ||
44 ||

He just did not care about who was following him. He just left everything. Literally became like a deaf person who was not listening to anything. He just kept walking in the northern direction towards the Himalayas. That place where all the Mahātmās had gone for no return. He went meditating upon that Parabrahma. He left everything.

What did the brothers do?

सर्वे तमनुनिर्जग्मुर्भ्रातरः कृतनिश्चयाः । कलिनाधर्ममित्रेण दृष्ट्वा स्पृष्टाः प्रजा भुवि ॥ ४५ ॥
sarve tam anunirjagmur bhrātarah kṛta-niścayaḥ | kalinādhama-mitreṇa dr̥ṣṭvā
spr̥ṣṭāḥ prajā bhuvi || 45 ||

All the brothers followed him. They understood Kaliyuga was coming. Everywhere that effect was seen. They just followed him.

ते साधुकृत्सर्वार्था ज्ञात्वाऽऽत्यन्तिकमात्मनः । मनसा धारयामासुर्वैकुण्ठचरणाम्बुजम् ॥ ४६ ॥
te sādhu-kṛta-sarvārthā jñātvātyantikam ātmanah | manasā dhārayām āsur
vaikuṇṭha-caraṇāmbujam || 46 ||

All those Pāṇḍavas thoroughly made use of their life, walking the path of righteousness, ever remaining at the feet of holy people, ever holding on to Lord. Thus they were very clear about what is the ultimate good for everyone. They

knew that holding to the lotus feet of the Lord alone is the ultimate good. Thus, holding on to the Lord, those blessed ones also followed.

तद्ध्यानोद्विक्तया भक्त्या विशुद्धधिषणाः परे । तस्मिन् नारायणपदे एकान्तमतयो गतिम् ॥
४७ ॥

tad-dhyānodriktayā bhaktyā viśuddha-dhiṣaṇāḥ pare | tasmin nārāyaṇa-pade
ekānta-matayo gatim || 47 ||

अवापुर्दुरवापां ते असद्भिर्विषयात्मभिः । विधूतकल्मषा स्थाने विरजेनात्मनैव हि ॥ ४८ ॥
avāpur duravāpāṁ te asadbhir viṣayātmabhiḥ | vidhūta-kalmaṣā sthāne
virajenātmanaiva hi || 48 ||

Because of the intense devotion for God, their minds had become extremely pure and single pointed. And thus, they attained the supreme state. That state which is impossible to attain by the sensuous, indulgent, unrighteous, immoral people. Pāṇḍavas attained that state.

विदुरोऽपि परित्यज्य प्रभासे देहमात्मवान् । कृष्णावेशेन तच्चित्तः पितृभिः स्वक्षयं ययौ ॥ ४९ ॥
viduro'pi parityajya prabhāse deham ātmavān | kṛṣṇāveśena tac-cittaḥ
pitṛbhiḥ sva-kṣayaṁ yayau || 49 ||

Vidura had no choice and had to live for a hundred years. Throughout those hundred years, the mind was in the Lord and finally he dropped his body and went back to Yamaloka.

द्रौपदी च तदाऽऽज्ञाय पतीनामनपेक्षताम् । वासुदेवे भगवति ह्येकान्तमतिराप तम् ॥ ५० ॥
Draupadī ca tadā ājñāya patīnām anapekṣatām | vāsudeve bhagavati hy
ekānta-matir āpa tam || 50 ||

When Draupadī came to know that all husbands have left her. In the spirit of renunciation she also did not have any difficulty in withdrawing the mind. Single pointed absorption of the mind in the Supreme Lord and she also attained that.

So, everybody attained that state.

यः श्रद्धयैतद्भगवत्प्रियाणां पाण्डोः सुतानामिति सम्प्रयाणम् । शृणोत्यलं स्वस्त्ययनं पवित्रं
लब्ध्वा हरौ भक्तिमुपैति सिद्धिम् ॥ ५१ ॥
yaḥ śraddhayaitad bhagavat-priyāṇāṁ pāṇḍoḥ sutānām iti samprayāṇam |
śṛṇoty alaṁ svastyayanam pavitraṁ labdhvā harau bhaktim upaiti siddhim || 51 ||

The one who with all faith, devotion listens to this episode of the Pāṇḍavas great abandonment, will also get this devotion and attain that state of liberation. This is the purpose of this episode.

The episode is a bit painful but is a great blessing. In life, Bhagavān will puncture our ego but understand it is for our own good. So, cultivate devotion for God and

life will be beautiful. You will never have any problem in renunciation, provided there is devotion for God.

This is very auspicious as it prepares us to leave the body. Even the great ones have done that, what to talk of us. Yudhiṣṭhira was such a great emperor but when the time came, he just left everything. It was all because of devotion. It was a wonder of devotion.

Those who listen to this episode of the great abandonment of the Pāṇḍavas, will also get this devotion and attain the state of liberation. This is the purpose of this episode.

This Canto is not over, there are four more chapters but those chapters are associated with the second canto. It is the story of Parīkṣit. They go well together.

We will take that up in the next canto.

I sincerely invoke the grace of the Lord and the blessings of all the great Mahātmās. May we also develop bhakti. The purpose of study of Bhāgavatam is only one, develop bhakti. Gain jñāna, bhakti, vairāgya and then attain mokṣa. That is the purpose.

इति श्रीमद्भागवते महापुराणे पारमहंस्यां संहितायां
प्रथमस्कन्धे पाण्डवस्वर्गारोहणे नाम पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः ॥ १५॥
Iti śrīmadbhāgavate mahāpurāṇe pāramaham̐syāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ
prathamaskandhe Pāṇḍavasvargārohaṇaṁ nāma pañcadaśo'dhyāyaḥ ॥ 15॥

OM TAT SAT