

|| Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya ||

- 1) With great difficulty they stopped the citizens who wanted to accompany them and they entered the dense forest at night. There, they saw a Rakshasa called Kirmira.
- 2) Kirmira was the brother of Bakasura. Due to Shiva's boon, he had become invincible. Desiring to kill Bhima along with his wife and brothers, he rushed towards them while hurling huge trees and boulders.
- 3) Bhima fought with him and brought him down on the ground quickly. In that battle akin to a Yajna, in which Sri Narayana was the Devata, he offered him as the sacrificial pashu.
- 4) After the killing of Kirmira, the Pandavas started living in the middle of that forest along with ten thousand saints and eighty eight thousand munis.
- 5) Thinking about the need to take care of them, Dharmaraja prayed nicely to Sri Narayana who was inside of Lord Surya and obtained an Akshaya Patra that could give unending supply of food every day, along with precious jewels and other things.
- 6) With that Akshaya Patra, Yudhisthira started feeding those Rishis and Munis, each of whom had thirty servants each. Earlier, they were all eating in golden plates in his palace, which had crores of servants.
- 7) Those groups of sages stayed back in the forest along with the Pandavas, desirous of the company of the noble. They stayed with them, listening to the ancient stories that espoused the supremacy of Sri Hari, and narrating to them similar stories.
- 8) In this way, giving up on crores of elephants, chariots, horses, jewels and people, the Pandavas stayed in that forest like how the Devatas stay in Swarga.
- 9) Dharmaraja used to donate a lakh cows every day along with a hundred measures of gold. Even after he went to the forest with his brothers, he remained very happy and spent his time there, just like Indra.
- 10) When the Pandavas left for the forest, Dhritharashtra asked Vidura – "What is our duty now?". To this, Vidura replied – "Call them back and hand over the Kingdom". Dhritharashtra got angry and said.
- 11) "I realize that you are an opponent of my sons. There is nothing I need from you here. If you wish you can stay. Otherwise you may leave". When he said thus, Vidura went to the Pandavas.
- 12) As soon as Vidura left, Dhritharashtra became engulfed with the grief of separation and fell to the ground (became unconscious). Later he woke up and told Sanjaya – "If you wish to see me alive, bring back my brother at the earliest".
- 13) When Dhritharashtra commanded thus, Sanjaya quickly went to the Pandavas and brought back Vidura. The clean-souled Vidura immediately got back and bowed to his brother, who gave him a deep hug.
- 14) Dhritharashtra placed him on his lap, smelt his forehead and felt great joy. Seeing Vidura return, Shakuni and the Kauravas boiled with intolerance. They held a conference and decided to kill at least one of the Pandavas. Along with Karna, they set out to do so.
- 15) Knowing their intentions, Sri Vyasa, the one who is omnipresent in the world, and the one who is the lord of even the most capable Devatas, arrived there and told Dhritharashtra – "Stop your son quickly".

16) "He will oppose the Pandavas and get destroyed along with his family. There is no doubt about this" – when Sri Vyasa said thus, Dhritrashtra requested him – "Please stop them". Sri Vyasa replied – "I will not speak to them".

17) "Maitreya shall come here. He will advise your son about the ways of the world, keeping in mind his well being. If he listens to him, good shall take place. Otherwise, he will curse (your son)".

18) Knowing that if Duryodhana and the others approach the Pandavas and get killed by them, the reduction of evil on the earth (through destruction of many others in the war) would not take place, Sri Vyasa, the lord who possesses infinite strength, spoke thus to Dhritrashtra and left.

19) All activities of all sentient and insentient beings is controlled by the supreme Bhagavan at all times. Yet, Sri Hari, in jest, sometimes stops certain activities while imposing other noble tasks at other times.

20) After that, Sage Maitreya arrived there. Dhritrashtra called his sons along with Karna and Shakuni. He served the sage very well. The sage praised the Pandavas a lot and advised them to hand over the Kingdom to them.

21) That excellent sage described the killing of Kirmira and others and especially praised the prowess of Bhima. Hearing that, Duryodhana became intolerant and mockingly patted his thigh.

22) At that moment, Sage Maitreya, that great *tapasvi*, cursed him. "A big war shall take place to break your thigh" – he said. Dhritrashtra bowed to him and pleaded. "If you do not hand over the Kingdom, this result cannot be avoided" – saying thus he went away.

23) When Dhritrashtra asked, Vidura narrated the incident of Kirmira's killing, hearing which Duryodhana became scared. The Pandavas, while living in the forest, conveyed their doings to Sri Krishna.

24-25) Sri Krishna arrived there quickly along with Satyabhama. Along with that, Drupada and the other relatives also got there. When Sri Krishna got angry against Duryodhana, they pleaded with him to calm down after praising his auspicious qualities. Then, Draupadi held his feet even as she was crying. She fell at his feet and praised him, the one who is the lord of all and the one who is independent.

26-27) "One who is indescribable, one who is eternal, unchanged, complete, one who possesses the ocean of auspicious attributes itself as his body, one who is free from any defect, one who is always worshipped by Ramaa, Brahma, Vayu, Shiva, Indra and the others, one who is the motivator behind all, one who is the lord of all, one who is the resort for even those who are liberated, the most excellent one!" – praising him thus, Draupadi narrated all her sufferings to Sri Krishna, the lord of all. Draupadi was more dear to Sri Krishna than even Shesha, Shiva, Garuda and the others.

28) Listening to all of that, *Bhagavan* Sri Krishna made a vow – "I shall show all of you the scene where the wives of all of them will be hugging the bodies of their husbands, having been killed by Bhima, and having to leave their hair untied". Consoling her with soft words, Sri Narayana spoke thus.

29) "If I were around there it wouldn't have turned out like this. I was in battle with that evil souled King Salva. I killed that great sinner".

30-31) Things may be near or far. There may be compulsions of time or of situations. There may be obstacles due to resources. Sri Hari, who is forever free from troubles, does not have any weaknesses whatsoever. Still, that most powerful one emulates the behavior of the mortal world.

32-33) In order to increase sins of the evil and to increase the auspiciousness of Bhima and the others, and in order to distribute the excess *punya* that Dharmaraja had accumulated, due to the Rajasuya, amongst Draupadi and his brothers as per their qualifications, Sri Vishnu acted thus out of his own accord.

34) Isn't Sri Vishnu known by the name 'Edhamanadvit' in the Vedas!

Note: In the sukta that starts with 'shrunve veere', Vishnu is known as Edhamanadvit, implying one who takes away any excess merit from people by making them do lowly things.

35) Sri Krishna did thus in order to also take away the excess merit from Bhishma, Drona, Dhritrashtra and others who were born with excess Dharma and knowledge, and to ensure the same is deposited with the Pandavas.

36) Sri Krishna also did thus to make sure Duryodhana and the others accumulate more sins. Sri Vyasa told Dhritrashtra – "The Pandavas are most dear to me. I am absolutely unhappy about them being sent to the forest".

37) He too spoke in this manner to increase the sins of Duryodhana and the others. By saying that the Pandavas were dear to him, he increased their *punya*.

38) Since Bhima was the older one, the patience shown by Arjuna and others during the game of dice was not a pious thing for them. On the other hand, Dharma was a natural quality in Bhima, without any external dependencies.

39) The act of undergoing that unbearable trouble turned out to be a great means of gathering *punya* for Draupadi. She knew Bhima's intent of not giving out a curse.

40) Therefore, Sri Krishna ensured the increase in *punya* for each of them in accordance with their inherent nature and qualification. However, he stated that all of that happened due to his absence (during the game of dice).

41) "When I got to know that Salva had attacked us, I sent Pradyumna and the others even as I was with you. They left for Dwaraka. Salva too sat in his plane and troubled Dwaraka a lot".

42) "Pradyumna immediately left for war, along with the entire army, other Yadavas, and his brothers. Noticing that my son had come to battle him, Salva got down from his plane and climbed a chariot to engage with him".

43) "My son fought with him very well. He countered his astras with his own great astras. Having decided to kill him, he picked up a divine arrow given to him by me. However, he heard a voice coming from the sky".

44) "Narayana himself has taken a decision earlier saying – 'I shall slay Salva in my avatara as Sri Krishna'. That is why even though he was Sri Hari himself, Sri Parashurama only defeated Salva but did not kill him".

45) “Therefore you will not be able to kill him. This arrow, on the other hand, is most dear to Sri Krishna, the bearer of the Chakra. Therefore, do not use it. I shall enter Salva’s mind and inspire him to withdraw – thus spoke Sri Vayu (the anonymous voice in the sky)”

46) “Listening to the voice of Sri Vayu, Pradyumna immediately withdrew that great arrow. Salva, on the other hand, climbed his plane and thought that it was useless to fight with a kid and that he wanted to battle Sri Krishna only, and returned to his Kingdom”.

47) “Pradyumna, Samba, Gada, Sarana and Charudeshna fought with Salva’s ministers and killed them along with their armies and returned happily to the city. Meanwhile I reached there and got to know everything from them”.

48) “Due to the radiance of that bow, whose mere holding ensures victory due to my grace, my son was able to defeat Salva, who then returned. Getting to know of this, I immediately chased him, as he had destroyed our city”.

49) “I saw Salva seated on his ‘Saubha’ plane and traveling over the ocean. He started showering numerous weapons and great astras against me. I stopped them and hit him in return with a barrage of arrows. Then, that great sinner employed *maya* against me.

50) “I immediately saw that (maya) through my inherent ability and destroyed that illusion with the *vijnana-astra*. I then killed numerous Daityas. When Salva started showering boulders on me, I cut down his plane with my Chakra and crashed it into the ocean”.

51) “Later when he climbed his chariot and came to battle, I cut off his arms with arrows, destroyed his chariot with a mace, and beheaded him using my Chakra. I returned to my city even as Brahma, Rudra and the other Devatas worshipped and praised me”.

52) “Due to this task of slaying Salva, I had to stay away from you. Because of that, you have been put into this trouble” – saying thus Sri Krishna stayed there for a few days in order to console them and also Draupadi. Satyabhamaa too stayed there even as she consoled Draupadi.

53) The other wives and all sons of the Pandavas had come with them to the forest and stayed there.

54) Dhrishtadyumna consoled Draupadi, bowed to Sri Krishna, took his permission and returned to his city along with the sons of Draupadi.

55) Dhrishtaketu took his sister Devaki, while Kashiraja took his daughter Kali and both of them returned to their cities. The other wives of Kunti returned to stay with Kunti.

