

|| Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya ||

- 1) As per the orders of Sri Krishna, Maya constructed an excellent palace full of surprises and handed it over to Yudhisthira. He also presented a mace to Bhima.
- 2) That mace belonged to Sri Vayu. King Mandhata had obtained it due to the grace of Sri Vayu. Bhima was very pleased to possess it.
- 3) Having stayed there for two more years, Sri Krishna left for Dwaraka. Unable to bear his separation, the Pandavas worshipped him a lot and bid farewell.
- 4) Later, Sri Krishna, even as he was staying in Dwaraka, left along with his wife, children and relatives to Syamanta Panchaka on the occasion of a solar eclipse.
- 5) The Pandavas, along with their wives and children and their mother left for the same place. Similarly, all those Kings who were dear to Sri Hari, those whom he disliked and those about whom he was indifferent, turned up there.
- 6) Similarly, Nandagopa left for that place along with his wife and all the Gopas and Gopis. The best amongst the Sages and all other citizens too went there.
- 7) All those who were dear to Sri Hari saw him in his three forms as Sri Vedavyasa, Sri Yadava Krishna and Sri Parashurama and worshipped him.
- 8) All of them took bath in those Tirthas built by Sri Parashurama during the solar eclipse and felt blessed having the *darshana* of Sri Hari.
- 9) Sri Hari blessed all of them in his three forms. He got Vasudeva (his father) to perform numerous Yajnas, complete with the offering of Dakshinas.
- 10) By granting darshana in that way to all the people of the world who had devotion in him, Sri Krishna showered his special blessings on that auspicious occasion.
- 11) Sri Krishna later got together with the Pandavas and went back to Dwaraka. There, he performed a Maha-Ashwamedha Yajna which was conducted in (just) one day.
- 12) Sitting in the chariot of Sri Hari, the sons of Sri Krishna, along with Bhima and Arjuna, took the horse around the entire world in just one-quarter of a day.
- 13) Jarasandha and all the other Kings were defeated instantly by Bhima and others. The divine horse returned.
- 14) That horse, which was created by Sri Krishna, was capable of travelling a lakh yojanas in just one day, to facilitate the completion of the Ashwamedha.
- 15) Sri Hari in the form of Sri Vyasa gave deeksha of that yajna to Sri Hari who was in the form of Sri Krishna. At that time, a Brahmana came there holding a blade of grass and started weeping.
- 16) "All my children are vanishing the moment they are born" – when he said thus Arjuna replied – "I shall protect your children".

17) "Sri Krishna, Balarama and Pradyumna haven't protected my children. Where do you have the capability for this?" – thus said the Brahmana to Arjuna.

18) At that moment, due to the corruption of his mind as a result of Asura Avesha, Arjuna said – "I am not like how Krishna and the others are".

19) "I have won the Devas in the Khandava forest. Soon, I shall be winning against the Nivatakavacha Asuras".

20) Having spoken thus he told Sri Krishna – "Look here I am leaving". Sri Krishna asked him – "Will this be possible for you?"

21) Noticing that Arjuna had lost his sense of modesty, Sri Krishna, the destroyer of enemies, said – "Proceed". Arjuna then took a vow on what he would do if he failed to protect the Brahmana's child.

22) "If I fail I shall enter the fire" – declaring thus he left with all the Yadavas. Sri Krishna did not deploy Balarama, Pradyumna and Aniruddha for this task, in order to protect their fame.

23-24) Balarama was most dear to Sri Krishna. After that Pradyumna was very dear to him. Aniruddha came next. He was born to Pradyumna and Rugmavati, the daughter of Rugma who was kidnapped in a Swayamvara. Rugmavati too was the Avatara of Rati. Aniruddha, the son of Kama, was born to her.

25) Earlier too (in the previous life) he was known as Aniruddha and had the Avesha of the Aniruddha form of Sri Vishnu. He was strong, handsome and knew all the Shastras.

26-27) Therefore, Sri Krishna appointed the rest for help apart from these three. At the time when the Brahmana's wife delivered a baby, Arjuna created a blockade with arrows. Still, the baby disappeared the moment it was born. The Brahmana, being very disappointed, chastised Arjuna. Along with the Yadavas, Arjuna came to where Sri Krishna, the Lord of Lakshmi, was.

28) Even as Arjuna was about to enter a pyre, Sri Krishna stopped him and climbed a big chariot along with him and the Brahmana. Crossing the seven seas, he proceeded in the northern direction.

29) Mountains and oceans gave way. Sri Krishna, the one with infinite valour, tore apart the eternal darkness, *Andhantamas*, with his Chakra, crossed the *Ghanodaka*, and saw his divine abode.

30) Sri Krishna made the Brahmana and Arjuna stay back in the chariot at a distance and entered his *moola roopa*, a form that has eight arms, that is decorated with precious stones and is radiant, and which is known as the ocean of excellent attributes.

31) That form was seated on the body of Sesha, who had a thousand hoods. It had the radiance of a thousand Suns and had worn clothes that were shining like lightning. It was along with Lakshmi and was being worshipped always by the released Brahma and others.

Note: That was the place where only released (Mukta) souls had access. Hence the Brahma and Devas from the previous kalpas were found worshipping Sri Vishnu over there.

32) Sri Krishna, the Lord of all, spent a muhurtha there in a single form and then came out with the sons of the Brahmana. Those sons were all the Avatars of Sunanda, Nanda and the other attendants of Sri Vishnu, and had taken birth on Earth.

33) Sri Krishna had brought the sons over there only to destroy the ego of Arjuna. Since he had extreme affection for Arjuna, he taught him a lesson in this way.

34) Coming out of that *loka*, that had the radiance of a lakh Suns and was beyond the realm of Prakriti, Sri Krishna climbed his chariot along with Arjuna and Brahma and his sons. He handed over the children to the Brahma.

35) Having performed the whole task in one and a half muhurtas, Sri Krishna performed the necessary *prayaschitta* for having gone away from the yajna. He then completed the sacrifice.

36) He gave respects to Brahma and the others who had arrived there, although they were his eternal attendants. He gave farewell to them and also served the Brahmanas.

37) Sri Krishna performed the *avabhrutha snana* along with his wives and relatives. On the way back after finishing the ceremonial bath, Dantavakra came in his way.

38) Sri Krishna immediately killed Dantavakra and Virudaratha with his mace. He sent Virudaratha to Tamas. The Asura who was inside Dantavakra also went to Tamas. The attendant of Sri Vishnu who was inside him entered Vishnu and stayed there.

Note: Virudaratha was Dantavakra's brother. Dantavakra had two souls inside him. One was an attendant of Sri Vishnu while the other was a Daitya named Hiranyaksha.

39) Once Sri Krishna leaves for his eternal abode, he would come out and unite with his original form which was that of a door-keeper.

40) After that, Sri Krishna returned to Dwaraka. Arjuna asked him – "What was that which I saw?". The lord of Ramaa revealed everything to him.

41) "This Jambudweepa and Lavana samudra is one lakh yojanas wide. The other dweepas and oceans are each twice as large as the preceding ones".

42-44) "Beyond the last ocean is the Suvarnabhumi coated with diamond which is slightly larger than half the size of the last ocean. All of this is known as *Loka*. Andhantamas is twice as large as all this. Those who are cruel and full of ignorance fall into this. Ghanodaka is twice as big as this (Andhantamas). At the end of it is my *Loka* which you saw. There, I reside as the Supreme Being and am always worshipped by (the liberated) Brahma and others".

45) "The sum total of the space occupied by *Loka* and *Aloka* (that which is not *Loka*) is fifty lakhs fifty thousand yojanas. It should be considered the same".

46) "Brahmanda is twenty five crore yojanas wide in the four directions from the Meru mountain, as also in the upper and lower directions".

47) "Water, Fire, Air, Space, Ahamkara, Mahattatva and the three Gunas (Satva, Rajas, Tamas) – these encircle the Brahmanda. Each of them is ten times wider than the inner one".

48) "I am omnipresent. I am everywhere. I possess infinite forms. There is no difference between any form of mine. I have infinite faces, eyes, feet, shoulders, thighs and attributes. My greatness is infinite. I possess a body that is pure knowledge".

