

|| Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya ||

- 1) Later, after discussions and having obtained the permission of Sri Krishna, King Drupada sent his *purohita* to Dhritharashtra for negotiations.
- 2) Drupada's *purohita* went to Hastinapura and addressed Dhritharashtra, who was seated along with Bhishma, Drona and the others. He said – "It is not good for you to oppose Dharmaraja".
- 3) "Bhima and Arjuna are the warriors-in-chief for Yudhisthira. Sri Krishna is their leader. You have anyways heard the news of Jarasandha and others being killed by Bhima".
- 4-5) "Due to the boon of invincibility from Shiva, three crore great Rakshasas had occupied all the Tirthakshetras and were causing obstacles for Tirthayatras. Bhimasena, desiring the welfare of his brothers, the Brahmanas and the entire world, killed all those brave ones. Due to this, all the Tirthakshetras on Earth are now approachable by humans".
- 6) "The sinner Jatasura had become invincible by taking refuge in the boon of Parvati. By putting on the guise of a Brahmana, he stayed with the Pandavas, all the while cheating them".
- 7-9) "In spite of knowing that he was an Asura, Bhima had not killed him as he was appearing as a Brahmana. Once, when Bhima had gone hunting, he captured Dharmaraja, the twins and Draupadi, and started running. When he saw Bhima, he released them and started battling Bhima. Pulling him down on the ground, Bhima crushed his head with his foot. He departed to Andhantamas. (This being the case,) Should I explicitly say he (Bhima) is capable of slaying your sons? You would have also heard that the Nivachakavachas were killed by Arjuna".
- 10) "On the other hand, you anyways know the capability of Sri Hari. This entire world, including sentient and insentient beings, along with Brahma, Shiva, Indra and the others are all under his control".
- 11) "Therefore you return back the wealth to Dharmaraja, who is looked after by these people". Even when he spoke thus, Dhritharashtra did not do as requested.
- 12) Later both Arjuna and Duryodhana left at the same time to meet Sri Krishna, who had left for Dwaravati along with the Yadavas, in order to seek help for the war. Duryodhana outpaced Arjuna.
- 13) "I being the King of Kings cannot sit by the feet" – thinking thus Duryodhana sat near the head of Sri Krishna, with great ego.
- 14) Sri Krishna, being the omniscient and all-capable one, knew of their impending arrival. Although being the one without sleep, he acted as if he was sleeping. Arjuna bowed to Sri Krishna's feet and, out of excessive Bhakti, stood near his feet with folded hands.
- 15) Lord Sri Krishna, although he knew Duryodhana had arrived first, saw Arjuna and said – "Arjuna! Welcome!". When he said thus, Duryodhana spoke – "I came here first". Sri Krishna welcomed him too and offered him hospitality.
- 16-17) Getting to know of the reason for their arrival, Sri Krishna said – "One of you came first. (But) I saw the other one first. Therefore, I shall offer equal help to both of you. On one side it shall be me without any weapons. On the other side will be ten lakh brave sons of mine as soldiers".

- 18) When Sri Krishna said thus, Arjuna selected Sri Krishna himself. This was due to his deep Bhakti in him. Duryodhana, being devotion-less, selected the sons (Gopas) of Sri Krishna who would take part in battle.
- 19) Although Sri Krishna would help only the Pandavas, he acted as if he would treat both of them equally in order to show (the world) that Duryodhana had no Bhakti in him. Later, Sri Krishna proceeded towards the Pandavas, along with Arjuna.
- 20) Duryodhana went to Balarama. Although he possessed friendship towards him, Balarama said “I cannot help you” due to fear of Sri Krishna.
- 21) At Upaplavya when Balarama had spoken in support of Duryodhana in the gathering, Satyaki had refuted him in front of Sri Krishna himself.
- 22) Therefore, he did not go with Duryodhana. Along with Krutavarma, Duryodhana left for Hastinapura. Bringing together the Kings of many nations, Duryodhana gathered an army of eleven Akshouhinis.
- 23) The army of the Pandavas became seven Akshouhinis in size as Virata, Drupada, Kekaya, Dhrishtaketu, Sahadeva – the son of Jarasandha and the King of Kashi joined them.
- 24) Purujit, Kuntibhoja, Chekitana, Satyaki and all the others who were on the side of the Devas moved towards the Pandavas along with their armies.
- 25-27) Vinda and Anuvinda from the Avanti country, Jayatsena, the other Kekayas, Kshemadhoorti, Dandadhara, Kalinga, Ambashta, Shrutayu, Achyutayu, Bruhadbala, Sudakshina, Shrutayudha, Jayadratha, the Rakshasas Alambusha, Alayudha and Alambala and all the other Daityas took the side of Duryodhana. Since he was personally invited by Duryodhana, Bhagadatta joined him.
- 28) Bahlika along with his sons and grandsons, Bhishma, Drona and Kripa joined Duryodhana in order to please Dhritharashtra. Veerasena, the King of Pandya country, took the side of the Pandavas.
- 29) Learning of Shalya’s march towards the Pandava camp, Duryodhana arranged excellent rest houses throughout the route, all of which were full of material luxuries.
- 30) Assuming that Yudhishtira had arranged all of those, Shalya said – “I shall fulfill the desire of the one who has arranged these”.
- 31) Listening to those words, the hiding Duryodhana came out and said – “Make your words come true. Help me in the war”. Shalya, in order to increase his fame, and to keep his word, said – “May it be so”.
- 32) Later Shalya went to the Pandavas and obtained their consent. When Dharmaraja asked him to denigrate Karna for the sake of Arjuna, he said yes and went to the Kaurava camp.
- 33) Later Dhritharashtra sent Sanjaya to the Pandavas in order to negotiate. Sanjaya argued that it was against Dharma to engage in war.
- 34) In the intense debate that ensued, Dharmaraja spoke about the Dharma that Bhima and Draupadi had taught him (in the forest) and rendered Sanjaya speechless. Sri Krishna too spoke about the genuineness of war.

