

|| Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya ||

1) The two Krishnas – Vasishtha Krishna and Yadava Krishna – consecrated Dharmaraja as the Emperor and Bhimasena as the crown-prince in the presence of Vipras. They made them happy through their blessings.

2) At that moment, an extremely evil Rakshasa, known as Charvaka, appeared as a Tridandi Sanyasi and condemned Yudhishthira saying – “Brahmanas are berating you”.

3) Listening to those words, Dharmaraja became sorrowful. Seeing this, Vipras cursed that Charvaka saying – “You are saying that we berated him even when we have not done so. Therefore may you be burnt to ashes immediately”. As soon as they said thus, that great sinner was burnt to ashes.

4-5) When that charlatan in the guise of a Sanyasi was burnt thus, Sri Krishna, the best amongst the Vrishnis, told a sorrowful Dharmaraja – “He was not a Yati. He was a great sinner who was always engaged in cruel acts. He was a lowly Rakshasa who was a friend of Duryodhana. He has now been killed by the Munis. Therefore, do not grieve. You have done whatever you had to do”. When he spoke thus, Yudhishthira gathered a little comfort and donated wealth to Brahmanas with devotion and pleased them.

6) Dharmaraja provided comfort to his relatives, citizens, refugees and the others. He gave them wealth abundantly. He took care of them like his children.

7) Dharmaraja thought about the killing of Bhishma, Drona, Karna and Duryodhana and, burning with regret, decided to give up his Kingship.

8) When his brothers, Draupadi and Brahmanas advised him regarding Dharma, he still (refused and) asked Bhima not to advise him. To Arjuna, he said – “You do not know”.

**Note:** Dharmaraja considered Arjuna as not possessing enough knowledge about Dharma and hence told him the same.

9) When Arjuna became angry, the Brahmanas told the King – “Arjuna knows the truth about Dharma more than you. He is Indra’s Avatara”. Even after listening to this, he did not give up his concerns about (the right) Dharma.

10-12) Dharmaraja kept thinking that all of their advice regarding the act being Dharma was arising out of affection for him. Sri Vyasa and Sri Krishna repeatedly said to him “It is Dharma indeed” using Shastra and logic. Yet he did not develop a firm mind. Then, the two of them, being the best amongst men and without any change, told him – “Bhishma can never be doubted by you since he belongs to the enemy camp. Therefore, go to him”.

**Note:** Sri Vyasa and Sri Krishna are described as ‘Purushottama’ and ‘Avyaya’ – the best amongst all who never undergo any deformation or change, with respect to time, space or attributes.

13) Dharmaraja got together with the two of them (Sri Vyasa and Sri Krishna), his brothers and with many Sages and went to (meet) Bhishma. When he felt shame, Sri Krishna spoke to Bhishma.

**Note:** Bhishma obtained that state of being on the bed of arrows due to the Pandavas. Hence Dharmaraja felt greatly embarrassed now to approach him and ask for moral guidance.

14) When Bhishma instructed him to ask, Dharmaraja put forth all questions very appropriately. Sri Krishna himself, being present inside of Bhishma, instructed all the Dharmas.

15) Bhishma then requested Sri Krishna – “O Lord! It is you who must instruct the Pandavas about Dharma. What ability do I possess to teach them?”

16) Sri Krishna then said – “In order to ensure your fame, I shall be present inside you and teach all the Dharmas and subtle truths”.

17) “It is appropriate and the main duty for a King to adhere to Bhagavata Dharma. For that sake, even killing evil is appropriate. All other Dharmas that are dear to Paramatma are also allowed”.

18-23) “Worshipping Sri Hari always with one’s *manas*, words and deeds. Knowing with conviction that Sri Vishnu possesses complete and infinite auspicious attributes and that he alone is independent while all others are always under his control. Understanding the hierarchy of Devatas. Not worshipping any other Devata as the Supreme Being apart from Sri Hari. Always worshipping other Devatas knowing them to be devotees of Sri Hari. Never engaging in unproductive work. Always giving up attachment over results of any action. Not opposing Sri Hari or his devotees ever. Taking the sides of the superior ones whenever a dispute arises between devotees of Sri Hari. Undertaking those activities without fail, those which are dear to Sri Vishnu and his devotees, and doing them well. Not performing any activity that is not liked by Sri Hari or his devotees, even if it is Dharma. Taking the side of the majority of Vaishnavas whenever there is equal contention between two sides – all of these are to be understood as being Bhagavata Dharma applicable to everyone”.