49) "O Arjuna! You and all the others are under my control. Strength, victory and every other attribute possessed by all is only due to my grace".

50-51) "Therefore, don't be surprised. Don't give space for ego. Focus on me. Become my devotee. Worship me. Bow to me. You shall certainly obtain me. This is true. I promise you. You are dear to me" – when Sri Krishna said thus, Arjuna performed a *sashtanga namaskara* to him and said – "Please forgive me".

52) The Pandavas, who were given special care due to the excessive affection of Sri Krishna, turned modest out of devotion, spent another few months there and then left.

53) Once then, Dharmaraja was seated in his palace surrounded with Kings and his brothers. Then, he listened to the details of the courts of various Devatas from Sage Narada and questioned him.

54) "You mentioned that the Antariksha loka is up there at the distance of one lakh yojanas, and that the Swarga loka which is full of planes and gardens is half a crore yojanas higher".

55) "Bhuvarloka and Swargaloka are one crore yojanas wide. Maharloka, Janoloka and Tapoloka are one and a half times the distance from the previous one".

56-57) "It is said that the total size of these lokas is fifty crore yojanas. Satyaloka is at a distance which is the sum of the distances of the other lokas. Satyaloka is nothing but Brahmaloaka and Brahma resides there. Vishnuloka which is eternal and is known as Vaikunta is twice the size (of Satyaloka)"

58-59) "Each of these lokas provides more bliss than the previous one by a hundred times. Even though it is filled with innumerable people, due to Sri Hari's wish, there is always space in these divine lokas and it never gets filled. All of them are always full of material comforts. The lokas are resplendent with the presence of divine men and women".

60) "The seven lokas below are similarly full of precious and divine stones. These seven lokas are borne by the powerful Seshadeva".

61) "The men and women living in these seven islands have all their material comforts, and live for thousands of years. All of them are very good looking".

62) "The Supreme Being Narayana is the one who bears and takes care of all these lokas. He resides in the Vishnu loka and is always worshipped by those liberated".

63) "All the presiding deities of the Vedas and the other Devatas are Brahma's family. All the sages and King Harischandra are Indra's family".

64-65) "You mentioned that all the Kings and our father Pandu were the followers of Yama and that all of them worshipped the Sri Rama form of Lord in the Sabha of Yama. The Vamana form of Sri Hari is worshipped by Indra".

66) "All the forms of Sri Hari are worshipped by Brahma always. The Nagas are the family of Varuna and the Matsya form is worshipped there".

67-68) “Kubera’s family consists of Gandharvas. Sri Hari is worshipped as Kalki there. The terrible Bhutas are the family of Shiva. Vishnu is worshipped as Sri Narasimha by him. In this way, Sri Vishnu is worshipped by all and you have thus described the divine Deva lokas that are ornate with precious stones”.

69) “I have a big doubt. O Sage! How did King Harischandra obtain the loka of Indra? Why did our father Pandu not obtain the same?”.

70) When he was asked thus, Sage Narada replied – “The greatness of Harishchandra is due to the performance of the Rajasuya” and further said – “Your father, who is in the Yama sabha, where two forms of Sri Hari are worshipped, said thus to me”.

71) “Let my eldest son perform the Rajasuya Yajna. His brothers are his worshippers. Sri Krishna is his protector. What then is not possible for him?”

72) Hearing this, Dharmaraja, the one with complete control over his senses and the knower of Dharma, started discussing with his brothers regarding the performance of the Rajasuya Yajna.

73) When his brothers said that it was an excellent task, Dharmaraja sent his charioteer to Sri Krishna.

74) At the same time, another messenger who was sent by the fathers and brothers of Sri Krishna wives came to him.

75) He bowed to Sri Krishna and told him – “Your relatives by marriage have lost in battle to Jarasandha and are captive in the hills”.

76) “Even as you are here, he intends to sacrifice twenty-two thousand eight hundred Kings to the *ugra* form of Shiva in a Yajna”

77) “O Lord Krishna! You should kill Jarasandha and get these Kings released. For protecting Dharma, you should cause the failure of the Yajna”.

78) When he said thus, Sri Krishna met the charioteer of Dharmaraja too and, after hearing him, left for the Pandavas.

79) He was worshipped very well by the Pandavas. Dharmaraja asked him about the (feasibility of the) Yajna. Sri Krishna, the lord of Lakshmi, spoke auspicious words.

80) “Whenever anyone performs this Yajna as per the laid down procedures, one who is qualified can obtain even the position of Brahma. But not others”.

Note: Whenever one performs Rajasuya, it has to be as per the mandate of the Shastras. Even after this is done, only those who are qualified obtain high positions such as the seat of Brahma.

81) “If one is not unqualified, the performance of this Yajna will bring supremacy in Mukti amongst those who are equal in stature”

Note: In Mukti, all the souls who are inherently of the same capacity will enjoy equal status and bliss. However, if one performs a Rajasuya Yajna, then such an individual will be best amongst his peers and enjoy more bliss.

82) "Even prior to Mukti, this Yajna will bring supremacy to one who performs it amongst his peers. That is why Harishchandra, the son of Trishanku, is greater than other Kings".

83) "Although your father is the *amsha* of a Devata, if he does not perform the Rajasuya then he will not be able to become greater than Harishchandra".

84) "In his original form, your father was once performing a penance. Indra, the best amongst the Maruts, came near him. Your father, however, did not stand up in respect. Hence he cursed him".

85) "You shall obtain the birth of a human. After your death, you will return to the Deva loka. However, you will not unite with your original form and hence Harishchandra will be greater than you then".

86) "When Paravaha (the original form of Pandu) apologized, Indra told him – 'If you perform the Rajasuya you shall attain your original form again and become superior to Harishchandra'"

87) "Therefore O Dharmaraja! You should certainly perform this auspicious task. All of you too shall obtain complete merit as per your own qualifications".

88-89) Sri Krishna spoke thus. Only Bhimasena, one who is set to reach the position of Brahma, is fully qualified to perform this Yajna. Thinking thus, and desiring to grant the complete merit of the sacrifice to him, Sri Krishna, the one who is *Vayuvahana*, spoke again to Yudhishtira.

90) "When Jarasandha is still alive, how can you accomplish the Rajasuya? Who can win against him, when even Balarama could not kill him?"

91) "Till Jarasandha, who can win the entire worlds due to the boons of Brahma and Shiva, is alive, this excellent Yaga will not fructify".

92) When Sri Krishna, the wielder of the Chakra, said thus, Dharmaraja replied – "O Lord! Because of Jarasandha, my mind is now withdrawn from the Yajna".

93) "There have been many Kings who have not become *Chakradhipatis*. When Kings did indeed become Chakradhipatis, Jarasandha wasn't around".

94) When he said thus, Bhima, the Avatara of the main Vayu, said – "If proper efforts are put in, even the position of Brahma can be attained easily".

95) "Those who do not possess inherent ability, those who do not obtain the blessings of Sri Hari and those who do not put in great efforts never rise in life".

96) "I have ability that is firm. The great blessing of Sri Hari is present. Let us put forth our efforts and obtain growth".

97) When Bhima said thus, it became known that he is the main performer of the Yajna, due to such efforts of his. Sri Krishna said.

98) "After Kali, the main person who is the source of strength for those who oppose noble people is Jarasandha alone".

99) "Similarly, only one person exists who is the refuge for the noble to let their nobility shine. Think about this thoroughly and send him along".

100) "If Jarasandha is killed by him, it is victory for the noble. Else know that it is victory for the evil. This cannot be otherwise".

101) "He who kills Jarasandha in battle shall surely attain the position of Brahma. He shall take care of the Vedas and Dharma".

102) "Since the King of Magadha is protected by Shiva, he who kills him shall make the whole world Vaishnava".

103) "He who kills the leader of the Shaivas will become the foremost Vaishnava" – when Sri Krishna spoke thus with a lot of depth, Yudhishtira still hesitated.

104) When Dharmaraja said – "I don't need this Yajna" Bhima said to him – "I shall definitely slay Jarasandha in battle".

105-106) When Bhimasena spoke thus, Sri Krishna said – "I, Bhima and Arjuna – the three of us will leave in order to kill Jarasandha. He shall be killed by Bhima definitely. The Yajna shall take place without a doubt. The world will come under your control".