35) Sanjaya, who could not counter the arguments, bowed to Sri Krishna and the Pandavas and returned to Dhritrashtra. Having returned that way, he berated Dhritrashtra and went home.

36) Having been insulted that way by Sanjaya, Dhritrashtra called Vidura at night and asked him questions about Dharma. Then, Vidura advised him that it was Dharma to hand over the Kingdom to the Parthas.

37) "Handing over the Kingdom to the Pandavas will ensure happiness in this world. It will also avoid condemnation. If you do not do so, Dharma will be violated and it will lead to the destruction of all your sons".

38) Not inclining towards that, Dhritrashtra, in order to rid himself of the sin of hating Pandavas by obtaining the knowledge of Brahman, asked him the truth about Sri Vishnu. Vidura then remembered Sage Sanatana.

39) Sage Sanatsujata arrived there and instructed him about the essence of Sri Vishnu. He also told him that a charlatan would never attain Sadgati. The next day, in the morning gathering, Sanjaya conveyed the message of the Pandavas in front of all the Kauravas.

Note: Sanatsujata was also known by the name of Sanatana.

40-41) Listening to it, Dhritrashtra, although overcome by fear, did not hand over the Kingdom out of attachment towards his son. King Yudhishthira had earlier told Sanjaya – "If our father is ready to hand over the Kingdom, you or Vidura may come here. Otherwise there is no need".

42-43) Noticing that the two of them did not arrive, he conducted discussions with Sri Krishna. Then, Sri Shouris said – "I shall go. Amidst all Rishis in that gathering, I shall speak appropriately. If he still doesn't accept them, then Duryodhana would become deserving of being killed in the eyes of all people, for having betrayed Dharma".

44) When Sri Krishna spoke thus, Bhimasena, in order to prevent the accusation of having started the enmity, spoke thus in order to teach all others.

45) "Because of my excuse, let our lineage not get destroyed. In order to protect our clan, we shall walk below Duryodhana".

46) Although he had firmly decided to slay all the Kauravas, Bhimasena spoke in this fashion desiring to show the way of the world.

47) Appearing to object to Bhima, Sri Krishna motivated him for war, in order to show the world that the destruction of the Kauravas was Dharma indeed.

48) Having understood the mentality of Sri Krishna, Bhima then narrated his real capabilities in front of the Kings. Sri Krishna endorsed it by saying that his strength was much more.

49) Amidst those Kings, Sri Krishna illuminated the facts, through excellent truth-revealing words, that the killing of Kauravas was excellent Dharma, and that the qualities of Bhima were unlimited.

50) Sri Krishna and Bhima possessed similar attitude always (on all matters). However, in order to cause everyone to firmly believe this, the two of them engaged in such an artificial debate.

Note: Through this staged debate, Sri Krishna and Bhima convinced everyone that the two of them had the same outlook towards all matters regarding Dharma.

51) Later Sri Krishna calmed down Arjuna, who wanted peace, through auspicious words filled with reasoning and logic. Nakula then spoke like a strategist, thinking of him, the lord of the world (Sri Krishna), as a mere mortal.

52) Sahadeva then asked for the war to be arranged, wanting to show his valour. Satyaki too gave the same suggestion.

53) Draupadi then said to Sri Krishna – “It is the foremost Dharma of Kshatriyas to bring Dasyus under control. Therefore, there should never be an agreement with the Kauravas”. Sri Krishna too gave her his word saying “May it be so” and left.

54) Sri Krishna, who sat in an excellent chariot along with Satyaki, was escorted by the Pandavas and other Kings for a very long distance. Sri Krishna then stopped them with his words and went to meet the Kauravas, along with the best of Brahmanas.

55) Along with the Sages, Sri Hari in the form of Parashurama and Vyasa also accompanied him and proceeded (towards Hastinapura). Although he is the same Vishnu (in all three forms), it isn't possible for anyone else apart from him to understand the infinite qualities of his words.

56) Throughout the way, Sri Krishna was worshipped by the citizens of the country. Brahma and the other Devatas showered flowers on him and bowed to him and praised him profusely. Sri Krishna, the one beyond the grasp of knowledge and the supreme one, reached Hastinapura.