56) Parvati was Nakula’s wife. She was the Avatara of Tilottama. She and the other wives of Nakula and Sahadeva had been stopped by Kunti.

Note: The wives of Nakula-Sahadeva who stayed with Kunti were Parvati, Vijayaa and Karenumati.

- 57) Sri Krishna made Subhadra and Abhimanyu sit in his chariot and, after informing the Pandavas, returned to his own city along with Satyabhamaa.
- 58) The sons of Draupadi stayed at Panchala city for some time and then went to Dwaraka. There, they stayed under the watch of Sri Krishna.
- 59) After that, as atonement for his mistake, Dharmaraja always placed Draupadi as his brothers' wife.
- 60) The Pandavas stayed in the forest surviving on food that was leftover after serving the sages. King Yudhishtira used to consume food only after his brothers ate.
- 61) Not able to violate his orders, the brothers used to consume food before him. After Dharmaraja ate, Draupadi used to eat alone.
- 62) In this way, the Pandavas, who were always on the path of Vishnu, used to eat only that food which was offered to him. They spent a year in this way. Then, as per the orders of Bhimasena, Draupadi, the one with excellent knowledge, spoke to Dharmaraja.
- 63) Since Dharmaraja was of a soft nature, Bhimasena knew that even in the fourteenth year, due to fear of elders such as Bhishma, Dharmaraja would refrain from getting back the Kingdom, and therefore sent Draupadi.
- 64) Forgiveness is not Dharma at all times. For a capable King, when it comes to the wicked, it (forgiveness) becomes an instrument for sin. This had to be proved (to Dharmaraja) on the basis of Shastra.
- 65-66) "In the fourteenth year, I shall slay the Kauravas when they refuse to hand over the Kingdom and I shall then rule the land" – in order to get such a genuine vow made by Dharmaraja, Bhimasena first sent Draupadi to him to set the context for a debate. She told Dharmaraja thus.
- 67) "It is never appropriate for a King to show forgiveness to evil people. You have always shown unnecessary compassion towards such people" – when Draupadi said thus Dharmaraja replied – "Forgiveness is the highest Dharma. The entire world is based on forgiveness".
- 68) "Sri Narayana alone is the doer for all matters of joy and sorrow. All of this is brought together by him alone. Therefore there is no need to feel anger towards anyone. Forgiveness is therefore the most excellent Dharma".
- 69) When he spoke thus, Draupadi said – "If forgiveness towards all is the main Dharma, then there shall be nothing left for a King to do. The world too cannot operate and it shall be destroyed by evil people".
- 70) "It is true that Sri Vishnu is the main cause behind all. Even Ramaa, Brahma, Rudra and the others are under his control like pieces of wood. This too is true. However, the efforts of the individual are not futile".

71) "An individual operates as per the dictum of Sri Hari. According to his Karma, he will enjoy joy and sorrow. His Karma never goes futile. Therefore, the fact that a Jeeva is the doer and that he is always under the control of Bhagavanta are both true".

72) "If there is no value for the efforts of a human, then who is the target of all the do's and don'ts in the Vedas? If the Jeeva is not subject to the *vidhis* and *nishedhas* then wouldn't it imply that the two are for Sri Hari himself?"

73) "If it is claimed that the *vidhis* and *nishedhas* are for Sri Hari himself, then it would mean that he gets tainted by the two. However, since he is the Supreme One and Independent he is never affected by Punya or Paapa. Therefore it is proven that the Jeeva is indeed the doer although he is under the control of Paramatma".

74) When Draupadi argued thus, Dharmaraja became speechless. He retorted – "You are resorting to twisted logic and are claiming dependence for even Sri Hari".

75) When Dharmaraja insistently scolded her, Draupadi asked him for forgiveness as a role model woman. Too much talk is never appropriate for a woman, isn't it? Later, Bhima started speaking.

76) "O King! Vishnu is the doer of all activity. None else. Everything else is under his control. He alone is independent. Yet the Jeeva needs to do that which is appropriate for him. With great effort, he also has to avoid that which is not appropriate".

77) "The fact that Jeeva performs Karma is established by sensory perception. The fact that he did so due to Sri Vishnu's directions has to be understood through logic. A knowledgeable person, therefore, performs that Karma mandated by Vishnu (i.e. through the Shastras) and considers it as done under Vishnu's influence".

78) "With that, he obtains the grace of Sri Hari and will attain Sadgati. A tamasa soul on the other hand assumes it is the Divine that is fully responsible and gives up Karma and eventually attains Tamas. Therefore, each and every Jeeva must perform the mandated duty".

79) "It has to be understood that everything is under the control of Sri Vishnu. One must perform the Karma mandated as duty without fail. The ownership of Karma in a person is established by sensory perception. Similarly the fact that everything is under Sri Vishnu's control is to be understood from scriptures and logic".

80) "Since everything is under his control, both cannot be given up. In this way, a knowledgeable person performs that Karma which is his duty. He will understand Sri Vishnu as being the reason behind all, and thus ensures he follows all three pramanas".

81) "If all three pramanas connect without contrariness, then it is known as *poorna-pramana*. If they persist on three different topics but without contradicting each other, it is known as *madhyama-pramana*. If they are contrary to each other, it is known as *apramana*. Therefore they have to be interpreted and understood ensuring that they don't contradict each other".

82) "One who is without the power of discretion will discard even that which is established by sensory perception and, by making an excuse of the Supreme one being the doer, discard Karma. The knowledgeable one, on the other hand, will always perform all his duties, knowing that the Jeeva is under the control of Sri Vishnu".

83-84) "In all Jeevas, there exists an inherent natural capability known as *swabhava* or *hatha*. That is the root cause of the fruition of Karma. The second reason is eternal Karma itself. The third one is the consistent efforts of the Jeeva known as *paurusha*. All three of these are always under the control of Sri Hari. But, Sri Hari is never under the control of anyone else. He is the best amongst the best, the Supreme One and independent".

85) "That natural ability, known as *hatha*, exists in a hierarchical proportion in all Jeevas starting (with the maximum) from Brahma till Kali. It is because of this *swabhava* or *hatha* that all Karmas take place. The efforts which are seeded in Karma takes place in accordance with the *swabhava* of the Jeeva and the eternal (anadi) Karma it possesses".

86) "If proper efforts that are in line are not made, neither inherent ability nor Karma will give results. Sri Hari is the main giver of results for all. Due to his independence he is the controller of all. Yet he always gives results by following these".

87) "It is his resolve that he shall always give results in line with these. This is the very definition of his independence. This independence never deserts him. He is omnipotent and hence there is nothing called incapability in him".

88) "Therefore one must perform the duty imposed by Sri Hari considering it to be his worship. By doing so, one obtains him. Otherwise, Naraka is certain. For a Brahmana, Japa and teaching are Swakarma".

89-92) "The Brahmana varna came into existence from the face of Sri Vishnu. Therefore, activities such as Japa and teaching, that come from the face are imposed by Sri Hari as their main duties. Kshatriyas were born from the shoulders of Sri Vishnu. Therefore, tasks such as removal of sins (punishment of sinners) and increasing noble work which are characteristics of the shoulder are their main duties. Since the face and shoulders are closely located, Sri Vishnu has mandated Japa and teaching to Kshatriyas also. Similarly, Brahmanas are also mandated to do Yajnas. Since Vaishyas came from the thighs of Sri Vishnu, their main duty is proliferation of people. Similarly, the growing of all the insentient immovable things are their duty. Since the thighs and hands are closely located, Vaishyas are in charge of communication too. It is said that the Shudras came from the feet of Sri Vishnu. Service which is mobile in nature is their main duty. Since the feet are closely associated with hands, all activities that are to be done with the hands are also their duties. Similarly, due to the closeness with the thighs, the increase of population is also their duty".

93) "Shoulders and chest are associated with strength and the heart is associated with knowledge. Therefore Kings are mandated to do both power-based and knowledge-based work. Hands are the root of skill. Therefore, since the hands are close to the thighs, and since the legs are close to the feet, Vaishyas and Shudras should possess skill in arts and crafts".

94) "This is distinct Dharma when viewed from the point of view of primary duty. Generally, all activities are Dharma for all. We, on the other hand, are Devatas. Therefore, generally for us, all tasks are Dharma".

95) "In this way, people of all Varnas should worship Sri Vishnu by performing their duties which were imposed right at the beginning of creation. Having devotion in him, as per individual capabilities, is Dharma for all. Similarly, the acquisition of knowledge as per one's capability and his worship is Dharma for all".

96) "Sri Vishnu is the father, guru and foremost Devata – he is all. Therefore, he is worship-worthy for all. Since they are his devotees, the Devatas too are worship-worthy. Amongst them, the bigger devotees are especially worship-worthy".

97) "When Sri Vasudeva is worshipped well he grants Mukti. When he is not worshipped he gives sorrow. Since he is independent he can grant joy and sorrow. No one else is independent. All are under his control only".

98) "Since he is independent he is complete with joy, good knowledge, great power and all other auspicious attributes. Since he is independent he is also free from all defects. Only he who possesses infinite strength is independent, isn't it?"

99) "Since he is unbounded by any limits, he possesses the requisite strength to be defect free and also to be full of auspicious qualities. Therefore Sri Narayana is full of all auspicious traits and he is worthy of worship by all through the performance of their Swadharma".

100-101) "Therefore, for us too he is worthy of worship through our Swadharma. In this way, excessive compassion is not Dharma for us. We are bound by duty to destroy evil. That Kshatriya, who destroys evil forces, especially in war, while remembering Sri Hari and through the usage of his own power, such a person's shoulders and body will be energized with spirit. If a Kshatriya destroys evil people who have become powerful due to boons, such a person's joy in Mukti will increase".

102) "There too, they will get excess affection of Sri Vishnu. Therefore, all sinners are always to be killed. Those sinners who cheat in gambling, and those caught in war must be gotten killed by others".

103) "In war, the Kings, Princes and brothers of Kings must be killed by the King himself. If the Prince is unmarried yet, the King must not kill such a person himself".

104) "Any cruel task that is sanctioned by Dharma is to be gotten done by a Kshatriya through others. In this way, Dharma is elaborated in the Vedas. The teachings of Vishnu in the Pancharatra agama are also similar".

105) "Gambling is a sinful activity and one that involves cheating. You played the same with Shakuni. There is no scripture that mandates gambling. That which is lost in gambling is not considered as lost. Things handed over due to fear, things lost in gambling and things given to a prostitute – these are fit to be taken back by the relatives (of the one who lost it)".