107) When Sri Krishna said thus, Dharmaraja spoke out of fear, thinking about the desertion of Madhura by Sri Hari.

108) "Out of Jarasandha's fear, you yourselves left Madhura and went to the ocean. Therefore, I am scared of him".

109) "O Lord Krishna! These two, Bhima and Phalguna, are my two eyes always. You are my *manas*. Without you three, I can never be considered a man".

110) "Therefore O Krishna, the special one! For my personal glory, I can never send you, who are dearer than my life, to that powerful enemy".

111-112) When Dharmaraja spoke thus, Bhimasena, the one who is like forest-fire to enemies, said – "Mahalakshmi, Brahma, Shiva and all others protect the world only due to his inclination. Their strengths are under his control. Suras, Asuras and Sarpas – all their strengths too are under his sway. That Sri Hari, the controller of Brahma and Rudra, is this very Sri Krishna. Where does Jarasandha stand in front of him?"

113-114) “My strength cannot be tolerated by enemies. That too is due to the grace of Sri Hari. He who is the chief reason behind the entire Universe possesses infinite strength and is invincible. Due to Sri Hari’s boon, Arjuna too is invincible. Therefore, the three of us shall now proceed towards our enemy the King of Magadha”.

115) “I shall definitely slay Jarasandha in front of Sri Krishna. Let there be no doubt about this”. When Bhima said thus, Sri Krishna addressed Dharmaraja.

116) “The three of us will together hand him over to death. Bhimsena will surely kill Jarasandha in battle”.

117) “You do not have to be worried that I haven’t killed him. In order to teach *niti* to the world I have not killed him myself”.

118) “If I get the chief amongst the devotees of Shiva killed by the one who is the chief amongst those who take refuge in me, it will cause my strength to become bright (well known)”.

119) “Therefore O Dharmaraja! Bear no doubt in your mind. I will get Jarasandha killed and show your brothers to you (bring them back to you)”.

120) When Sri Krishna said thus, Dharmaraja thought deeply about Sri Krishna’s great qualities and said – “May it be so”. The three of them quickly proceeded towards Magadha country.

121) Having reached Magadha country, the three of them reached the vicinity of a hill, that was worshipped with good flowers, clothes and ornaments, by virtue of being known as Shiva’s Mahalinga.

122) They brought down that hill, to which Jarasandha used to bow, with their shoulders as if it were his head.

123) They entered the city through the back door. With just their fists, they destroyed three drums that were made from the muscles of an Asura called Masha. The sound of the drums used to fill Jarasandha with energy. The sounds were like Shashtra that would glorify his fame. By destroying them, they belittled Jarasandha.

124) They forcefully snatched many excellent garlands and scents from the shops in the city and wore them. They entered his house too from the back door. They approached him shouting “Bho” loudly.

125) Jarasandha saw the three who were in the guise of Brahmanas. He noticed the powerful ones who were appearing like Snatakas, and also noticed the signs of bows on their shoulders. Realizing that they were Kshatriyas, he said to them.

126) “Who are you? Why have you come here? Why did you destroy my hill which was a Linga? Why did you perform such unwarranted acts even as you are in the guise of excellent Brahmanas?”

127) When he said thus, Sri Krishna replied – “One must oppose an enemy in all ways, isn’t it?”. Jarasandha asked – “I am not an enemy of Brahmanas. How come you have enmity with me?”

128) When he spoke thus, Sri Janardana said – “We are not such Brahmanas. I am Krishna, your enemy. These two are known as Bhima and Arjuna”.

129) “O! You have left the path of the Vedas and desire to sacrifice our relatives as Pashus in a Shiva Yaga by following Rakshasa Dharma. Therefore, we have arrived here to contain you by force”.

130) “If you do not release them, we will contain you and get our relatives freed. Either you release them, or decide to meet your death and face us in battle”.

131) When Sri Krishna warned him thus, the King of Magadha replied – “I cannot release these Pashus (Kings) meant to be sacrificed in the Shiva Yaga. I shall fight with you, whether it is all of you at once, one at a time or even with your armies”.

132) “Whether it is without weapons, with them, or with any weapon of your choice. It does not matter if I am alone, or with my army. I shall face all of you in battle”.

133) When he spoke thus, the most powerful Sri Krishna, one who never saw defeat, said – “Face one of us in battle, either alone or with your army”.

134) “Quickly choose your opponent amongst us. You can chose to fight us without weapons, with them or with a weapon of your choice”.

135-136) Sri Krishna had gone there bare-handed in order to increase Bhima’s fame by getting him to kill his enemy, in order to grant him his supreme blessings, to increase his devotion and knowledge, and to belittle all enemies.

137) But it is never appropriate to go anywhere as a Kshatriya without weapons. Therefore, Sri Krishna, Bhima and Arjuna had put on the guise of Brahmanas.

138-139) Therefore, in order to show Jarasandha poorly, they had gone there without weapons. Even when he was in his own home, and along with his army, by getting him invited to battle in that way, Sri Krishna greatly increased the limitless Dharma, success and fame of Bhima.

140) Sri Krishna had taken Arjuna as the third person when leaving to face Jarasandha, only in order to show that Bhima’s greatness was much bigger. By asking Jarasandha to choose one of them, and getting the King of Magadha to reply, he made this known.

141) When Sri Krishna asked him to choose one among them, Jarasandha replied – “I cannot fight with the weak Arjuna”.

142) “This fifty-five year old is weak and hence like a child. I cannot fight with a weak person such as him. Although he is young, I consider him a child since he is weak”.

143) When he spoke thus Arjuna possessed doubts about himself and therefore did not reply saying – “If it be so, then test me with your shoulders, or with bows”.

144) Therefore, it became known that Bhima's strength was much more. For the same reason, Sri Krishna had brought Arjuna along.

145-146) Knowing fully well that he possessed strength that no one could tolerate, Jarasandha did not invite Sri Krishna, the all-capable one, for battle out of hesitation. He called him a Gopa (and made up an excuse). Hoping that he stands a chance of surviving, he selected Bhima.

147) He possessed the fear that Sri Krishna would definitely kill him. Hence the King of Magadha did not pick Vasudeva.

148) Even if he picked Arjuna and won, Sri Krishna and Bhima would kill him. If he picked the weakest amongst the three, his reputation would definitely take a blow.

149) Thinking that he may survive, or at least his fame wouldn't suffer, the King of Magadha chose Bhimasena.

150) In this way, having selected Bhima for battle, the powerful son of Jara performed the *pattabhisheka* of his son in the Kingdom. His son Sahadeva was the Avatara of a Rudra named Patratapa.

151) Believing that, while Bhima's strength was more, his own excellence with the *gada* was higher, Jarasandha hesitated for a wrestling battle and instead gave Bhima a gada and picked one himself too.

152) Since he wished for it, Bhima picked up the gada and went outside of the city along with Jarasandha, accompanied by Sri Krishna and Arjuna. The two of them starting fighting in front of Sri Keshava and Partha.

153) Initially, Bhima won against him through his words, highlighting the qualities of Sri Vishnu, knowing that he was a devotee of Shiva. Later, both of them picked up their maces and starting battling each other, showing unique moves.

154) The two maces, which were diamond like in strength, were smashed to pieces when they were hit against the opponents chest. Due to the extraordinary resilience of their bodies, the gadas were broken just like lumps of mud that are hit against rocks.

155) When the maces were thus destroyed, the two of them fought with their fists that were capable of blasting the entire Universe. It was like the fight of Sri Krishna and Kaitabha.

156) The Earth shook. Hills were smashed. Big mountains shivered. All the oceans started drying. Brahma, Shiva and the other Devatas and the Asuras gathered in the skies.

157) While the Devatas wished for Bhima's victory, the Asuras wanted Jarasandha to win. All of them watched the battle. Then, the son of Sri Vayu steadily started showing his strength.

158) As per the orders of Sri Krishna, Bhimasena respected the boon of Brahma and fought with him for fifteen days. After that, he decided to kill his enemy.

Note: Jarasandha had a boon from Brahma that he wouldn't be defeated even if someone fought him for fifteen days at a stretch.

159) Bhimasena bowed down to Sri Hrishiksha and prayed to him with enthusiasm. He hugged Arjuna out of affection and then held Jarasandha's head just as a Lion catches an Elephant.

