

- 1 Ādi (225)
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- 3 Āranyaka (299)
- 4 Virāta (67)
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- 16 Mausala (9)
- 17 Mahāprasthānika (3)
- 18 Svargārohana (5)

King Dhritarashtra  
goes to the forest  
  
Ashrama Parva  
Chapters 1-8, 13-14

Swami Tadatmananda  
Arsha Bodha Center

जनमेजय उवाच  
King Janamejaya said,  
janamejaya uvāca

प्राप्य राज्यं महाभागाः  
Having regained the kingdom,  
prāpya rājyaṁ mahābhāgāḥ

पाण्डवा मे पितामहाः |  
the great Pandavas, my ancestors -  
pāṇḍavā me pitāmahāḥ

कथमासन्महाराजे  
how did they behave  
katham āsan mahārāje

धृतराष्ट्रे महात्मनि ||  
towards the great Dhritarashtra?  
dhṛtarāṣṭre mahātmani (1.1)

वैशम्पायन उवाच  
Rishi Vaishampayana said,  
vaiśampāyana uvāca

पाण्डवाः सर्वकार्याणि

About what needed to be done, the Pandavas  
pāṇḍavāḥ sarva-kāryāṇi

सम्पृच्छन्ति स्म तं नृपम् ।

asked King Dhritarashtra.  
sampṛcchanti sma taṁ nṛpam

चक्रुस्तेनाभ्यनुज्ञाता

Directed by him, they ran the kingdom  
cakrus tenābhyanujñātā

वर्षाणि दश पञ्च च ॥

for fifteen years.  
varṣāṇi daśa pañca ca (1.6)

एवं धर्मभृतां श्रेष्ठो

The most righteous of all,  
evaṁ dharma-bhṛtāṁ śreṣṭho

धर्मराजो युधिष्ठिरः ।

Yuddhishtira, son of Dharma,  
dharmarājo yudhiṣṭhiraḥ

भ्रातृभिः सहितो धीमान्

along with his brothers,  
bhrāṭṛbhiḥ sahito dhīmān

पूजयामास तं नृपम् ॥

served the king.  
pūjayāmāsa taṁ nṛpam (2.13)

वर्तमानेषु सद्वृत्तिं

Engaged in good deeds  
vartamāneṣu sad-vṛttim

पाण्डवेषु महात्मसु ।

were the great Pandavas.  
pāṇḍaveṣu mahātmasu

प्रीतिमानभवद्राजा

He loved them, King  
prītimān abhavad rājā

धृतराष्ट्रोऽम्बिकासुतः ॥

Dhritarashtra, son of Ambika.  
dhṛtarāṣṭro 'mbikā-sutaḥ (3.2)

न तां प्रीतिं परामाप

Not so great a love  
na tāṁ prītim parām āpa

पुत्रेभ्यः स महीपतिः ।

for his own sons had the king  
putrebhyaḥ sa mahīpatiḥ

यां प्रीतिं पाण्डुपुत्रेभ्यः

as his love for the sons of Pandu  
yām prītim pāṇḍu-putrebhyaḥ

समवाप तदा नृपः ॥

the king felt then.  
samavāpa tadā nṛpaḥ (3.10)

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

King Dhritarashtra said,  
dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca

विदितं भवतामेतद्

You know about this,  
viditaṁ bhavatām etad

यथा वृत्तः कुरुक्षयः ।

the deeds that led to the destruction of the Kurus.  
yathā vṛttaḥ kuru-kṣayaḥ

ममापराधात्तत्सर्वम्

All that was my fault  
mamāparādhāt tat sarvam

इति ज्ञेयं तु कौरवाः ॥

even though the Kauravas approved.  
iti jñeyaṁ tu kauravāḥ (5.1)

योऽहं दुष्टमतिं मूढं

The evil-minded fool  
yo 'haṁ duṣṭa-matiṁ mūḍhaṁ

ज्ञातीनां भयवर्धनम् ।

who struck fear in his relatives -  
jñātīnāṁ bhaya-varḍhanam

दुर्योधनं कौरवाणाम्

Duryodhana – it was I who  
duryodhanaṁ kauravāṅām

आधिपत्येऽभ्यषेचयम् ॥

installed him as king.  
ādhipatyē 'bhyaṣecayam (5.2)

यच्चाहं वासुदेवस्य

To what Sri Krishna said, I  
yac cāhaṁ vāsudevasya

वाक्यं नाश्रौषमर्थवत् ।

did not listen properly –  
vākyaṁ nāśrauṣam arthavat

वध्यतां साध्वयं पापः

that it would be good to kill Duryodhana  
vadhyatāṁ sādhvayaṁ pāpaḥ

सामात्य इति दुर्मतिः ॥

along with his ministers.  
sāmātya iti durmatih (5.3)