57) Sri Krishna was received with great devotion by Bhishma and the others. He walked along with them on the royal pathway. Desiring to see Sri Krishna, the most beautiful one on Earth and the ocean of auspicious attributes, all the citizens rushed there.

58) Being offered great respect filled with devotion by all of them, the eternal one went to Dhritrashtra's house. Led by Bhishma and others, Dhritrashtra performed special worship of Sri Krishna. Being seated on a golden throne, he was radiant, illuminating all the directions with his shine.

59) Conducting appropriate interaction with all of them, Sri Krishna went to Duryodhana's house. He too offered respects to Sri Krishna. But he rejected that worship as Duryodhana was the enemy of the noble Pandavas. He proceeded to Vidura's house.

60) In spite of repeated requests from Bhishma and others, Sri Krishna, the primordial lord, did not go to their houses. Their neglect of Draupadi was the reason behind this. The indiscernible one immediately proceeded to Vidura's house.

61) Being very pleased with the devotion filled welcome of Vidura, Sri Krishna entered his house. Vidura worshipped him with great excitement and with full devotion, and offered him everything.

62) The next day, Duryodhana escorted Sri Krishna to the gathering of the Kauravas. Being seated amidst the best of the Sages on a gem-studded golden divine seat, Sri Krishna put forth (his proposal).

63) Sri Krishna, the reliever of Kali's influence and the one with lotus-eyes, was worshipped well by Bhishma and the others and appeared radiant. After exchanging appropriate pleasantries with them, he spoke at the appropriate time.

64) "O Dhritrashtra! For the sake of your family's welfare, hand over the Kingdom to your son Dharmaraja. Only then will you gather fame, punya and my foremost grace".

65) "If you do not do so, you will lose fame and punya. And you will become my opponent" – when Sri Krishna spoke thus, Dhritrashtra replied – "You yourself advise my son as he always violates my words".

66) In spite of being advised especially by Sri Vasudeva, the evil-minded Duryodhana got up along with his brothers and ministers and made up his mind to imprison the all-mighty Sri Krishna.

67) All those who thought about imprisoning Sri Krishna at that moment were the opponents of Devatas. Therefore, all of them, including Vikarna, became fit for being slayed. They voided themselves of an auspicious ending.

68) Karna, although being the personification of a Devata, possessed the Avesha of an Asura and engaged in that plan for the sake of Duryodhana. By character he was not evil. Therefore, he obtained a noble after-life. All those who acted in accordance with Sri Krishna there were of noble character.

69-70) In spite of being advised by Rishis, Sri Parashurama, Sri Vyasa – the one possessing unlimited *tejas*, Sri Krishna, his parents and Bhishma and the others, the evil-minded Duryodhana went ahead with his plan to arrest Sri Krishna.

71) Satyaki and Krutavarma heard the plan of arresting Sri Krishna very clearly. Satyaki made Krutavarma stand elsewhere and met Sri Krishna alone and informed him of Duryodhana's evil thinking.

72) Sri Krishna, although omniscient, heard that plan from the mouth of Satyaki and told the son of Vichitravirya – "Watch my omnipresent form".

73) Then, as Dhritrashtra called Duryodhana along with his ministers over there, Sri Krishna, the best amongst men showed his all-pervading form that was full of the six auspicious attributes.

Note: Sri Mahavishnu is *shad-guna-poorna* – full of six auspicious qualities – dominion, might, glory, splendor, wisdom, and dispassion

74) As soon as that amazing form of Sri Krishna, that was bright like the Sun at the time of dissolution, being full of unlimited radiance, bearing the entire Universe, eternal and one that could not be understood fully was seen, Duryodhana and the others closed their eyes, being unable to bear the intensity of the radiance.

75) Sri Krishna took back his Vishwaroopa. After Dhritarashtra pleaded with him a lot, he made him blind as earlier. After showing the whole world that Duryodhana and his followers were great sinners, he left.

76) Although Sri Krishna, the one with unlimited strength and the best amongst all sentient beings, was fully capable of inspiring Duryodhana to follow his advice, he did not do so. He caused him to fall into Andhantamas.

77) Sri Krishna went to Kunti's house again and listened to her message for Dharmaraja. He got Karna into his chariot and left. Narrating to him the incidents surrounding his birth, he told him – "Come to the side of Pandavas". Having received great affection from the Kauravas, Karna did not heed his words.

78) Bhagavan Sri Krishna left Karna there and met Ashwathama in solitude and advised him to be friendly with the Pandavas. Ashwathama replied that he would go soft on them until his father was alive. Sri Krishna bid him farewell and, having taken leave of the Kauravas earlier itself, returned to the Pandavas.

79) Although Kunti repeatedly requested him saying – "You are my son. Join the Pandavas" Karna did not agree and, in turn, gave her his word saying – "Apart from Arjuna, I shall not kill any other son of yours".

80) Desirous of battling (each other), both the Pandavas and the Kauravas left for Kurukshetra, along with Sri Krishna and erected their camps. The Pandavas, as instructed by Sri Krishna, put up their camps at an auspicious place.

|| End of chapter 24, known as 'Yuddhodyoga', from the Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya, composed by Srimadanandatirtha Bhagavatpada ||

|| Sri Krishnarpanamastu ||