160) Forcing his thigh on his back, he broke it. Just as during the time of his birth, he split him into two when killing him.

161) In order to make known his strength and also due to his resolve not to hit at the vulnerabilities, Bhimasena did not attack him in his vital parts.

162) When his body split, a big sound occurred as if the world had burst. The three lokas shook due to the same.

163) Having killed Sri Krishna's enemy, he offered it as a worship. Sri Krishna had accompanied him there in order to personally receive that great worship.

164) Sri Janardana received that offering of Bhima and became very pleased and gave Bhima a deep hug. Bhima bowed to him repeatedly. Arjuna performed a *sashtanga namaskara* to Bhima.

165) Due to the grace of Sri Krishna, when Bhimasena violated the boon of Shiva in that manner, Brahma and the other Devatas became pleased and departed. The Asuras too left even as they became extremely sad.

166) Sahadeva, the son of Jarasandha, was an intelligent person. He took refuge under Sri Krishna, Bhima and Arjuna. He offered his sister and a chariot to Bhima. He bowed to Sri Krishna with extreme devotion.

167) That chariot was given by Sri Hari to King Vasu through Indra. Since Jarasandha was born in the lineage of Vasu, he had inherited the same. Bhimasena offered that chariot of Sri Hari to Sri Hari himself.

Note: The Vasu referred to in this shloka is Uparichara Vasu.

168) Sri Krishna remembered Garuda who came and sat in the chariot's mast. Sri Krishna along with the two Pandavas climbed the chariot. Bhima accepted the *kanya* on behalf of his brother Sahadeva.

Note: The sister of Sahadeva therefore ended up marrying the Pandava Sahadeva.

169) Nakula had already been given a daughter by King Shalya. Like her, this *kanya* too was the Avatara of Usha Devi. Nakula and Sahadeva enjoyed their lives with these two. Usha Devi is the wife of Ashwini Devatas.

170) Later Nakula and Sahadeva started interacting with Draupadi considering her to be their sister-in-law. The son of Jarasandha worshipped Sri Krishna and the two Pandavas with many jewels and returned after taking their permission.

171) As per the instructions of Sri Krishna, Sahadeva performed the *pitru karyas*. As per his orders he released the Kings as well. Sri Krishna, who was worshipped by those released Kings, followed them along with Bhima and Arjuna and returned.

172) Those Kings were all treated well by Sahadeva. All of them praised Sri Krishna and Bhima and returned to their homes. Jarasandha, the enemy of Sri Krishna, eventually obtained Tamas.

173) Sri Krishna and the two Parthas climbed on to a single chariot and proceeded towards Dharmaraja. Hearing the sounds of their conches, Dharmaraja realized their arrival and their victory, and became extremely pleased.

174) Later Bhagavan Sri Vyasa came there and instructed the Pandavas to make all preparations for the Yajna. He asked them to perform a Rajasuya combined with the *Parama Ashwamedha* Yajna, something that none apart from Brahma had performed.

175) One who performs such a joint Yajna, if he also possessed qualities equal to that of Brahma, would obtain the position of the creator. Sri Vyasa, the Guru of Brahma, asked them to perform such a Yajna in order to ensure that the maximum results accrue to Bhima.

176) The individual who is the most important reason behind the performance of a task obtains the complete benefit from the same. The others obtain limited results. Thus is the decision of the Shastras. This applies to all apart from Sri Vishnu. After all, isn't he beyond Karma and its effects!!

177) The Devatas, even if they are responsible for sinful tasks, do not normally suffer its effects. Similarly, the Daityas do not obtain results of noble deeds. Human beings get their share from both types of deeds.

178) The killing of Jarasandha, the victory over Karna, Keechaka and others – since all these were invincible, it is said that the main instrument of the Rajasuya was Bhimasena.

Note: – Since Bhima killed or defeated all of them, the most difficult challenges in the performance of the Yajna were resolved by him. Hence Bhima was the main, rather actual, performer of the Yajna.

179) Arjuna was the second important instrument. Yudhishtira was third in the order. In this way, to ensure Bhima obtained the position of Brahma, Sri Vyasa ordered them to perform the Yajna which none other had performed, and asked them to start the *digvijaya*.

180) Then Arjuna said – “O Lord! I possess an excellent bow, flag and chariot. Therefore, it is my desire that I should be handed over the responsibility of the *digvijaya*”.

181-182) When Arjuna spoke thus, Sri Vyasa, the Lord of all, said – “It is true that you possess the necessary means in abundance. Similarly, you possess immense strength. However, Keechaka and the others as also Karna will not come under your control”.

183) “Although you are more powerful than Karna, due to competition over you he will never surrender and pay tax as long as he is alive. It is not possible for you to kill him now”.

184) "Since he possesses the *kavacha* and *kundala* you will be unable to kill him now. Therefore, let Vrikodara proceed in the direction that is dear to your father (east)".

185) "Out of fear that he may be captured alive, Karna will surely pay tax to Bhima. Let there be no doubt about this. After all, hasn't he already lost to Bhima earlier?"

186) "Due to Shiva's boon, Keechaka and Paundraka Vasudeva are invincible. Yet they will come under the control of Bhima. Similarly, the King of Chedi (Shishupala) too will come under his control".

187) "Since the killing of Jarasandha by Bhima, all of them fear getting caught by him. Either after losing, or even before that, they shall pay tax".

188) "You proceed in the direction ruled by the God of wealth (North). Attain victory against the seven islands and against the Nagas, Daityas in all directions and also against the Daityas in the nether worlds and return quickly".

189) "You have a divine chariot that flies in air. Similarly you possess divine weapons and a divine bow. Yet, let Bhima proceed against Bana and others who are invincible due to the boon of Shiva".

190-191) "Thereafter, as per my orders, the other Kings too will pay tax to Bhima. Let Nakula and Sahadeva too go towards the western and southern directions and attain fame and *punya*" – when Sri Vyasa instructed thus, all of them bowed to that great ocean of noble attributes with devotion and went in the directions decided by him.

192) Bhimasena defeated numerous Kings. Later he went to King Virata. There, having defeated Keechaka, he obtained tax from him.

193) After that he won against many Kings routinely, and reached the Chedi country. Due to the words of his mother, and out of fear, Shishupala accorded Bhima respect.

194) Bhima stayed at the house of his aunt for a few days happily, and collected a lot of tax (from Shishupala). He then continued his conquest in the eastern direction.

195-196) He systematically defeated all the Kings and then fought against the powerful Paundraka and Karna and rendered them chariot-less. He collected taxes from all of them and then won against Indra and the other Devas who were present on the peaks of the Himalayas. Having contested against him for joy, the Devas happily gave him lots of jewels.

197) The mighty Shesha and Garuda too contested against him for sport. Bhima defeated them and happily accepted the ornaments given by them. Out of friendship in their hearts, they gave him a deep hug.

198) The powerful Bhima then reached the city of Banasura by swimming across the ocean. There, he defeated Shiva who came in the form of an elephant. Hara, who fought with him for sport, became very pleased with Bhima.

199) When asked by Shiva, Bhima narrated all the details of his conquest, including the defeat of Devas such as Garuda, Shesha, Indra and others who had fought against him in the guise of Lions, Tigers and other animals.

200) Shankara listened to all of that and, having realized that it was Sri Hari who was going to conduct the Yajna, got Banasura, the son of Bali, to hand over a heap of jewels.

201) Bhimasena collected the excellent and huge collection of precious stones that Shiva gave him through Banasura and returned to his city.

202) He offered his huge aggregation of wealth in front of Sri Vyasa and Sri Krishna, the two forms of Sri Hari, and bowed to them with devotion.

203-205) Bhima also bowed to his older brother Yudhishtira and narrated everything in front of Sri Krishna and him. He narrated the victories over Keechaka and others, the win over Paundraka who had come along with Ekalavya and the defeat of Karna and others. He also explained the defeat of Garuda, Shesha, Indra and the Devas who had come in front of him in the guise of Lions and other animals, and the victory over Shiva who had come as an elephant.

206) That powerful Bhima was accorded great respect by Sri Krishna, Sri Vyasa and Dharmaraja. As per the orders of Sri Vyasa, he got all the materials for the Yajna ready.