106) “In this way there is an eternal Vedic injunction. Whether in gambling or that which is given to a prostitute, if the quantity is meagre, it need not be taken back. However, if it is valuable for those dependent on it, then that too can be snatched back”.

107) “If the one who loses it does not have the strength to take it back, his relatives must do it for him. Therefore, we have to take back our Kingdom. Since you are a follower of Dharma and because you are my older brother, I haven’t done the same without your approval”.

108) “If you permit me now, I shall slay all of them and bring back your entire Kingdom today itself. If you wish your words regarding (those) sinners to come true, then twelve months have already passed by”.

109) “On the basis of the Vedas, months are to be considered as years. That is how the Vedas mandate upon humans the performance of yagas for a thousand years. Let us perform the Ajnatavasa for one month and then kill our enemies and rule the Kingdom”.

110) “O King! Do not become the cause of pain for your friends. Similarly, do not become the source of comfort for your enemies. May you shine brightly on your enemies’ head. May you cause joy to your friends. May you worship Sri Vasudeva every day”.

111) “O King! The independence of Sri Hari is now well established through *pratyaksha* – sensory perception itself. Because Sri Krishna, who is Sri Hari himself, has won against Rudra and the other Devas and against Jarasandha and other Kings, who had the boons of Brahma and others”.

112) “Through the person of Sri Vyasa, it has been seen multiple times that Sri Hari is greater than Brahma and others and also greater than Sri Mahalakshmi. Hasn’t Sri Vyasa proven to us that in the matter of all people he is independent, by virtue of granting us divine vision?”

113) “Therefore O King! get ready to bear the Emperorship so that you may destroy all enemies. Due to this, you will garner immense fame and Dharma, all due to the blessings of Sri Hari”.

114) When Bhimasena advised thus, Yudhishthira, the son of Dharma, assured him – “After the completion of thirteen years, I shall do exactly as you have said, without fail”.

115) “This is true. Let there be no doubt. I swear on myself. Do not tell me anything more as I am wary of the world heaping blame on me”.

116) “Even after I am assuring you thus, do not berate me excessively. I shall be pained. You should have ignored me then itself and killed all our enemies. Now it is not appropriate to hurt me with these words”.

117) “Bhishma, Drona and the others know astras. How do we face them in battle? It is completely inappropriate to stop them through brute force, since they are all worship worthy”.

118) “Although you are fully knowledgeable about astras, you will not use them anywhere. Therefore, we should go for battle only after Arjuna learns all the astras”.

119) When Dharmaraja spoke thus, Bhimasena did not say anything further for fear of losing his love. His purpose had already been attained, hadn't it?

120) It was Bhima's intention that Dharmaraja should take a vow to be ready for war at the end of thirteen years. Otherwise, due to his soft nature, he would have changed his mind about his enemies and would have given up on war. Therefore, Bhima spoke the way he did.

121-122) Since his wish was fulfilled Bhima became quiet. Dharmaraja then started worrying about how to defeat Bhishma, Drona and the others. Bhima would never desire opposing Gurus and elders. Therefore, all of them had to be engaged by Arjuna. Bhima would engage them only in a situation involving great peril.

123) When Dharmaraja was worrying in this way, Sri Vyasa, the omnipotent and omniscient one, came there. He advised Dharmaraja who was sulking from his worries.

124) "I shall grant you the *upadesha* of a mantra. With that Arjuna can win against Bhishma, Drona and the others. You teach that mantra to him".

125) Saying thus, he advised that mantra to Dharmaraja. As the power of the mantra would be more than required, he did not directly teach it to Arjuna.

126) Only a limited amount of power (of the mantra) was sufficient to win against Bhishma, Drona and the others. It was not required to possess more power than that. Deeming a limited amount to be sufficient for Arjuna, Sri Vyasa did not instruct the mantra directly to him.

127) After Sri Vyasa, the omniscient one who is the doer of all activity, left the place, Dharmaraja instructed the mantra to Arjuna in secrecy.

128) Arjuna received the upadesha of that mantra and, after taking the blessings of his two older brothers, and giving a warm hug to his two younger brothers, left for the Indrakeela mountain.

129) At the mountain, Phalguna performed a penance, meditating on Sri Hari who is present inside Rudra. After six months, he saw an Asura named Mooka on that mountain.

130) That Rakshana put on the guise of a swine and rushed at Arjuna in order to kill him. Becoming aware of the same, Arjuna picked up his Gandiva and, having strung it, released numerous arrows at the body (of the Asura).

131) After that, the three-eyed Shiva, along with Parvati, took the guise of a hunter and shot that Asura with arrows. Due to the arrows from both of them, the Asura died.

132) Shiva then told Arjuna – "I came here chasing this pig. But you shot at it. Therefore, engage with me in battle now".

133) When he said thus Arjuna replied – "Stop! Stop! I will not let you go". Speaking thus, the two best amongst men engaged in a battle.

134) In that duel, Shiva swallowed all the astras released by Arjuna. Later Arjuna hit Shiva using his Gandiva.

135) At that moment, Shiva let out a laugh and consumed the Gandiva too. After that, the two of them engaged in a wrestling match.

136) Shiva then lifted Arjuna like a lump and threw him. Arjuna, troubled by Shiva, fell deeply unconscious.

137) Earlier, Shiva had requested Sri Hari, the one with Garuda as his flag, thus – “When you grant the boon of invincibility to those lower than me, I should be able to win against them due to your blessings”.

138) When requested thus, Sri Vishnu had granted that boon to Shiva. Therefore, Shiva won against *Shwetavahana* in that fight.

139) Sri Vyasa, the one who is pure Chit, had not just given pure Vaishnava mantras to Arjuna to defeat Bhishma and the others.

140) Sri Vyasa had thought that if Arjuna were to be given pure Vaishnava mantras, he would become extremely powerful due to the same and his ego would bloat.

141-142) Once Arjuna regained consciousness, he desired to win in that battle. He started worshipping Shiva with the mantra given by Sri Vyasa. The flowers that he offered to Shiva climbed the head of that Kirata. Arjuna realized that the Kirata was none other than Shiva himself and bowed to him. Later, Shiva gave him the Pashupatastra.

143) That Pashupatastra was presided by Sri Vishnu. Since Shiva had gained *siddhi* over it, it came to be known as Pashupata. At that moment, other Devatas appeared there and gave their astras also to Arjuna.

144) Indra approached Arjuna and told him – “Arjuna! The one without any defects! You are dear to me. You have pleased that Supreme Brahman Sri Hari who resides in Rudra’s body. Therefore, you come to my *loka*. I shall send you my chariot”.

145) Saying thus, Indra returned to his world. Matali came there with his chariot. Arjuna climbed it and left for the world of his father Indra.

Note: Matali was the charioteer of Indra.

146) Arjuna was accorded a great reception by all the Devatas. Indra made him sit on his seat. Arjuna sat along with Indra on that excellent seat.

147) Indra looked at the face of Arjuna, the great Kuru hero and his own other form, and hugged him and felt great joy. Arjuna stayed at Swarga for five years.

148) Indra gave Arjuna many astras. All of them were great divine weapons. Then, Urvashi approached him. Considering himself as a human, he rejected her as she was the mother of his clan.

149) Urvashi cursed him to become a transgender. Indra converted it into a boon by saying – “You shall go around in the guise of a transgender for one year. You shall never obtain transgender-hood”.

150) Later Arjuna learnt the art of *Gandharva vidya* from the Gandharva Chitrasena. He also practiced the art of astras with Indra.

151) Sri Krishna, who had gone back to Dwaraka along with Subadhra and Abhimanyu, once thought thus.

152) “I had once given a boon to Shiva saying that I shall in turn seek a boon from him, in order to cause confusion to the Asuras”.

153) “O Shiva! I shall take birth with one *amsha* of mine in the Dwapara yugas amidst humans and obtain boons from you by worshipping you”.

154) “Through the Agamas that have been created, you cause the Asuras to turn away from me. Hide me from them. Due to this, the Asuras will not reach upper lokas but will go to the nether worlds only”.

155) Rugmini got to know that Sri Krishna had decided to make those words of his come true, and spoke to him, seeking his affection.

156) Although she already had obtained a son, she realized Sri Krishna’s decision to have a(nother) son and said to him – “O Lord! I want a strong and powerful son, who knows all astras, to take birth”.

157) When Rugmini spoke thus to cause illusion to Asuras, Sri Krishna climbed on to Garuda along with her and left for Badarikashrama.

158-160) “O Shiva, the powerful one! I shall create scriptures that will cause illusion to those who are evil. You too compose such works. Get others to compose such works too. Convey things that don’t exist as if they do. Speak about things such that they convey a different meaning. Explain things as if you are the Supreme one. Do not reveal my greatness. In order to confuse the world I shall worship you. Otherwise, the Asuras cannot reach Tamas. Thus is my opinion”.

161) These were the words of Sri Vishnu to Shiva. Therefore, in order to render them true, when Sri Krishna arrived at Badarikashrama, all the sages there, being omniscient, worshipped him.

162) At night, when Sri Krishna was seated amidst the Munis, two *Pisachas* by name Ghantakarna and Karna arrived there. They had been asked by Shiva to see Sri Krishna and hence they desired to go to Dwaraka.

163) When the two of them saw Sri Krishna amidst the sages, they did not at first realize who he was and they got into creating nuisance that was typical of Pisachas. Later, they meditated and realized who he was.

164) Seeing Sri Krishna who appeared in their hearts, they became very curious and, out of devotion, they praised him and bowed to him repeatedly. Inherently, they were noble souls.

165) Sri Krishna, being pleased with them, touched them and in a moment converted them into excellent Gandharvas, granting them divine form and good voice.

166) The two of them again worshipped Sri Krishna through their dance, singing and through excellent prayers. Lord Krishna then went to Kailasa, the King of mountains, and appeared as if he was performing penance there.

167) Sri Vishnu, even as he was enjoying his own attributes through eternal knowledge (of the same), acted as if he was doing penance to please Shiva, all the while causing confusion amongst evil souls.

168-170) In order to cause great confusion amongst Asuras Sri Krishna had earlier told Shiva – “I shall perform penance for twelve years appearing to pray to you, so Asuras may undergo confusion. May the Devatas be free of worry”. Therefore, Sri Krishna made Brihaspati cross the twelve rashis in a single day. Thus, as per Sri Krishna’s orders, that one day turned into twelve years.