24) “For a Brahmana, imparting knowledge of the truth is the *vishesha* Dharma. Apart from his own wife and children, it is Dharma for him not to punish others. For them too (wife and children) no injury must occur nor must the pain last long”.

25) “Brahmanas and Vaishyas must not impose fines. On the issue of physical punishment, the rules for Vaishyas and others is the same as that of the Brahmanas”.

26-27) “An excellent Brahmana must subsist on materials that are obtained without effort, or through *bhiksha*, or through that which his *shishyas* bring to him seeking *bhiksha*. Under duress he can subsist through *kshatriya-dharma* and under great duress he can subsist through *vaishya-dharma*. *Kshatriyas* must obtain materials (tax) from all except Devatas and Brahmanas and subsist by ruling over them. He can forcefully take tax from enemy *Kshatriyas*”

28) “He should protect Dharma through *Sama* and *Dana* always. In the end he can achieve it through *Danda* also. Except for the benefit of noble men, he should never run away from battle”.

29) “Agriculture, trade, protection of cows and dealing in interest (finance) are the chief occupation of *Vaishyas*. For *Shudras*, employment in service of the other three *varnas* is the main duty. The others should conduct themselves as per their ancestors”.

30) “The devotees of Sri Hari, amongst the Brahmanas and in the order of the *varnas*, are worthy of worship. Even if one is higher in *varna*, he is not worthy of great respect if he is not excellent in his devotion to Sri Hari”.

31) "Even if one is lower in varna, if he is a devotee of Sri Hari, he must be given respect through various means, except for prostrating at his feet. Wherever there is excellent devotion towards Sri Hari, respect must be accorded".

32) "When a knowledgeable Brahmana is not available, even a Kshatriya can impart knowledge, after taking due permission from a Brahmana. When Kshatriyas are not around, Vaishyas can do so. In case of extreme situations, even a Shudra can impart knowledge".

33) "Since Shruthi says that when the four varnas are without knowledge, those outside cannot become knowledgeable, the question of one outside the varna granting knowledge does not arise".

34-35) "Women belonging to the three varnas must gain all knowledge apart from the Vedas. Women and men must stay loyal to each other. Even thinking of uniting with a woman who is higher in attributes ensures the road to Tamas. Desiring to unite the wives of those who are higher in *guna* leads to loss of *gunas*. For women, union with men who are lower than their husbands leads to great sin, that increases as the difference increases. It is sinful when others are desired too".

36-37) "For women who are very high in the hierarchy, study of all Vedas too is must, like others (men). Devata women and wives of Rishis are excellent even when they are born in the wombs of humans. The best amongst Shudras too must study books of knowledge, apart from the Vedas, through others. For all others, the chanting of Sri Hari's name is mandatory".

38-40) "Thinking of anyone as greater than Sri Vishnu or anyone as equal to him. Thinking of Brahma, Rudra and others as same due to minor differences in their attributes. Thinking of non-difference of these Devatas with Sri Vishnu. Thinking of differences between Sri Vishnu and his qualities. Thinking of differences between the Avatars of Sri Vishnu. Thinking of Sri Vishnu as possessing material body in his Avatars. Thinking of ignorance, sorrow, weakness and other such defects in Sri Vishnu. Incorrect understanding of hierarchy amongst his devotees – All of these lead to guaranteed Tamas".

41) "He who opposes either Sri Vishnu or his devotee through his thoughts, words or deeds and he who thinks of anything as not being under the control of Sri Vishnu – such a person shall attain Tamas".

42) "He who thinks of Sri Vishnu as being under the control of others; He who does not realize Sri Vishnu is complete in all aspects; He who is not a devotee of Sri Vishnu – such a person shall definitely attain Tamas".

43) "Those who harbour doubts about *Tattva* shall attain Naraka due to such defects. If they possess multiple *gunas* they shall not attain Andhantamas".

44) "Those who possess *gunas* and *doshas* in equal measure keep getting born as humans again and again. Remaining thus till their defects are destroyed, they then attain higher states increasingly".