207) Sri Vyasa addressed Bhima thus – “O Bhima, destroyer of enemies! You have won everything. Only when one wins against all, is the Yajna complete. Otherwise it does not”.

208) “Before this, only Brahma had won thus. You have become the second one” – saying thus he gave him a deep hug and ordered him to prepare all the materials for the Yajna.

209) By that time, his brothers had won in the other directions and returned. Sahadeva had won in the southern direction and had brought precious stones.

210-211) Among them (the Kings in the South), the powerful Rugmi did not fight with Sahadeva. He had earlier lost to Sri Krishna and thereafter obtained an excellent bow after pleasing Shiva through a penance. “You will win against everyone with this. Except Sri Krishna. If you oppose him this bow shall return to me” – Shiva had said thus. Therefore, he did not oppose Sri Krishna.

212) Out of love for his sister Rugmini, due to the fact that Sri Krishna was getting the Yajna conducted, and out of fear of Bhima and Arjuna, he gave tax to Sahadeva. The valorous Sahadeva won against the other Kings due to his own strength.

213) Sahadeva sent Ghatotkacha, who came there upon mere remembrance, to Vibhishana. He too gave a lot of tax to Sahadeva.

214) Vibhishana remembered all that Sri Rama had told him. He realized that Sri Krishna was Rama himself. He also observed the strength of Bhima and Arjuna, and that the Pandavas were all Devas. Hence he gave the tax.

215) The son of Bhima came back to Sahadeva with one mahouga precious stones. Sahadeva returned back to his city.

Note: One mahouga is a crore followed by sixty zeroes!

216) Nakula won against all the Kings in the west. The brave Nakula obtained tax from his uncle Shalya even while dealing affectionately with him. He returned back to his city with a huge heap of precious stones.

217) Arjuna climbed the chariot that had Hanumanta, the best amongst the monkeys, in its mast and went in the northern direction, wielding the Gandiva in his hand. There, evil Kings who were ruling the mountains faced him.

218) The people of the Trigarta country, along with the Kings of the mountain countries, got to know the intention of Arjuna and faced him together.

219) Arjuna won against all of them at the same time, and having won that direction, proceeded further and faced the powerful Bhagadatta. He had a huge battle with him.

220) He climbed his elephant and fought for eight days. Getting tired, he asked Arjuna – “What is the reason for your war? Tell me”. Arjuna replied – “Pay me tax”.

221) He said – “Your father Indra is elder to me” and respectfully paid the tax. “Since I possess the divine Vaishnavastra you will not be able to win against me due to its radiance” – he said.

222) Since he made the payment with respect, not wanting any fight that was not productive, and caught in the web of friendship, Arjuna did not say anything.

223) Relying on the radiance of all his weapons, Arjuna won the remaining eight Varshas, the other six islands and the four directions.

Note: Apart from Bharata varsha, the other eight varshas are Kimpurusha, Hari, Ilavruta, Bhadrashva, Ketumala, Hiranmaya, Ramyaka and Kuru. The other six islands, apart from Jambudweepa, are Plaksha, Shalmali, Kusha, Krauncha, Shaka and Pushkara.

224) Arjuna went to the nether worlds as well and won against the Daityas and Danavas. As per the orders of Sri Vishnu, Bali gave him tax which he accepted adopting the *sama* or conciliatory approach.

225) He won against Vasuki too and obtained a lot of precious stones from him. The brave one quickly came back to his city within a year.

226-227) The heaps of gold and precious stones collected by the four of them were, in the corresponding order from the western direction, respectively ten yojanas, thirty yojanas, hundred yojanas and four hundred yojanas respectively.

Note: Nakula brought ten yojanas worth of tax. Sahadeva brought thirty yojanas worth jewels. Bhima’s was hundred yojanas wide and Arjuna’s collection was four hundred yojanas wide.

228) Since Indraprastha was the creation of Vishwakarma, it became possible to store those mountainous collections within the confines of the city. It was verily a miracle.

229) Later, as directed by Sri Vyasa, the Yajna started. In that Yaga, sages who were experts in all Shastras were Ritviks.

230) As per the directions of Sri Vyasa, the Ritviks gave the *deeksha* of the Yajna to Dharmaraja. Since he was the elder one, Bhima, Arjuna and the others handed over the responsibility of being the *yajamana* to Yudhisthira and sat down with him.

231) Since she was qualified for the post of Sarasvati, Draupadi alone became the Yajnapatni. Since the other wives of the Pandavas did not qualify for that position, they did not sit along with their husbands. The orders of infinitely radiant Sri Vyasa, the bearer of the entire world, was the main reason for this.

232) The entire area around (the Yajna) was filled with jewels and gold. Is there a need to separately state that the instruments of the Yajna and the camps, etc were all covered with jewels and gold?

233) During the *digvijaya*, the fourteen worlds had been invited by Bhima and the other Pandavas. Accordingly Brahma, Rudra, Indra and all the others arrived there.

234) Bhishma, Drona, Dhritrashtra, his sons and their wives arrived there. Bahlika too came there with his sons.

235) Similarly, Balarama and all the other Yadavas came there. Rugmini, Satyabhama and the rest of the *mahishis* of Sri Krishna too arrived.

236) When the whole world had assembled there in that fashion, many discussions took place in the Yajna mantapas for the determination of the truth revealed in the Shastras. Sri Vyasa, the personification of complete knowledge, who was none other than Sri Narayana, became the chief *prashnika* (questioner).

237) In those conferences, special discussions on the determination of the nature of infinite attributes of Sri Hari took place. It came to the conclusion that there is none similar to Sri Hari, and that therefore there is none better than him. They concluded that he was the pinnacle in the hierarchy of beings and there is none other than him (at the top).

238) Even as Sri Vyasa and Sri Parashurama were listening, amidst the swarm of people who had happily gathered, and even as the decision about the eternal truth was taking place, Dharmaraja asked Bhishma.

239) Even though Dharmaraja, who knew Dharma, was aware that Sri Krishna was none other than the always worshipped Sri Hari, he questioned Bhishma in order to remove the doubts in the minds of the assembled Kings.

240-241) Even though it had been established by Brahma and others during the discussions that there is none equal to Sri Narayana, the assembled Kings still thought of Sri Krishna as a mere human. Therefore, in order to convince them thoroughly that Sri Krishna was none other than Sri Narayana, Dharmaraja asked Bhishma.

242) Brahma and the other Devatas too were being considered as mere humans. They did not possess enough belief even in the Sages.

243) All the Kings knew of Bhishma as the one who was well versed in all the Shastras. He was also the eldest in the lineage. Hence Dharmaraja asked him.

244) “O Grandfather! Amidst all the people assembled here, who qualifies for the first worship? Even Brahma, Rudra and the Devatas and all Kings are here” – when Yudhishtira asked thus Bhishma replied – “Sri Krishna is the lord of all and is most worthy of worship”.

245-246) Sri Vishnu himself had appeared there in three forms in the lineages of Vasishta, Bhrigu and Vrishni. However, Sri Vyasa and Sri Parashurama were Brahmanas and therefore the Kings would not oppose them. On the other hand, they will consider them worthy. They did not possess such enmity against the two.

Note: Sri Vyasa was the grandson of Sage Vasishta. Sri Parashurama was born in the lineage of Sage Bhrigu. Sri Krishna was born in the Vrishna clan of Yadavas.

247) If there were to be no dispute, it wouldn't become well known that Sri Krishna was verily Narayana. Therefore Bhishma thought that Sri Krishna had to be accorded the first worship.

248) When Sri Krishna is worshipped first, the Kings would create a lot of dispute and due to that the fame of Sri Krishna would especially spread everywhere.

249-250) Therefore, the Pandavas accorded Sri Krishna the first worship in front of everyone. Since they were no different from Sri Krishna, Sri Vyasa and Sri Parashurama were also accorded the first worships. Thereafter, the others were given appropriate respect.

251) As soon as the *agra puja* for Sri Krishna was completed, Shishupala, the King of Chedi, started abusing him out of anger. Listening to it, Bhima rushed towards him in order to kill him for having abused the Guru of the world.