Note: The time taken by Brihaspati or Jupiter to travel through one zodiac sign is considered as one year. By making Brihaspati travel across all twelve signs in a single day, the equivalent of twelve years was accomplished.

171) Considering each rashi to be one year, Sri Krishna, in a single day, performed mentally all the required upavasas and the prescribed rituals.

172) Sri Krishna completed the *masa vrata* in his mind in the time required to take a hundred and fifty breaths. He did so in order to grant the benefits of twelve years of vratas to his devotees.

Note: Masa vrata is the vrata undertaken for one month. A human takes 21600 breaths in a day. Considering this as 12 years, one year turns out to be 2800 breaths. Therefore, one month comes to 150 breaths.

173) Then, Garuda and the other Devatas belonging to his close circle served Sri Krishna. He performed homa and other rituals. Although the focus of these rituals was himself, he made it appear as if he was doing all that to please Shiva.

174) When Sri Krishna was engaged in penance in this way Brahma, Indra and the other Devatas, the best amongst the Yogis, Prajapatis, Pitrus, the best amongst the Munis and their families rushed to the lotus-eyed one. Gandharvas, Siddhas, Yakshas, birds and others too came there.

175) Shiva too, noticing that the lord of all Devatas and his own master, Sri Hari, had come to his place, gathered his family and along with his wife rushed to him with great devotion and excitement, carrying along that which is required for performing his worship.

176) Shiva approached the primordial lord of the Universe Sri Krishna and bowed his head down with devotion and prayed to him. He praised Sri Krishna, the one with a body made of the six auspicious attributes, one who is free from all defects, one who is full of great opulence and the one who is the best amongst all, with excellent *stutis*.

177) Sri Krishna too, in order to cause *moha* to the ill-qualified souls, praised himself as present inside of Rudra. Listening to that, Shiva addressed all the Devatas and said – “I shall speak the truth. Listen to me”.

178) “Mahavishnu is the one who should be worshipped by all people as the Supreme One. Myself, Vayu and Mahalakshmi are the instruments for obtaining him. Sri Vishnu is the best amongst all and is greater than me and Brahma. Thus is the definitive teaching of all Vedas and other shastras”.

179) “It is the purport (of all shastras) that he is eternally greater than Mahalakshmi and all groups of souls. All of you keep remembering him again and again”. When Shiva spoke thus, all the groups of Devatas fell at the feet of Sri Krishna with extreme devotion and worshipped him.

180) Thereafter, due to the other explanations of Shiva describing Sri Krishna and revealing the truth, Indra and the other Devatas, who were already knowledgeable, obtained even more enlightenment (from Shiva’s teachings).

181) The Devatas are always aware that Sri Hari is the best amongst all Devatas. However, since the *pramana granthas* are too many in number, whatever doubts had arisen in their minds due to their reliance on logic were cleared from the discourse of Shiva.

182) Later Sri Krishna, in order to make his earlier words – “I shall obtain a boon from you to have a son” – to Shiva come true, spoke thus.

183) “Grant me a son”. Shiva replied – “A son named Pradyumna has already been born to you. Let people think that he is the one who was granted by me”.

184) “Earlier, Kama had been burnt by me. His wife Rati had asked me – ‘Grant me my husband’. I had then said”.

185) “ ‘When he will be born as Pradyumna to Sri Krishna, may you obtain him as your husband’. O Lord Sri Hari! As per your orders may it be known now that he was granted by me to you”.

186) “O Lord of all Devatas! I am your servant. Protect me as I have taken refuge in you” – speaking thus, Shiva bowed to Sri Krishna and again addressed the Devatas.

187) “O Devatas! Listen to me. I shall let you know why Sri Krishna has come here (to Kailasa)”.

188) “An Asura named Vakra had become invincible due to the boon of Brahma. Apart from the just-born Manmatha, the son of Sri Krishna, he could not be killed by anyone else”.

189) “In order to kill him, Sri Krishna held his son Pradyumna in his stomach and came here. Here, he brought out his son and burnt that Asura. Notice that forest which has been burnt”.

190) “Due to the series of flames, that Asura Vakra, who was terrible, was burnt by Sri Krishna along with the forest through Pradyumna, whose *tejas* increased greatly”.

- 191) “Sri Krishna once again placed his son in his abdomen. He again got him to take birth through Rugmini. And then he made him a young man immediately”
- 192) “All of this has been witnessed by Sage Narada and others. In this way, the *Deva* plays, possessing unimaginable opulence”.
- 193) When Shiva informed them thus, Indra and the other Devatas bowed to Sri Krishna.
- 194) Sri Krishna was praised by Brahma, Indra and the other Devatas. Sitting on Garuda’s shoulders, he was worshipped by Shiva again and again. On the third day, he got back to his city (Dwaraka).
- 195) On the day Sri Krishna left for Kailasa, at nightfall, Paundraka Vasudeva attacked Dwaraka along with Ekalavya, his mother, father and an army of three akshouhini.
- 196) Upon getting to know that Dwaraka was being destroyed, the great Yadava warriors, including Balarama, Satyaki and others engaged in battle. Then, Ekalavya, the leader of the *Nishadas*, showered arrows upon them.
- 197) Due to his weapons and astras, all the Yadava heroes became worried. All the lights in Dwaraka got extinguished. All of them, along with Balarama and Satyaki, returned to the city.
- 198) All of them picked up large torches and, being led by Balarama, came out of their city wielding weapons in their hands. It was like lions rushing out of their caves.
- 199) Then, Balarama climbed a chariot and faced Ekalavya. Satyaki engaged with Paundraka Vasudeva. Satyaki and Paundra fought against each other and rendered each other chariot-less.
- 200) Later, Satyaki and Paundraka had a battle with maces. Similarly, the brave Balarama and Ekalavya rendered each other chariot-less and started fighting with maces.
- 201) At that time, Sri Krishna climbed on to Garuda and came to the place where the Yadavas were engaged in battle. Seeing him, Balarama was filled with joy. With overflowing happiness in his heart, he decided to kill Ekalavya.
- 202) When Balarama picked up his mace with both hands and rushed towards Ekalavya, he ran away from there out of fear wanting to save his own life, after noticing the strength and anger of Balarama.
- 203) Balarama too ran after him. The scared Ekalavya jumped into the ocean. After chasing him till the coast, the powerful Balarama stood there holding the mace in his hand.
- 204) That great sinner Ekalavya, thinking that Balarama was still chasing him, swam a distance of eighty yojanas, reached an island and then turned around and looked back.
- 205) Having defeated the powerful enemy Ekalavya in that way in battle, Balarama happily returned towards Sri Krishna. Paundraka Vasudeva, ignoring (the attack of) Satyaki, moved towards Sri Krishna.

206) Sri Krishna rendered him chariot-less and weapon-less in an instant. Paundraka Vasudeva returned to his city and then sent a messenger to Sri Krishna. (The messenger said –) “I alone am Vasudeva”.

207) “Give up the usage of my insignia and surrender to me as I am eternal”. When the messenger spoke this, all the Yadava heroes laughed vociferously.

Note: Paundraka wanted Sri Krishna to give up using Shankha, Chakra and the other Vaishnava symbols, claiming them to be his own signs.

208) Sri Krishna laughed loudly and said – “I desire to give you the weapons, which are your insignia, only in battle”. When he spoke thus, the messenger conveyed the same to Paundraka, who came back desiring battle. Sri Krishna proceeded to face him.

209) Seeing Paundra sitting on a golden Garuda which was placed on his chariot, wearing artificial Chakra and other weapons and with a burnt chest attempting to get the Srivatsa sign, Sri Krishna laughed uncontrollably.

210) Then, even as Paundraka was showering many astras and other weapons, Sri Krishna defeated him and beheaded him with his Sudarshana Chakra. Later, he also beheaded Paundraka’s maternal grandfather with an arrow.

211) Sri Krishna, the Lord of all, made the head of that King of Kashi (grandfather of Paundraka) fall in Varanasi. Paundraka, who used to always call himself Brahma and Vasudeva, was condemned to Andhantamas due to his ignorance.

212) The King of Kashi who helped him, Kirmeera, Hidimba, Salva and other Daityas had all fallen into Andhantamas. Similarly, this evil minded one too fell into Tamas.

213) Having killed the two of them, Sri Krishna had already caused Pradyumna to be born (again) in Rugmini. Ekalavya, who was defeated by Balarama, performed a penance for appeasing Shiva. He obtained a boon of invincibility from Shiva.

214) His ego boosted due to Shiva’s boon, Ekalavya rushed against Sri Krishna wanting to battle him. Stopping all his weapons and astras, Sri Krishna beheaded him with his Chakra.

215) He too, being a great sinner, reached the terrible Tamas, where sorrow is forever, all due to his hatred of Sri Krishna. In this way, Paundraka and Kashiraja were killed by the best amongst Yadavas.

216) Sudakshina, the son of the King of Kashi, performed a *tapas* with great devotion in order to please Shiva. When Shiva appeared, that sinner and evil-hearted one asked for a boon to eliminate Sri Krishna.

217) Due to the Avesha of Asuras, Shiva’s mind too was polluted (at that time) and he gave a *Daitya-shakti* to him in the *Dakshinagni*. That Dakshinagni too had the Avesha of Asuras. Being worshipped by the son of the King of Kashi, that Agni increased in power due to Shiva’s boon and he left to the place where Sri Krishna was present.

218) Sri Krishna, the most valorous one, sent his Chakra in order to remedy the Dakshinagni. That terrible, shining Chakra with extra-ordinary strength chased the Agni afar.

219) That Agni was the son of the main Agni (-Devata). Having been chased away by the Chakra, that fire burnt away Sudakshina, his wife, children and his family and rendered them into ashes.

220) The Sudarshana Chakra burnt the city of Varanasi and returned to Sri Vasudeva. That great sinner Sudakshina reached Tamas along with this family, due to his hatred of Sri Krishna.

221) At Dwaraka, Sri Krishna, the one with eternal bliss and one who is complete, once sportingly spoke to Rugmini. Although he never fought with the defectless Rugmini, he did so in order to mock the behavior of Grihasthas.

222-223) "O auspicious one! I have no purpose to be served from you. Only in order to humiliate my enemies I brought you in that manner". Mahalakshmi, the omniscient one, although knew that she never separates from her consort, appeared as if she was sad just to show wives should behave thus with their husbands. Sri Krishna, the lord of lords, consoled her in order to teach the Dharma of Grihasthas, although he himself is eternal blissful.