45) "Once all defects are destroyed, one gets Mukti due to increase in devotion and knowledge, both of which are commensurate with one's inherent ability (Swabhava). Noble deeds fetch Swarga. Sinful acts are destroyed by the words of Sri Vishnu or his devotees".

**Note:** Once sins are destroyed, the increase in knowledge and devotion is not unlimited. Each jeeva gets knowledge and devotion that is a reflection of the jeeva's inherent Swabhava. Higher jeevas like Brahma, Vayu, Rudra get more knowledge and devotion in Sri Hari than lower jeevas.

46) Sri Vishnu, by being present inside Bhishma, taught these and other secrets of Dharma to the Pandavas. Having listened to the same, the son of Dharma asked his brothers and Vidura which among the three out of Dharma, Artha and Kama was the greater *Purushartha*.

47) Vidura opined that Dharma was the best (purushartha) while Artha was average and Kama, being non-productive, was lowly. Arjuna claimed Artha to be the best.

48) "Artha is of two types – Daiva (divine) and Maanusha (humanly). Knowledge is divine wealth. Money, gold and others are humanly wealth".

49) "Dharma is *madhyama* (neither excellent nor low). Vidya is both a goal and an instrument for Dharma. Mukti too is obtained through Vidya".

50) "The humanly (or material) wealth can become an instrument for Vidya when utilized in the right way. Due to (the right utilization of) such wealth, a Guru can become pleased and facilitate Moksha".

**Note:** Material wealth must be always utilized for noble reasons such as pleasing Gurus and elders. This will lead to them gracing us and facilitating the attainment of Moksha.

51) "Even if wealth is unknowingly utilized for Dharma, Gurus and Devatas shall be pleased. Dharma that is undertaken without the desire of (specific) results also follows wealth only".

52) "Therefore, Artha is what possesses superiority. Since Kama is non-productive it is inferior". The twins too, being great scholars, approved of what Arjuna said.

**Note:** Nakula and Sahadeva agreed with Arjuna's assessment.

53) Then, Bhimasena, the best amongst great knowers of truth, addressed everyone energetically and with a smile and said – "There is no other Purushartha greater than Kama. How then can it be inferior?"

54) "Scholars term desire as Kama. Purusharthas and their results are desirable hence Kama is superior indeed. That which is not desirable can never be a Purushartha. Isn't it known as Purushartha since it is desired by Purushas?"

**Note:** The basic commonality between all four Purusharthas is that jeevas desire to attain them. Hence *ishtha* (desire) which is another name for Kama is the underlying requirement for even the other Purusharthas. It therefore cannot be inferior. Quite the opposite actually!

55) "Knowledge, devotion and other qualities act as instruments for Purushartha. But, they cannot be such instruments if detached from desire. Therefore, if not desired, even the final Moksha is not attainable".

56) “Sri Hari, who is the best of the best and the primordial being, is an object of desire for himself and others too. If he is not desired then he grants an inauspicious end-state. Therefore he too is known as Kama. In this way, all Purusharthas are actually Kama only”.

57) “Although Kama is interpreted as desire, if it is not present, even a sentient being becomes insentient like a pot or a wall. Therefore, that desire which is the very essence of a sentient being is superior indeed. Being sentient in essence, it always remains under wraps”.

58-59) “Therefore it is wholly inappropriate to treat Kama separately. Therefore O King! If you wish to understand the relative hierarchy in Kama (it is as follows) – When Kama is in accordance with both Dharma and Artha, it is superior. If it is in line with just one of them, it is medium. If it is against both, such Kama is inferior. Therefore one should always enjoy Kama that is in sync with one’s intellect known as *Stri*”.

60) “O King! There is no other Purushartha greater than Kama. Sri Hari, who is intellect personified, who is one’s best friend, who is always embalmed with the essence of sandalpaste, who is wearing special garlands and jewels and one who is Supreme, is indeed Kama himself” – having thus described it succinctly as well as in detail, the brave Bhima became silent.

61) Dharmaraja praised Bhima and the others and praised Moksha as the best Purushartha. Since it was not (totally) against his own words, Bhimasena did not reject (counter) it.

|| End of chapter 29, known as ‘Samasta Dharma Sangraha’, from the Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya, composed by Srimadanandatirtha Bhagavatpada ||

|| Sri Krishnarpanamastu ||