252) It was Bhima's eternal and great vow that he would cut off the tongue of the one who abused Sri Hari. Bhishma stopped Bhima by saying that it was the promise of Sri Hari that he himself would kill his devotee.

253) Getting to know the assurance of Sri Hari that he himself would kill the two of them, Bhima kept quiet even as Bhishma held his hand.

Note: It was Sri Hari's assurance to Jaya and Vijaya that he himself would kill them in all the three avatars of theirs.

254) Even though Bhima knew of Sri Krishna's decision, he rushed in that way as it was his duty (to oppose the abuser). Later, knowing that the action was appropriate enough, he kept quiet.

255-256) All those belonging to the class of Devatas saw the first worship of Sri Krishna and greatly rejoiced. Those belonging to the human class were indecisive. Duryodhana and the others who were

Asuric in their nature felt bad in their hearts. Shishupala started abusing, with bad words, that great ocean of noble qualities.

257) He invited Sri Krishna there itself for war. Stopping all his arrows, Sri Krishna, the most powerful one, killed him with this Chakra.

258-259) Even as his neck was being severed, Shishupala developed devotion in Sri Krishna. The Asura who was inside him went to Andhantamas. Jaya entered Sri Krishna and later became his attendant. The Yajna of the Pandavas continued as per the procedures in the Shastras.

260) The Kings gave many precious gifts consisting of bars of gold and precious jewels. Dharmaraja appointed Duryodhana for the task of collecting those gifts.

261) The Pandavas treated the Brahmanas to unlimited varieties of sweets and other eatables. They gave them heaps of gold and precious stones as *dakshina*.

262) The Pandavas gave to each person whatever he desired. After that, they performed the *avabhruta snana* with great joy.

263) The Pandavas performed that concluding bath in the river Ganga, even as the sounds from the instruments of the Devatas were emanating and the divine Gandharvas were singing and divine ladies were performing unique dances.

264) They performed that bath in the river Jahnavi together with all the Kings and later returned to their city. The Devatas returned to their *lokas*.

265) All the Kings returned to their respective cities. Dhritarashtra, along with Bhishma and others, also returned back.

266) Dharmaraja sat down along with Sri Krishna on an excellent throne, in that palace that was made of magical precious stones and was radiating like the Sun.

267) Similarly, Rugmini and the other wives of Sri Krishna sat next to him. Bhima and Arjuna too sat next to him.

268) Draupadi sat along with Bhima, next to the auspicious Rugmini and Satyabhama.

269) Nakula, Sahadeva, Dhristadyumna and the others sat down near Arjuna. Similarly, Balarama and Satyaki sat near King Yudhisthira.

270) That gathering, with all of them seated, shone just like the gathering of Brahma decorated especially by the presence of Sri Vishnu.

271) In that gathering, the Kings were resplendent, having worn special and golden garlands, putting on auspicious clothes and possessing shining crowns and ear-rings.

272) Sri Krishna, the Lord of the Universe, along with his wives, was especially radiant, just like Sri Hari in the assembly of the Devatas.

273) Sri Krishna was worshipped by all the Kings and by the noble. At that time, Duryodhana came there along with his brothers, holding a sword in his hand.

274) Moving away from a door that was shining due to the radiance of *Indraneela* stones (thinking it to be a wall), he banged into an actual wall that was made of *Spatika* stones and was reflecting from both the inside and the outside.

275) Then, as per the orders of Dharmaraja, Nakula and Sahadeva held his hands and brought him in. Being seated there for a moment, he was unable to bear the sight of the divine wealth they possessed and got up and walked away from there.

276) There he saw lotuses with precious jewels on a floor made from Indraneela stone and mistook it for water and walked carefully lifting his clothes. At another place, he mistook water that was shining for a proper floor and fell into it, along with his brothers.

277) Keeping the reason of *bhu-bhara-harana* in mind, Sri Krishna signaled to Bhima who then mocked Duryodhana with a loud laugh. Draupadi too laughed. Following them, the others including Sri Krishna's wives too laughed.

278) Sri Krishna, with a moon like radiant face that was beaming a smile, looked at Bhima but did not say anything. Later Dharmaraja stopped them and sent clothes, garlands and scents to Duryodhana and the others.

279) Duryodhana was embarrassed and he rejected the clothes and other things sent by the King. He left along with Shakuni after getting very angry at Bhima and Draupadi. On the way he spoke to Shakuni.

280) "In front of Krishna, Bhima and Draupadi laughed at me. Without causing them grief, I do not desire to live".

281) "If I had the means, I would have killed Bhimasena. I would have stopped Krishna's agra-puja too. No doubt about this".

282) "All the Kings are behaving like Vaishyas and giving tax to the Pandavas. Who can desire to live seeing such wealth of theirs?"

283) When Duryodhana spoke thus, Shakuni, in order to strengthen his hatred, said – "O best amongst Kings! What is the use of hating the powerful Pandavas?"

284) "All of them are superior in qualities and more powerful. You should pacify such heroes" – when Shakuni stated thus, Duryodhana got very angry and said.

285) "If all of their wealth doesn't come under my control, I shall definitely not live. I am stating the truth to you".

286) “Their wealth can never be taken away with force. Even Indra cannot win them in war. What then to say about humans?”

287) When Duryodhana said thus, that most sinful Shakuni spoke thus to the Emperor of sinners (Duryodhana).

288) “That bright wealth which you are seeing with the Pandavas can easily be brought to you by me, through gambling”.

289) When Shakuni spoke thus Duryodhana’s became very pleased. Both of them went to the son of Vichitravirya (Dhritharashtra).

290) Shakuni, the Avatara of Dwapara and the personification of atheism, told Dhritharashtra – “Your son has sulked. He has paled and lost his hue”.

291) Listening to those words, Dhritharashtra felt sad and asked “Why?”. Immediately the two of them narrated the discussion they had on the way to meet him.

292) As soon as he heard them, the King said – “That is not possible. What is against Dharma will cause destruction. Your thinking is bad. I do not like it. The Pandavas have amassed huge wealth due to their own prowess”.

293) “You too win in all directions and perform great Yagas. Do not feel jealous about such noble ones, especially because they are your brothers. They are also extremely valorous”. When he advised thus, Duryodhana replied.

294) “If you do not agree to taking away the wealth of the Pandavas through gambling, then consider me dead already. You can live happily with the Pandavas”.

295) “If you wish to see me alive then invite the Pandavas, along with their wives, immediately for playing the game of dice. There is no adharma in this”.

296) “The Vipras sustain on the Vedas. Kshatriyas survive due to Shastras. That which destroys the enemies is Shastra, nothing else”.

297) “Therefore this is very much our Swadharma. You too will get great benefits from this” – when he said thus Dhritharashtra replied – “I do not desire any benefit. You can keep it all”.

298) Although he spoke thus, Dhritharashtra came under the Avesha of Kali and, out of attachment towards his son, sent Vidura to the Pandavas.

299) When the occasion had (earlier) arisen for the obtaining of a son, Kali had entered him. He had not left him since that day.

300) Till the time he eventually left Hastinapura and went to the forest, his mind was always filled with sinful thoughts due to this.

301) Vidura, the one with great intellect, stopped Dhritrashtra and said – “This action is a great sin. It is also detrimental to the lineage. There is no doubt about it. Do not do this. You will also garner ill-fame”

302) When he said thus, Dhritrashtra responded – “There shall be no conflict. (If it happens) we can stop it. I desire to see my children, the Kauravas and the Pandavas, getting together and playing”.

303) “Therefore bring the Pandavas immediately” – when he forced Vidura thus, the latter went to the Pandavas. At the same time, Sri Krishna had gone back to Dwaraka.

304) After Duryodhana had left the Pandavas, Sage Narada, upon being asked by Dharmaraja, told about an enemy having arrived at Dwaraka.

Note: After Duryodhana returned from Indraprastha, Sage Narada visited the Pandavas. When asked by Dharmaraja about the happenings elsewhere, he mentioned the arrival of a strong enemy at Dwaraka.

305) When asked by Dharmaraja about which of the Kings were engaged in preparation for war, Sage Narada said – “Salva, the King of Saubhara, has obtained a boon from Shiva for winning against the Yadavas”.

306) “For many years he performed a penance surviving only on one fistful of mud every day. Doing thus, he obtained a boon from Shiva to win against Sri Krishna and has come here”.