224) When Sri Krishna was thus sporting with Rugmini, Balarama went to Gokula once, based on Sri Krishna's directions. There, he met Nanda and Yashoda and was respected by them. They asked him about Sri Krishna's well-being.

225) There he stayed for two months and spent time enjoying with the Gopikas. Being intoxicated, Balarama asked the river Yamuna to come to where he was. When Yamuna, knowing that he was intoxicated, refused, the great warrior pulled her with his plough to where he was.

226) When she bowed to him, he let her return. Later, he returned to Dwaraka, having been seen off by Nandagopa. He narrated to Sri Krishna the devotion that Nandagopa and the others had in him.

227) Then, Mainda and Vivida, friends of the son of Bhumi (Narakasura) and possessed of Asura avasha, started destroying the Anarta country after Bhauma's death, out of hatred for Sri Krishna. Balarama was asked by Sri Krishna to kill them.

228) Sri Krishna granted him a boon – "This Mainda and Vivida are invincible due to Brahma's boon and due to the fact that they have drunk Amruta. Yet they shall be killed by you. Proceed".

229) Having proceeded thus, Balarama first killed Mainda when he attacked him angrily at the peak of the Raivata mountain. On the next day, the doer of the most excellent tasks killed Vivida by hitting him with his plough, even as he attacked him with showers of rocks.

230) The Asuras who were present inside the two of them reached Andhantamas while the Ashwini Devatas reached their own loka.

Note: Mainda and Vivida were the Avatara of the Ashwini Devatas. They also had the Avesha of two Asuras inside them.

231) Duryodhana had a daughter named Lakshanaa. She was Rati's Avatara and was very beautiful. In her Swayamvara Samba held her by force. She too developed a liking for him.

Note: Samba was Sri Krishna's son born to Jambavati. He was the Avatara of Manmatha.

232) When he held her by force, Karna and the others, including Duryodhana became fiery with anger and engaged in battle (with him). They rendered him chariot-less with great difficulty even though he was alone. Relying on his physical prowess, and due to the company of Karna, Bhurishravas and others, Duryodhana captured him.

233) As soon as they heard the news, all the Yadavas got ready for a battle against the Kauravas. Balarama stopped them, and desiring peace, went to the Kauravas himself, along with Uddhava.

234) Stopping outside Hastinapura in a garden, Balarama sent Uddhava to the Kauravas. All the Kauravas came and paid reverence to him. He conveyed the orders of Ugrasena to them.

235) "Our King Ugrasena has ordered you. All of you have gotten together and, with great difficulty, captured our Prince who was alone. But we have forgiven the same as you are our relatives. Release Samba immediately".

236) When Balarama conveyed the orders of Ugrasena thus, the Kauravas berated him out of anger and returned to their city. Balarama became furious at this.

237) Balarama pulled the city of Hastinapura into the waters of the Ganga with his plough. When he started to leave, all the Kauravas came there and bowed to him, requesting him not to do so.

238) Being worshipped by Duryodhana, Balarama then received Samba with his wife and son, along with many gifts, and returned to Dwaraka.

239) Balarama, who had the Avesha of Sri Krishna, and who was the Avatara of Sesha, performed many such wonderful deeds. Noticing the time of the Avesha of Sri Krishna in him, even Bhima would avoid engaging in a duel (during those times).

240) Whenever he engaged in a duel with him for sport, Bhima would notice the temporary Avesha of Sri Vishnu that Balarama would have, and out of devotion for Sri Hari, would not hit him back even when he would get hit (by Balarama).

241) In those instances, Balarama would win the duel. But, whenever the Avesha of Sri Vishnu wasn't present, Bhima would always emerge victorious. Balarama would possess the Avesha of the Shukla-Kesha of Sri Vishnu (during his victories), wouldn't he?

Note: Sri Krishna was born from the Krishna-Kesha or black hair of Vishnu while Balarama had the presence of the Shukla-Kesha or white hair. Such Avatara and Avesha from the hair of Paramatma is only symbolic. Otherwise there is no difference between any of the parts of Sri Vishnu.

242-243) In this way, when Sri Krishna, the one with lotus in his navel, was staying at Dwaraka along with Balarama, Usha Devi, the daughter of Bana, once had a dream in which she united with Aniruddha (the grandson of Sri Krishna). She called Chitrlekha and told her – “Bring him to me”. Later, she (Chitrlekha) drew the pictures of men on a cloth and she (Usha) identified him. She got to know from her (Chitrlekha) that he was Sri Krishna’s grandson. Chitrlekha brought him to her at night.

Note: Chitrlekha was Usha’s friend and she possessed the unique art of being able to draw the faces of people just from her imagination.

244) Usha obtained the noble Aniruddha by virtue of Chitrlekha bringing him to her, and she spent several days sporting with him.

245) The guards of the ladies’ inner palace got to know that Aniruddha was staying there secretly and they informed Banasura of the same. He sent his guards to have him arrested.

246) The powerful Aniruddha hurt them (the guards) when they arrived to catch him with his Parigha and chased them away. Then, Banasura himself came there to battle. He struggled a lot and eventually arrested him with a Nagastra.

247-248) Later Sri Krishna climbed Garuda along with Balarama and Pradyumna and came there. At first he fought with the Agnis and the Aangirasa and defeated and chased them away in an instance. Thereafter he chased away the Pramatha Ganas of Shiva and then faced the ‘Jwara’.

Note: Aangirasa was the son of Sage Angirasa. The Jwara was a fever owing allegiance to Shiva. It was therefore a Shaiva Jwara.

249) When Balarama was afflicted by fever by virtue of the attack of the Jwara in the form of an ash-attack, Sri Krishna, the lord of the Universe, hugged him and relieved him from the fever.

250) Sri Janardana played with it (Shaiva Jwara) for a while and smashed it with his fists. Being Achyuta, the one without any aberrations, he created the Vaishnava Jwara.

251) Although he himself had defeated the assistant of Shiva, the capable Sri Krishna wanted to get him defeated through his own assistant and hence created a separate Jwara there itself.

252) When the Vaishnava Jwara started troubling the Shaiva Jwara and was about to consume it, the latter took refuge in Sri Krishna himself. When he was praised by the Jwara, the lord released it.

253) The omnipotent Sri Krishna, although he never undergoes any suffering, puts on a display of having won over even ordinary people through great efforts. He does this for sport, and to confuse the Asuras. Otherwise, how can the eternally independent lord have pain or any other trouble?

254) When the Jwara and others ran away from there, Shiva himself came against Sri Krishna. A battle took place between them. Sri Krishna stunned Shiva with the Vijrumbhanastra.

255) When he was stunned thus, Shiva, who was standing still without any movement, and had not realized Sri Krishna due to the Avesha of Asuras, was warned through appropriate words by Lord Brahma.

256) Holding on to Shiva, he entered Vishnu's abdomen and showed him the form of Shiva that was stunned in a forest called Bilva. He also showed him that the efforts of Shankara to attain the post of Shiva had gotten halted there.

257) Once the mask that had engulfed his mind due to the Avesha of Asuras had gone away, Shiva, who has the Vrushabha as his mast, realized Sri Krishna was Sri Hari himself. After that, Banasura started fighting with Sri Krishna, who cut off his thousand arms. Later, he picked up the Chakra in order to behead him.

258) Then, Shiva bowed to Sri Krishna in order to protect Bana. Sri Krishna accepted Bana as a devotee and protected him, after leaving just two of his arms.

259) Sri Krishna got Aniruddha released and headed back after being worshipped by Bana. In this way, Sri Krishna effortlessly won against the Agnis, Aangrirasa, Jwara, Shanmukha, Shiva and Banasura and left for Dwaraka.

260) When Sri Krishna easily defeated Shiva, the destroyer of all the worlds himself, what else is to be said about his victories over the Jwara and others?

261) Without the grace of Sri Hari, none of the infinite number of Shivas, Brahmas nor Mahalakshmi can get the ability to even move.

262) Similarly, none of them can have knowledge or any other attributes, nor even existence without his grace! Therefore, there is no surprise in the victory of such a powerful Sri Krishna against Shiva.

263) Along with Chitrlekha, Usha and Aniruddha, Sri Krishna climbed Garuda and reached Dwaraka, even as he was joined by Balarama and Pradyumna. There, the eternally blissful Sri Krishna spent a lot of time sportingly.

264) Such pastimes of Sri Krishna, the best amongst Yadavas, one with incalculable greatness and one with great energy, are infinite. These (pastimes) are always sung by Mahalakshmi, Brahma, Shiva, Indra, Surya and the others. They bestow Mukti.

265) In this way, when Sri Krishna, one who is the very essence of strength and valour, was staying at Dwaraka, Sage Lomasha, having been sent by Indra and Arjuna, undertook a Yatra of all Tirthakshetras and joined the Pandavas.

266) The Pandavas traveled the world in the order of 'Pradakshina' (clockwise) and undertook bathing in all the *tirthas* as mandated in the shastras. They worshipped Sri Hari in all those tirthas and, in order to offer all of that to Sri Krishna, reached Prabhasa.

267) In order to felicitate them, Sri Krishna came there along with Balarama and all the Yadavas.

268) The Pandavas offered a special worship to Sri Krishna and all the Yadavas. As per the orders of Sri Krishna, the Yadavas too felicitated the Pandavas.

269) When, after looking at Bhima in the guise of a Tapasvi, Balarama started berating Duryodhana out of extreme affection for Bhima, Satyaki spoke.

270-271) "Let us all slay Karna and the Kauravas and place Abhimanyu on the crown to rule the Kingdom till the Pandavas finish their thirteen year exile and return. After that, Dharmaraja can rule just as earlier".

272-273) When Satyaki said thus, Sri Krishna looked at the faces of the Pandavas and said – "O Satyaki! Pandavas do not desire any Kingdom given to them by others. They will kill their enemies with their own strength and earn the Kingdom". When he spoke thus, the Pandavas said – "Indeed". Later, the Yadavas returned, with Sri Krishna leading them.

274) The Pandavas too thereafter reached the Himalayas. There, while on a very difficult terrain, they noticed Draupadi appearing to get tired, and remembered Haidimba (Hidimba's son – Ghatotkacha). He came there along with several Rakshasas.