307) “He got to know about the killing of Jarasandha, the digvijaya of the Pandavas, the Rajasuya yaga and the killing of Shishupala”.

308) “He is going to attack the Yadavas soon” – listening to this Dharmaraja looked at the face of Sri Krishna that was appearing like the moon’s constellation.

309) “So be it” – saying thus Sri Krishna sent Pradyumna and the other Yadavas. After a few days he too left along with Balarama.

310) Vidura then went there and invited Dharmaraja. Even as his brothers and Draupadi stopped him, he got ready to leave. Along with Kunti, his brothers and Draupadi, he quickly proceeded towards Hastinapura.

311) Even though he invited Dharmaraja as per the orders of his elder brother, Vidura explained the ill effects of gambling in many words and asked him not to come.

312) He said – “Gambling is full of many defects. In spite of this, it is your uncle’s order that you should definitely come. Ponder over these two deeply and engage in that which you feel is appropriate for you”.

313) Even though Vidura warned him thus, Dharmaraja went to Dhritrashtra, along with his soldiers, since Kali had entered him.

314) Due to Kali entering him, Dharmaraja had undertaken a vow long back – “If anyone invites me for gambling, I shall never refuse to go, no matter who stops me”.

315) Therefore, even as his well wishers stopped him repeatedly, he immediately left for Hastinapura. How can gambling be Dharma, especially for a Kshatriya who is the protector of the world?

316) Dhritrashtra accorded great respect to the sons of Pandu. They stayed with him that night. In the morning, Bhishma and the others, along with Kings and the Pandavas assembled in the palace hall.

317) While Dhritrashtra came to the hall along with Vidura, his sons Duryodhana and the others came along with Karna and Shakuni. There, Shakuni invited Dharmaraja for a game of dice.

318) Kali had entered inside all of them, apart from the four Pandavas including Bhima and Kunti, Draupadi and Vidura. Therefore, even as they engaged in that which was to destroy their lineage, Bhishma and the others could not stop them.

319) Even as Bhima and the others and Vidura stopped him, Dharmaraja staked all his wealth in the game of dice and lost. He was quickly defeated by Shakuni who knew the art of gambling. Later he staked Nakula.

320) After losing him, Dharmaraja staked Sahadeva, Arjuna, Bhima, Draupadi and then himself one after the other, and lost everyone. Then, Duryodhana sent his charioteer to Draupadi.

321) Pratikami, the charioteer, went to Draupadi and told her everything – “You have lost in the game of dice. Come quickly to the big gathering of the King”. She replied – “I cannot come to the gathering of the Kauravas”. He returned back. Realizing that he (Pratikami) was scared of Bhima, Duryodhana sent his brother Dushasana.

322) Dushasana, the foremost amongst evil, held Draupadi’s hair in his fist and dragged her to the gathering in front of his mother, even as she was in a single cloth.

323) Draupadi, who was then menstruating, upon being brought into that hall, asked Bhishma and the others – “This is Adharma. Why are people like you who are always engaged in Dharma not stopping this?”

324) “How can that which has been deceitfully won in a game of dice count as a fair victory? No one can claim gambling to be Dharma. It is always Adharma, especially for Kshatriyas”.

325) “Those who do not teach Dharma in a gathering cannot be considered as elders. A group of people who are not such elders cannot constitute a *sabha*, so say the knowledgeable”.

326) “When my husband was still undefeated, how can I be lost in dice? Don’t the knowledgeable ones call a wife as a *sahadharmini*?”

327) “Even when a husband becomes a servant the wife should engage in service along with him. When my husband loses, I still can never get a separate servant-ship”

328) Even when Draupadi told them thus Bhishma and the others, due to the influence of Kali, said – “Ask Dharmaraja himself” and sat down quietly.

329) No one there was able to protest against Duryodhana. Then, Vidura said – “This is not Dharma” in a very clear manner.

330-331) Dhritrashtra and his sons did not heed the words of Vidura. He then lifted both his hands upwards and, indicating his inability to the Devas, and addressing Draupadi, said – “You have certainly not been defeated fairly. A great Adharma has engulfed this gathering”.

332) When Vidura said thus, Karna, even though he was a great sinner, wanted to show off that he was aware of Dharma. He said – “This is Adharma”. Karna then admonished him.

333) Bhima, noticing the pain of Draupadi, and the violation of Dharma by Yudhishtira, wanted to make it known that it was the duty of the Yuvaraja to correct the Raja and said thus.

334) “These hands of yours which staked Draupadi in the game of dice must be burnt”. Arjuna replied – “It should not be done so”. Then, Bhima replied to him – “It (such a punishment) must be told. But the same must not be executed. Hence I am not doing it”.

335) “When the best err, they are to be punished with words. When the ordinary commit a mistake, they must be punished through fines. When the lowly sin, they are to be punished through physical means. Therefore, I only chastised Yudhishtira”.

336) Then, Karna said to Draupadi – “O beautiful one! You no longer have any husbands. Go to Duryodhana’s house”. After that Duryodhana, with the intention of causing internal strife among the Pandavas, said thus.

337) “O Draupadi! Only Dharmaraja is responsible for your sorrow. If the others or just Bhima and Arjuna or even just Bhima says ‘He is not respectable’ then I will release you”.

338) When he uttered thus, Bhima replied – “Dharmaraja is respectable to all of us. There is no doubt (in this). Am I not the Guru for all of you? Amongst Kshatriyas one who is superior in strength is respectable. So say the learned”.

339) “If you still have questions about the greatness of my strength, all of you heroes get up against me. I will squash you and your families with my foot. Who can face me?”

340) When Vrikodara said thus and stood up, letting out a leonine roar, the entire gathering started shivering with fear. Not a word came out of the crowd.

341) Bhishma, Drona, Vidura and the others said – “Forgive us. All that you have said is true” and held both his hands and made him sit down. When Bhima quietened down, the Kauravas were relieved.

342) When Bhimasena was thus stopped by Dharmaraja and the other elders, he did not kill the Kauravas there itself, out of respect for the Gurus.

343) In order to let them accumulate more sins, and also to demonstrate how younger ones should behave with the elders, Bhimasena did not violate the path of his older brother Yudhishtira, the follower of Dharma.

344) After that, even as Bhimasena was watching, Duryodhana showed his thigh to Draupadi.

345) "I shall break your thigh with a forceful mace" – when Bhima said thus Duryodhana spoke again – "You have no other wealth left. You may as well stake Krishna in the game of dice".

346) As soon as Duryodhana insulted Sri Krishna thus, Bhima undertook a vow – "I shall bring you down on the ground and stomp your head".

347) "Whoever insults Sri Hari, even indirectly, I shall definitely slay that person" – isn't this the solemn oath of Bhima?

348) He did not kill him there itself in order to let him accumulate even more sins. Then, Karna, the son of Surya, said to Draupadi thus.

349) "Leave for Duryodhana's house. You do not have the Pandavas" – when he said thus, Bhima got up and rushed (towards Karna). Arjuna too got up. Dharmaraja and the others stopped the two of them.

350-351) When the two of them sat down, Duryodhana said – "O Dushasana! Remove the garments of these servants of ours". When he said thus, Dushasana rushed towards the Pandavas. Then, they gave up their clothes and wore garments made from barks of trees.

352) Showing (to the whole world) how evil Duryodhana and the others were, they put on a huge amount of patience and sat down on the floor.

353) Again, when Duryodhana commanded, Dushasana started pulling the *saree* of Draupadi even as the Pandavas were watching. Then, Bhima declared a vow.

354) "I shall tear the chest of this Dushasana, who is the first amongst sinners and a lowly soul born in the Kuru lineage that has always followed Dharma, and drink his blood".

355) When Dushasana started pulling her cloth, Draupadi started remembering Sri Krishna through a special prayer. At that time, a second cloth, that was divine, fine and shining like gold, appeared there.

356) As Dushasana kept pulling the saree again and again, more clothes that were similar kept appearing. That sinner could never reach the end (of the cloth). He squatted down after getting very tired.

357) When those clothes turned into a mountainous heap, Duryodhana, the one with a dull intellect, got very angry and said – "Why delay further? Take her to our home".

358-359) Listening to him, Draupadi then declared a vow – "Bhima shall slay Duryodhana. Karna will be killed by Arjuna. Shakuni, the evil dice player, shall be slain by Sahadeva". When she said thus, Bhima announced in the midst of the assembly – "It shall be exactly so".

360) Arjuna accepted that vow. Similarly, Sahadeva did so too. After that, Nakula undertook a vow that he shall slay Ulooka, the son of Shakuni.

361-362) When Dushasana started pulling Draupadi to take her inside his home, Bhima saw the same and stated out of anger – “Arjuna! Arjuna! Patience is no longer acceptable to me. Once this life is over, the body is like firewood and is dirt. The only three things that remain are Vidya, Karma and Progeny”.

363) “This is stated in the Vedas. If the wife is violated, there cannot result good progeny. When the wife is violated it is like half of one’s own body being violated. He cannot attain the higher lokas. If the wife is violated even as she couldn’t be protected, then nothing good is accrued even if she is deserted”.

364) “Therefore I shall now slay all the Kauravas along with their families” – saying thus Bhima looked at those enemies, filled with energy and staring as if to burn them.

365) Having decided in his mind to destroy all Kauravas without a trace, Bhima looked at a terrible Parigha with great anger.

Note: A Parigha, a type of weapon used in war, was lying around in the hall. Bhima started staring at the same, indicating to all that he would pick it up and commence battle.

366) At that time, female foxes let out loud sounds of moaning from the *agnigruha* of Duryodhana. Similarly, there were many omens noticed in the house of his father too.

Note: Agnigruha is the house where the Agnihotra is performed daily.

367) Dhritharashtra, noticing the occurrence of many such omens as soon as Bhima got angry, asked Vidura about the impending results due to those omens.

368) Vidura then replied to his elder brother – “All your sons along with their family will be immediately destroyed due to the force of Bhima’s hit”.

369) “Like a child you are asking ‘What did we win? What did we win?’. You are winning through Adharma but thinking that it is a (just) victory”.

370-371) “The knowledgeable say that that which has been given to women, that which has been won through gambling and that which was given by an intoxicated man cannot be called as a gain. They also say that the same can be taken back by relatives (of the person who lost it or gave it away). Still, in order to show everyone how lowly your sons are, the Pandavas aren’t doing it”.

372) When Vidura said thus, Dhritharashtra asked – “What is the way to ensure the results of these ill omens do not occur?”. Vidura immediately said – “Release Draupadi immediately”.

373) “Please her through boons. Otherwise be known that your sons shall be crushed by Bhima and shall die. Let there be no doubt about it”.

374) “Since Draupadi and the Pandavas desire to increase the accumulation of merit, they have not burnt your sons with their tapas. Therefore, your sons are still alive”.

375) “In spite of this, if you do not release Draupadi, Bhima shall, without a doubt, slay all your sons with his power”.

376) When Vidura insisted thus, Dhritrashtra admonished his son Dushasana and got Draupadi released. He then insisted her to seek boons from him.

377) Even when he insisted that way, Draupadi, being a follower of the *shuddha bhagavata dharma*, did not seek any boons for herself. She only asked for the release of the Pandavas.

378) Dhritrashtra gave her boons in the form of the release of Dharmaraja and his brothers and the release of his Kingdom. Draupadi did not accept any other boons in spite of further requests.

379) Bhagavata Dharma stipulates that it is not appropriate for a woman to seek boons from anyone apart from her husband and Sri Hari. Therefore, she did not seek any other boons.

380) Since they were anyways illegally taken away, Draupadi concluded that taking them back would not really constitute a boon. Hence she asked for the release of the Pandavas.

381) In the Bhagavata Dharma, an exception is made for a Kshatriya woman to see three boons from her father-in-law. For a Brahmana woman up to a hundred boons are allowed. Due to this reason, Draupadi did not seek any other boons.

382) After that, the released Pandavas, along with Draupadi, bowed to the elders and started back towards their city. Then, Dushasana, the chief amongst the sinners, addressed Dhritrashtra.

383) “What a surprise! All that wealth that had become ours was given back again to them by you. Now it is certain that we shall all be slain by Vrikodara”.

384) “Therefore bring back the Pandavas for our sake. Let the game of dice be played once again. Let them lose and go to the forest”.

385) When Dushasana spoke thus, Dhritrashtra invited the Pandavas again. In spite of being stopped by his brothers and Draupadi, Yudhishthira returned to the sabha for gambling, having been called by his elder uncle.

386-388) Twelve years of exile followed by one year of exile in disguise. Such an exile in disguise not to be undertaken far from Hastinapura and needs to be done under a famous King. During the disguise if either Draupadi or any one of the Pandavas are spotted, then a twelve year exile followed by another year in disguise to be undertaken. If this is again broken in the middle, the same sequence is to be repeated from the beginning. As per the suggestion of Dushasana, Duryodhana placed these as the conditions in the game.

389) Dharmaraja was again defeated by Shakuni, who was well versed in the subtleties of the game. Dharmaraja wished to go on exile along with his brother.

390) At that time, the sinner Dushasana repeatedly mocked Bhimasena by calling him “Ox! Ox!” repeatedly and dancing at that.

391) Even as he was dancing, Dushasana said to Draupadi – “O auspicious one! You no longer have any husband. Go to Duryodhana’s house”.

392) He mocked Bhima again by saying – “All of them are impotent sesame seeds. They will go to Andhantamas from where there is no return”. The other Kauravas laughed loudly.

393) Bhimasena then made a vow – “I shall slay all of you in war”. When he took such an oath, the Kauravas took to the refuge of Drona.

394) “Where there is Drona, there will be his son. Similarly Bhishma too shall be there. So will be Kripacharya. Bhima shall never go against all these elders” – thinking thus all of them took refuge under Drona.

395) Drona then told the sons of Dhritrashtra – “Although I am a Brahmana, I, my son and Kripacharya shall bear weapons for your sake”.

396) “I shall try to the best of my strength to protect you. However, I am not truly capable of protecting you against Bhima. I am stating the truth”.

397) After that, the brave Pandavas started leaving for the forest from that gathering, along with Draupadi. At that time, Duryodhana mocked the walk of Bhima, who was leaving like a young lion walking majestically.

398) Bhima, who was half-way out of the sabha, returned and spoke while staring with his red eyes – “I shall break your other thigh too in war”. Saying thus, he walked out of that inauspicious gathering.

399) Out of affection for her sons, Kunti followed them when they began. Vidura stopped the crying Kunti and made her stay at his place.

400) The Pandavas bowed to her and left quickly from there along with Draupadi. Dharmaraja, who was compassionate, lowered his head to ensure his stare didn’t fall on the Kauravas, which would have otherwise burnt them due to his anger.

401) The powerful Bhimasena lifted both his shoulders, indicating that his physical strength was enough to kill all enemies, and exited the hall.

402) Draupadi left the gathering leaving her hair untied, as an indication that the wives of the Kauravas would, in the future, always remain with their hair untied.

Note: A woman leaving her hair untied is a sign of her widowhood.

403) Arjuna walked out, spraying mud all along the way. His message was to indicate how many arrows he would fire at his enemies, as he knew numerous great astras.

404) Nakula and Sahadeva walked out lowering their heads. Their intention was to ensure that the enemies did not get to see their faces.

405) “When the Kauravas are dead, the final rites of their souls should be conducted through me” – thinking thus, Sage Dhaumya chanted the Preta Samskara Suktas and moved ahead.

Note: The Vedas contain a few Suktas that are chanted when the crematory ceremonies are conducted.

406) Along with the main chariot, there were fourteen additional chariots. Along with them, the charioteers, cooks, overseers of food and other assistants followed them and started walking.

407) After that, noticing that the dwellers of the city had come following them, the Pandavas sat down under a large tree in the forest near river Ganga.

408) They then meditated upon Sri Narayana with devotion, thinking of him who is omnipresent, who is full of auspicious qualities, who is worshiped even by Brahma, Shiva and the others, who relieves devotees from Samsara and who is the Lord of all.

|| End of chapter 21, known as ‘Pandava Vanavasa Gamanam’, from the Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya, composed by Srimadanandatirtha Bhagavatpada ||

|| Sri Krishnarpanamastu ||