275) Ghatotkacha carried Draupadi while his servants lifted the Pandavas. They reached Badarikashrama and worshipped Sri Narayana there. Having finished other appropriate chores there, they travelled further towards the North.

276) Later they crossed the Himalayas. They went past the Hemakoota and Nishadha mountains. Next, they reached Badarikashrama, the best place on Earth, that was located in the Gandhamadana mountain, by traveling east of Meru.

277) At Badari, they were accorded great respect by those excellent amongst Munis. They engaged in constant worship of Sri Narayana through penance that involved (acquisition of) knowledge and meditation. They propagated excellent philosophical truths.

278) In this way, when they were relaxing at Badari, Bhimasena was once alone with Draupadi. At that time, Garuda, that excellent vehicle of Lord Vasudeva, pulled a snake out of a big pond.

279) Due to the wind from the wings of Garuda, that mountain shook and an excellent golden lotus flower fell near Draupadi and Bhima. It was radiant like the rising Sun and possessed excellent odour.

280) Seeing that excellent golden flower, that was of exceedingly good perfume, Draupadi, overcome by curiosity, asked Bhimasena to bring her many such flowers. She knew very well the great capability of Bhima, one that could not be tolerated (faced) by even Devatas or Daityas.

281) Having been requested by Draupadi, Bhimasena, with a mace in his hand, started climbing that mountain furiously. He destroyed many Daityas who were disguised as Lions and Tigers. The groups of Devatas and Siddhas praised him profusely.

282) On the way, he saw Hanumanta, who was radiant like the rising Sun and was his own (alternate) form. Even though he knew him to be his own *rupa*, he still sportingly engaged with him as if he was different.

283) Whenever they are born as humans, it is utmost Dharma for Devatas to engage with their own alternate form as if they are different, to especially not receive the same strength as the original form and to always conduct themselves complying with human nature. Therefore, both Hanuman and Bhima behaved as if they were brothers even though they were same.

284) When Devatas take Avatara as humans, depending upon the Yuga, and depending upon the (capability of the) original form, their qualities get masked as appropriate. The excellent amongst those Devatas have their original qualities expressed in part, whenever an occasion arises.

285) In all his appearances, Sri Vishnu, who displays all his qualities in full measure, never faces such restrictions on displaying his attributes. For Sri Vayu, his qualities usually manifest depending upon his own intent. For the other Devatas, such qualities manifest only during special circumstances.

286) Therefore, at that moment, Bhimasena behaved as if he was interacting with a different person, only in order to increase his own punya. Although he is the very essence of strength, he acted that way in order to cause illusion to Asuras.

287) Bhimasena saw that form of Hanuman becoming immense. He heard the tales of Sri Rama from him. He heard the divine glory of the four forms of Sri Hari. He also listened to the excellent Dharmas that are appropriate for the four Yugas.

288) Hanuman granted him a boon saying he would sit on Arjuna's flag and cause defeat to the enemies merely by his roar. Later, Bhima bowed to him and quickly left for that excellent forest containing the Sougandhika (flowers).

289) Having reached that lake which was unreachable by (ordinary) humans, Bhima saw golden lotus flowers that had amazing form, were divine, and had excellent scent. He was then opposed by some carnivorous Rakshasas.

290) Bhima, who was terrible, most powerful, of handsome outlook, and possessed a weapon, was stopped together by hundred crore Daityas known as Krodhavashas.

291) Talking about those Shastras proclaiming Shiva as the Supreme One, and having become invincible due to Shiva's boons, they showered Bhima, the omniscient one who was the very personification of Tapas and an ocean of strength, with terrible weapons and astras.

292) Bhimasena first defeated them in the war of words using Vaishnava shastras, destroyed their weapons and then killed them all with his mace.

293) Bhima was that son of Kunti, born from Sri Vayu, who was powerful, brave, *tapasvi*, destroyer of enemies, always engaged in truth and Dharma and who was never subdued in valour by his enemies.

294) Bhima defeated many other Rakshasas there who were arguing that the world was unreal, without a God, that it doesn't depend upon anyone and claiming themselves to be *siddha* and *Ishwara*, by singing the glory of Sri Vishnu.

295) Declaring Vishnu to be distinct than all others and Vishnu to be the Supreme One, he killed one lakh warriors among them. Seeing his valour, strength, knowledge and physical prowess, they failed to face him in spite of attacking together, and were killed. The remaining ones immediately fled from there.

296) Bhimasena, the great Kuru hero, attacked all of them with his mace. Having chased them away, he entered that lotus pond, drank its nectar like water and picked up those divine flowers.

297) Around that time, noticing many ill-omens indicative of war, Yudhishthira felt disturbed in his mind and asked Draupadi – "Where is Bhima?"

298) Hearing from Draupadi that Bhima had gone to fetch Saugandhika flowers, Dharmaraja climbed the best amongst Rakshasas and left for that place, along with Draupadi and his brothers.

Note: They sat on the shoulders of Ghatotkacha and his assistants.

299) Having reached the place where Bhima was present, he saw his state and asked him not to do such things, out of fear of Shiva.

300) Rakshasas who were fearful of death from the Devatas were guarding that pond as per the orders of Kubera. Shiva in turn was the protector of Kubera. The lord of wealth, however, knew the greatness of Bhima and was not furious at him.

301-302) When the Pandavas were staying there, a few more days passed by. One day, a wind brought there a few flowers, bearing five colours, from the house of Kubera. Knowing that it would bring glory to Bhimasena if he brought those flowers from that place inhospitable to humans, and that his punya would also increase, Draupadi asked him (to bring them).

303) "Since this mountain is lorded by Kubera, its terrain is difficult for all. You should go there today itself and defeat all the Rakshasas".

304) When Draupadi asked him thus, Bhimasena, the one who had never tasted defeat, picked up his mace, bow and arrows and climbed that mountain. There, seeing him approach, an army of three *padma* Rakshasas who were intoxicated (with over-confidence) stopped him.

305) The Rakshasa Manimanta, who had become invincible due to the boon of Shiva, engaged in battle by showering numerous weapons and great astras. Bhimasena immediately felled all the Rakshasas, who were with Manimanta, through a barrage of excellent arrows and killed them.

306) Those Rakshasas, known as Krodhavashas, although they were invincible, were killed in an instant by the most-powerful Bhimasena in battle. Having been slain by Bhima, who was on top of that mountain, all of them entered Andhantamas.

307) Manimanta, who was killed in the Sougandhika forest, was born again in Kaliyuga and, having spread false knowledge especially, obtain higher Tamoloka.

308) Later King Kubera, seeing that his army of three *padmas* and their leader and his friend Manimanta had been slain, climbed a divine chariot in order to face Bhima in battle.

309) Due to Asura-avesha, he had developed great anger against Bhima. The lord of wealth himself came there to fight Bhima.

310) At that time, King Dharmaraja heard the roar of Bhima and immediately asked Draupadi – “Where is Bhima?”. As soon as she told him, he climbed the shoulders of Ghatotkacha and reached the place (where Bhima and Kubera were about to battle).

311) When Dharmaraja, along with his brothers, Sages and Draupadi reached the place where Bhima was, the Asura-avesha of Kubera reduced a little upon seeing him. Similarly, a littleness friendliness developed towards them.

312) Since a little Asura-avesha still resided in him, he could not recognize the greatness of Bhima even after seeing him wield the weapon. He then stated that the reason for his friend Manimanta’s killing was the curse of Sage Agastya.

313) Later, when his Asura-avesha went away completely, his mind became calm and he happily offered his house to the Pandavas for them to stay. The Pandavas started living there, as well as in the houses of the other Devatas.

314) Even as the noble Pandavas stayed there happily, four years passed by. Arjuna, who had by then spent five years learning great astras from Indra, requested him to ask for Guru-dakshina.

315-316) Indra asked Arjuna, who was his own Avatara, to kill his enemies the Nivatakavachas. Brahma had granted them a boon saying that they could not be killed by Devatas, Daityas, Gandharvas, Yakshas or even Rakshasas. When Indra had requested (Brahma) again, he had granted him a boon too, asking him to kill them through human form.

317) Therefore, Indra told Arjuna, his own Avatara in human form – “Kill them”. Saying thus, he placed his crown on Arjuna’s head.

Note: Arjuna came to be known as Kiriti after receiving Indra’s divine crown.

318) Partha climbed Indra’s chariot along with Matali and, holding the Gandiva bow, proceeded to slay those great Asuras.

319-320) The Devatas then gave him a conch. That great conch was (named) *Devadatta*. Causing an echo from the sounds of that conch, Arjuna, wearing divine ear-rings given by Indra, twang the Gandiva which led to a loud thunder, and reached the divine city of those Daityas.

321) Hearing the sounds of Arjuna’s conch, and the twang of the Gandiva, the Nivatakavacha Asuras, who were most valorous, came to face him.

322) Those three crore Danavas had bloated egos due to the boon of Brahma. Together, they showered numerous weapons on Partha.

323) Arjuna, who was well decked with a crown and garlands, countered their weapons with great astras powered by his knowledge of divine weapons, discharged excellent arrows from his Gandiva to stop those astras, and chopped their heads off.

324) Those Rakshasas were all killed by that great chariot-warrior Arjuna. After that, he went after sixty thousand great warriors who were known as Pauloma-gana and Kaleya-gana.

325) Even as they were showering astras and other weapons, Arjuna burnt all of them with the Pashupata astra. He returned to Indra loka where Shakra embraced him with great affection.

326) All of those Asuras, who were haters of the Devatas, reached Andhantamas. Later Arjuna obtained the permission of his father and returned to his brothers, seated in the shining chariot of the bearer of the Vajra.

327) Seeing the arrival of Arjuna, the brothers felt great joy. Enjoying their time, they spent a further four years on that mountain.

328) The Pandavas, whose minds were always fixed upon Sri Hari, spent their time happily by listening to stories of Sri Vishnu, and by meditating upon, and worshipping him.

329) “Without destroying enemies, without earning great fame and without following Sri Hari’s orders, Kings will never attain their primary goal”.

330) “For those belonging to other Varnas, forgiving enemies is an important Dharma. For all the Varnas, the primary Dharma is to follow Sri Hari’s orders”.

331) Hearing these words of Bhima, Yudhishtira once again climbed the shoulders of the Rakshasas along with Draupadi and his brothers and left.

332) When the Pandavas were staying on the lower hills of the Himalayas, Bhimasena, the son of Vayu, once went deer hunting with his bow, and came near Nahusha who was in the form of a large python.

333) Earlier, due to the killing of Vrutasura, Indra, the husband of Shachi, hid himself in the stem of a lotus. All the Devatas then conferred amongst themselves and made Nahusha, the son of Ayu, as the lord of the three worlds, after granting him a boon that he would receive the *tapas* and strength of all those whom he stared at.

Note: Indra hid in the stem of a lotus in Lake Manasa Sarovara, in order to hide from the Brahma Hatya Dosha for having killed Vrutasura.

334) That Nahusha obtained every day, a large amount of tapas and strength of all the Suras and best of Brahmanas, and grew immensely. Swelling with pride, he then desired to obtain Shachi too.

335) As per the instructions of Indra, Shachi, in order to cheat him, asked Nahusha to sit in a vehicle carried by a group of great Rishis. Nahusha made the Rishis carry his vehicle.

336) The great Sage Agastya, in order to ensure Nahusha does not force himself upon Shachi, asked him a question about the *pramanya* of the Vedas. His mind being clouded, he replied that the Vedas were not a pramana. When Sage Agastya argued otherwise, he kicked the head of the Rishi.

337) At that moment, Brahma entered inside of Sage Bhrigu, who was all the while hiding inside the matted locks of Sage Agastya and had never been sighted by Nahusha, and cursed him – “O sinner! May you immediately become a python”.

338) “During the sixth part of the day, even those more powerful than you shall come under your grasp. When it becomes impossible to kill such a man, and if that man refuses to release himself even though he is capable, then all the excess tapas and strength you possess shall go to that man”.

339) “The entire tapas belonging to all the Devatas and the best Sages that is presently in you shall go to that man completely. Let there be no dispute about this”.

340) “Whenever a person answers all your questions, you will give up the body of the python and reach Swarga. Due to my grace, you will retain memory of your previous birth always”.

341) When Nahusha was thus cursed by Brahma, who was inside of Sage Bhrigu, he instantly fell down on Earth as a python.

342) Indra too worshipped Sri Vishnu and cleansed his sins and obtained his position again. For Indra, the sin due to the killing of Vrutra became an instrument for increasing punya.

343) How can the killing of Vrutasura, and consequent protection of the world, be a sin for Indra, the ruler of the three worlds? Isn't there a Veda-vakya that says Indra gained immense punya by killing Vrutra?

344) Sometimes it is clear sins too become an instrument for increase of punya. Just like the killing of Vrutra became a reason for increase of Indra's punya.

345) This happens only for Devatas or Sages. For humans, it is never so. For them, paapa is paapa and punya remains punya. Similarly, the punya earned by Asuras sometimes becomes responsible for increase of their sins. So says the Skanda Purana. Therefore, it did not become sin for the husband of Shachi.

346) It is an excellent *vrata* of Devatas to not occupy the position of another (Devata). Therefore, even though they were capable, they seated Nahusha in the position of Indra.

347) In this way, due to the curse of Brahma, Nahusha fell down to Earth and, in the twenty-eighth Mahayuga, Bhimasena recognized Nahusha and knowingly came to him in order to take away his tapas.

348) In order to take away all of his tapas, that originally belonged to the Devatas and Munis, Bhima willingly came under his grasp.

349) When Devatas incarnate as humans, only a part of their strength manifests. However, for Sri Vayu alone, it manifests fully as per his desire. It is not so for the others.

350) It is the purport of Shastras that for Sri Vishnu alone all his qualities manifest fully at all times. Similarly, for humans and others, the rest of the qualities too manifest similarly (in decreased amounts).

351) When Devatas take Avatara as humans, if they do not express their true capabilities in spite of being able to do so, their punya increases and Sri Keshava becomes especially pleased.

352) Therefore, when his humane strength was blocked by the boon of Brahma, Bhimasena did not manifest his divine strength, although he was fully capable of doing so.

353-354) Even though he was extremely capable, Bhima did not answer the questions (of Nahusha). It is not Dharma for even Brahmanas to sustain themselves through (the trading of) education. Therefore, is there a need to say that the same cannot be done by Kshatriyas? Hence, Bhima, although he was knowledgeable, did not desire to free himself by answering the questions of Nahusha.

355) Even though Bhima did not make any explicit attempt, and although the snake was filled with the strength of the entire world, Nahusha could not even move Bhima. He only circled and held him, but could not do anything more.

356) Out of love for his brothers and mother, although Bhima wanted to get freed quickly, he did not make any attempts towards it.

357-359) In order to accept the tapas of all the Devatas and the best amongst Sages towards himself, Bhimasena remained that way, although he knew that he should not stay there for long due to the affection over his brothers and others. He thought that the strength of the python would decrease very soon, due to the orders of Sri Hari and the ruggedness of his own body.

360) At that moment, as per the words of Brahma stated earlier, and as per the orders of Sri Hari, the entire strength and tapas of the Devatas got into Vrikodara.

361) As the tapas and strength of Nahusha got filled in Bhima, slowly Nahusha started losing his strength.

362) When Bhima had departed, Yudhishtira noticed several ill omens and a doubt developed in his mind. He asked Draupadi – “Where has Bhima gone?”

363) Getting to know that he had gone for hunting, Dharmaraja found the path made due to Bhima’s thighs forcefully bringing down big trees and went in the same direction. He noticed Bhima constricted by the python and asked.

364) Yudhishtira heard the reason from Nahusha in its entirety. Out of affection for his brother, he answered all the questions asked by him. Immediately, Nahusha rose to Swarga.

365) As their forefather Nahusha, putting on divine robes and ear-rings, left for Swarga in an aero-plane, Dharmaraja and Bhima returned to their ashrama. There, Dharmaraja narrated all the incidents.

366) Listening to the narration, all the brothers who had extreme devotion towards Bhima, along with the best of the Rishis and Draupadi, became embarrassed after knowing that Bhima was held by the python. Out of friendship towards him, they told him the same too.

Note: The incident caused somewhat of an embarrassment to Draupadi, the Pandavas and the Sages. They told Bhima that they felt so.

367) “Such a daring act is not appropriate. Even though you were capable, you did not attempt to free yourself and thereby caused lot of pain to your close ones”.

368) “Don’t not repeat this” – saying thus, all of them came near Bhima and hugged him. After some days, the Pandavas got together with some of the chief Rishis and left for Dvaita forest, that was near the Kuru country.

369) There, Bhagavan Sri Krishna, the one with unlimited strength, came to meet them along with Satyabhamaa. Worshipped well by the Pandavas, he engaged with them, doing banter on a lot of topics.

370) Satyabhamaa and Draupadi, the two best amongst women, joyfully engaged in conversation. When Satyabhamaa, the omniscient one who is without any defects, asked Draupadi in order to test her, Draupadi replied.

371) Draupadi narrated the entire *Stree-Dharma* to Satyabhamaa, knowing fully well that she was defect-less and omniscient. Teaching the world was the purpose (of that narration).

372) Draupadi was aware that Satyabhamaa’s words were in jest, and replied to her with affection in the same manner.

Note: Satyabhamaa asked Draupadi how she had kept her five husbands under control!

373) Later, Sri Krishna, after staying there for a few days, returned to Dwaraka with Satyabhamaa, after being warmly sent off by the Pandavas.

374) Once, when all the Pandavas were away for hunting, Jayadratha, the King of Sindhu, came to that excellent Ashrama along with Kotikashya and his army. There, he saw Draupadi.

375) Jayadratha, who was on his way to a wedding, sent Kotikashya when he saw Draupadi with a message saying – “Come to me”. When she refused, that evil sinner came forward to grab her hand.

376) When Draupadi shook her hand, that sinner fell down unconscious. He got up and, without shame, rushed to kidnap her. Then, as she was helpless, Draupadi asked Sage Dhaumya to follow her, along with the Agni.

Note: Draupadi asked Sage Dhaumya to carry the *Aupasana* Agni with him.

377) Draupadi climbed his chariot even as she was saying – “You cannot leave in peace now”. The Pandavas noticed several ill omen and immediately returned to the Ashrama.

378) They heard the whole incident from a maid and immediately chased the King of Sindhu. They saw Sage Dhaumya who was shouting – “Bhimasena!”. In front of him, they saw the evil sinner Jayadratha.

379) The Pandavas roared like lions. Seeing them, Draupadi got down from the chariot and returned to the Ashrama along with Sage Dhaumya. The Pandavas then started pounding the army of the Saindhava with great valour.

380) First, Bhimasena beheaded Kotikashya, who had called Draupadi to come to Jayadratha, and sent him to his death. He reached Tamas.

381) Bhima and Arjuna destroyed the entire army of the Saindhava. They sent back Dharmaraja, Nakula and Sahadeva and chased the escaping Jayadratha. Arjuna rendered him chariot-less.

382) When he started running on his feet, Bhimasena caught him and rendered a few blows. He went into great sorrow, even as Bhima brought him to Draupadi’s feet. The son of Dharma released him.

383) “I am Draupadi’s servant” – Bhima released him after making him say so. He went away to the forest, fully embarrassed. The Pandavas started living there with great joy.

384) Then, Sage Markandeya came to the Pandavas and told them numerous stories. Those stories were varied, and were composed of the three types of Bhashas.

Note: The three types of Bhashas are Guhya, Darshana and Samadhi.

385) Relying upon the face value of the incidents, Devatas and Sages narrate stories. Only the essence of those stories are to be grasped. The superficial stories are never to be accepted.

386-387) In the ‘Samadhi’ Bhasha, all the meanings are acceptable. There is no doubt. In the ‘Darshana’ Bhasha that corresponds to other philosophies, only the fact that those philosophies are such and such are to be accepted. The interpretations are not to be considered as truth. The Vedic Darshana is of course always acceptable. In the Guhya Bhasha, the main purport is the one that is hidden and is to be interpreted and accepted. This is the key to understanding Bhashas.

388) Jayadratha, whose hair was cut off by Bhimasena, except for five tufts, performed a penance to please Shiva and asked for a boon to be able to stop the Pandavas. Shiva, being pleased with Arjuna’s penance, granted him a boon that he would be able to stop all of them (for a day) except Arjuna.

389) Even as the Pandavas were in the forest, Duryodhana performed a Yajna known as the Paundarika, out of competition with them. That Yajna was not equivalent to even a fraction of the Rajasuya.

390) As per Duryodhana’s orders, Dushasana sent a messenger to the Pandavas in order to insult them and told them – “Come (to the Yajna)”. Bhimasena sent a reply – “We shall come without fail to the Yajna that is war”.

391) After a few days, the Kauravas held a ill-intentioned discussion with Karna and Shakuni, and in order to display their great wealth to the Pandavas and Draupadi and insult them, proceeded along with their wives.

392) Accompanied by chariots decked with gold and precious stones, excellent elephants, horses and foot-soldiers, they put on attractive dresses and garlands and decorated themselves well, and quickly proceeded towards the Dvaita forest.

393) Getting to know that they have made an excuse of watching cows, and desiring to break their pride, Indra sent Chitrasena after granting him a boon to possess the necessary strength to arrest them.

Note: Chitrasena was a Gandharva.

394) Chitrasena proceeded to the lake where Duryodhana desired to take bath, along with an army of sixty thousand crores, and the best Gandharvas. As per the orders of Duryodhana, his assistants told the Gandharvas thus.

395) “The King of Kings, Duryodhana, is soon to come here for taking bath. You people need to get out of this Tirtha. Obey his orders” – when they said thus, the Gandharvas laughed loudly.

396) They replied – “Devendra is the lord of the three worlds. We will obey (only) his orders dutifully. We do not listen to the words of even Emperors amongst humans. What then to say about the orders of this lowly hero Duryodhana”.

397) When they spoke thus, an angered Duryodhana started attacking those excellent Gandharvas with a shower of arrows. Karna and the Kaurava brothers also started attacking them. In turn, the Gandharvas too hit back at Duryodhana’s army.

398) For a duration of one muhurtha, the battle between the Gandharvas and Duryodhana went equal. After that, due to the boon of Indra, and due to the *maya* of the brave Gandharvas, their strength started to increase.

399) Brahma and Vishnu, for the sake of the Pandavas, had granted strength to those Gandharvas to destroy the pride of Duryodhana. They faced the Kauravas.

400) At first, Chitrasena fought against Karna. Fighting with a sense of competition against Arjuna in mind, Karna failed to win against him, due to the words of Sri Parashurama, the one with the six auspicious attributes.

Note: Sri Parashurama had cursed Karna that he would lose in any battle where he engaged with a sense of one-upmanship or competition against Arjuna.

401) Karna, who was rendered chariot-less, climbed the chariot of Vikarna and, driving his horses, ran away from there along with Vikarna. Duryodhana engaged in a duel with Chitrasena.

402) For a muhurtha, Duryodhana fought an equal battle with Chitrasena and the numerous Gandharvas. Due to the *maya* of the Gandharvas, his chariot was destroyed. Chitrasena then captured him even as he stood on the ground.

403) Although Duryodhana was extremely powerful, due to the boon of Indra, and due to Sri Vishnu's orders, Chitrasena had accumulated lot of strength to which Duryodhana fell prisoner. He also got arrested by the electric shackles given (to Chitrasena) by Indra.

404) His brothers, Shakuni and royal wives were all taken prisoners by Indra's assistants. When Chitrasena left through the route of the skies along with them, the ministers (of Duryodhana) went to the Pandavas in a desperate condition.

405) They came to the Pandavas and said – "Your clan has been defeated by Indra's assistants. Duryodhana has been captured along with his brothers and wives. You, being the best of the Bharatas, should get your brother released".

406-407) When they spoke thus, Bhimasena addressed his older brother – "O King! I know how this confrontation took place. Duryodhana came here to display his wealth to us. In order to harm his glory, Indra, the bearer of the Vajra, has done this, after realizing his evil intentions. There is nothing that has gone wrong for us in this". Showing his divine ability in this way, Bhima went silent.

408) Dharmaraja, who was engaged in a Yajna lasting a full day, sent Bhima and Arjuna along with Nakula and Sahadeva. The two of them (Bhima and Arjuna) defeated Chitrasena in battle and quickly released Duryodhana.

409) Chitrasena then narrated all the evil designs of Duryodhana, as told by Indra, to Bhima and Partha. Hearing the same, Duryodhana felt extremely embarrassed.

410) All of them reached Dharmaraja, who was approaching them after completing the Yajna. Dharmaraja sent off Chitrasena after according him respect, and told Duryodhana – "Do not repeat this, O Duryodhana!".

411) Having been released by the Pandavas, along with his family and wives, Duryodhana went a little further from there and, out of great shame, sat down waiting for everyone to gather. Then, he saw Karna.

412) He told Duryodhana – "O King! Providence has ensured you won". Duryodhana felt ashamed and said no. He narrated all that had happened. Later, out of extreme grief, he sat down, intending to give up his life.

413) Even after Karna, Dushashana, the gambler Shakuni and others requested him repeatedly, Duryodhana refused to give up his resolve and get up.

414) As night set in, the Asuras held a discussion, noticing that their side had been weakened, and created a *Daitya-shakti* (evil force) by performing a *homa*.

415) That evil being, which was created by Sage Shukracharya, lifted Duryodhana and took him to *Patala*, even as all of his ministers were asleep.

416-417) Later all the Asuras convinced Duryodhana in multiple ways – “You are a divine being. A brave soul. We pleased Shiva through penance and that resulted in you being made. You are on our side, and are invincible always. The Pandavas belong to the Devatas”.

418) “Due to the boons of all Devatas, you lost in the battle. We will (now) ensure that you win against the Pandavas”.

419) “Narakasura, who was killed by Krishna, has now entered Karna. He will surely ensure Krishna and Arjuna are no more. There is no doubt about this”.

420) “All of us shall enter Bhishma and the others, to ensure your victory. We will increase Karna’s and your strength through our tapas”.

421) “O King! Therefore go back and rule the Kingdom without fear. This is of utmost secrecy and will increase your fortune. Do not reveal this to anyone”.

422-423) Stating thus, they sent back Duryodhana, through that *Kshudra Devata*, to the place from where he was brought. Believing that his upper torso was made by Shiva, and the lower part by Parvati, Duryodhana convinced himself to be invincible and decided to rule the Kingdom. He did not reveal his experiences to anyone else.

424-425) In the morning, Karna spoke again – “Since you have been released through your servants, the Pandavas themselves, your fame has actually increased in the world. Is it necessary to state how great you are when your servants themselves are thus? Therefore, O best amongst Kings! Arise! Be firm in your decision”.

426) “Give up your concerns with regard to Arjuna. Listening to what I am about to say. Till I kill Arjuna, I shall wash my legs myself”.

Note: It was custom for Kings to have their servants wash their feet. Karna undertook a pledge to wash his feet himself till he kills Arjuna (which never happened).

427) When Karna said thus, and when Shakuni and his brothers requested him similarly, Duryodhana climbed his chariot and speedily went to Hastinapura.

428) Knowing that Karna could not be killed till he possessed his ear-rings and *kavacha*, Indra desired to take away those excellent accessories.

429) Getting to know of this (intention of Indra), Surya revealed the same to Karna in his dream and asked him not to hand them over. When Karna said – “I will definitely give it”, he replied – “In that case, obtain that best weapon from Indra in return”.

Note: Surya asked Karna to ask for, and obtain, the amazing *Shakti*.

430) Even though Karna knew Indra had come to him in the guise of a Brahmana to obtain Daana, he cut the ear-rings and kavacha from his body and handed them over. In return, he obtained the extraordinary *Shakti* from him.

431) Indra gave him the Shakti weapon, told him that he would be able to kill one person apart from Arjuna using it, and returned with his ear-rings and kavacha.

432) The Pandavas, after freeing Duryodhana, lived happily in that forest. Getting to know that a deer had taken away the firesticks (*arani*) and the holding vessel of a Brahmana, they chased it.

433) When they could not locate the deer, they felt thirsty. Apart from Dharmaraja, the others went to fetch water, one after the other. Due to the *maya* of Yama, all of them fell into deep sleep.

434) Yama, being invisible, stopped them. All of them drank water (without answering him). In order to protect the Dharma of Kshatriyas, those great destroyers of enemies did not answer his questions in exchange for water, although they were fully capable.

435) It is not Dharma for even Brahmanas to trade their knowledge for the sake of livelihood. What then to say of Kshatriyas? Therefore they drank water forcing their way through.

436) Apart from Sri Hari, the other Devatas, when they are born as humans, behave like normal humans, even though they are extremely powerful.

437) Only when an occasion arises, their auspicious qualities manifest externally. Therefore, Bhima and Arjuna, although more powerful than Yama, were put to sleep in an instant by him, due to the wishes of Paramatma.

438) That divine *maya* is capable of taking effect on them for only a muhurtha. Once they wake up, Yama is not equal to even one-hundredth of the strength of Bhima and Arjuna.

439) All of this has been stated in the Padma Purana in great detail. Therefore, one should not doubt incapability in Bhima or Arjuna.

440) Later, Dharmaraja came near that body of water. There, seeing his brothers, he suffered in sorrow. When he desired to drink that water, Yama, in the form of a crane, stopped him. He therefore did not drink it.

441) The compassionate Yudhishtira desired to answer the questions of that crane, for the sake of his brothers. Later, Yama started asking him questions after taking the guise of a Yaksha. Dharmaraja answered them.

442) Then, Yama became very happy and gave him a boon that he would bring to life one among his brothers. Dharma said – “In case only one would wake up, let it be Nakula”. Yama, out of joy, asked him – “What are you doing?”

443) “You have great love for Bhimasena. He is strong, and is also the reason for you obtaining the Kingdom” – when Yama said thus, Dharmaraja replied – “It is inappropriate to wake up the son of Kunti leaving out the son of Madri”.

444) When he replied thus, Yama became very pleased and woke all of them up. He also gave them boons allowing them to take guises as they wish, and to return to their original forms when required.

445) Being pleased with Dharmaraja's attribute of compassion, he gave them a boon saying that they would remain incognito during the Ajnatavasa. In this way, Yama sportingly engaged with himself as though he was with his son, and increased his own fame and *punya*.

446) Having taken away the firesticks and created the other incidents in order to increase the fame and *punya* of his own form of Yudhishtira, Yama gave it back so it could be handed over to the Brahmana, and then returned to his *loka*.

447) Later Dharmaraja went along with Bhima, Arjuna and the twins and handed over the firesticks to the Brahmana. Joined together by Draupadi, all of them were happy and spent time chanting the glory of Sri Krishna, the one who is eternal and without a trace of any defect.

|| End of chapter 22, known as 'Arani Prapti', from the Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya, composed by Srimadanandatirtha Bhagavatpada ||

|| Sri Krishnarpanamastu ||