पुत्रस्नेहाभिभूतश्च

I was overcome by love for my son  
putra-snehābhibhūtaś ca

हितमुक्तो मनीषिभिः ।

when told what is best by others –  
hitam ukto manīṣibhiḥ

विदुरेणाथ भीष्मेण

by Vidura, Bhishma,  
vidureṇātha bhīṣmeṇa

द्रोणेन च कृपेण च ॥

Drona and Kripa ...  
droṇena ca kṛpeṇa ca (5.4)

पदे पदे भगवता

one by one,  
pade pade bhagavatā

व्यासेन च महात्मना ।

and by the great Rishi Vyasa,  
vyāseṇa ca mahātmanā

सञ्जयेनाथ गान्धार्या

and by Sanjaya and Gandhari.  
sañjāyēnātha gāndhāryā

तदिदं तप्यतेऽद्य माम् ॥

Now, all this torments me.  
tad idaṁ tapyate 'dya mām (5.5)

विशेषतस्तु दह्यामि

I have been greatly tormented  
viśeṣatas tu dahyāmi

वर्षं पञ्चदशं हि वै ।

for fifteen years.  
varṣaṁ pañcadaśaṁ hi vai

अस्य पापस्य शुद्ध्यर्थं

To purify myself of sin,  
asya pāpasya śuddhyartham

नियतोऽस्मि सुदुर्मतिः ॥

I am trying, though I am weak-minded.  
niyato 'smi sudurmatih (5.9)

भूमौ शये जप्यपरो

I sleep on the ground, practice japa,  
bhūmau śaye japyaparo

दर्भेष्वजिनसंवृतः ।

and wear a deerskin.  
darbheṣv ajina-saṁvṛtaḥ

नियमव्यपदेशेन

Engaged in this same penance  
niyama-vyapadeśena

गान्धारी च यशस्विनी ॥

is the glorious Gandhari.  
gāndhārī ca yaśasvinī (5.12)

अनुज्ञातस्त्वया वीर

With your permission,  
anujñātas tvayā vīra

संश्रयेयं वनान्यहम् ।

I will leave for the forest  
saṁśrayeyam vanāny aham

चीरवल्कलभृद्राजन्

wearing rags and bark, O Yudhishtira,  
cīra-valkalabhṛd rājan

गान्धार्या सहितोऽनया ॥

accompanied by Gandhari.  
gāndhāryā sahito 'nayā (5.20)

युधिष्ठिर उवाच

Yudhishtira said,  
yudhiṣṭhira uvāca

योऽहं भवन्तं दुःखार्तम्

O King, you were stricken with grief,  
yo 'ham bhavantam duḥkhārtam

उपवासकृशं नृप ।

emaciated from fasting,  
upavāsa-kṛśam nṛpa

यताहारं क्षितिशयं

withdrawn from activities, sleeping on the ground,  
yatāharam kṣiti-śayam

नाविन्दं भ्रातृभिः सह ॥

but I did not know, nor did my brothers.  
nāvindam bhṛātṛbhiḥ saha (6.2)

भवान्पिता भवान्माता

You are our father. You are our mother.  
bhavān pitā bhavān mātā

भवान्नः परमो गुरुः ।

You are our greatest guru.  
bhavān naḥ paramo guruḥ

भवता विप्रहीणा हि

Deprived of you  
bhavatā viprahīṇā hi

क्व नु तिष्ठामहे वयम् ॥

how can we live?  
kva nu tiṣṭhāmahe vayam (6.6)

नाहं राजा भवान्राजा

I am not king. You are king.  
nāham rājā bhavān rājā

भवता परवानहम् ।

I am directed by you.  
bhavatā paravān aham

कथं गुरुं त्वां धर्मज्ञम्

To you, my wise teacher,  
katham gurum tvam dharmajnam

अनुज्ञातुमिहोत्सहे ॥

how can I dare to give permission to leave?  
anujñatum ihotsahe (6.9)

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

Dhritarashtra said,  
dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca

तापस्ये मे मनस्तात

Dear, on penance is my mind  
tāpasye me manas tāta

वर्तते कुरुनन्दन ।

fixed, O Yudhishtira.  
vartate kurunandana

उचितं हि कुलेऽस्माकम्

In our family, it is considered proper  
ucitam hi kule 'smākam

अरण्यगमनं प्रभो ॥

to go to the forest, O Yudhishtira.  
araṇya-gamanam prabho (6.16)

वैशम्पायन उवाच

Rishi Vaishampayana said,  
vaiśampāyana uvāca

इत्युक्त्वा स तु धर्मात्मा

Having spoken thus, the righteous  
ity uktvā sa tu dharmātmā

वृद्धो राजा कुरूद्वहः ।

old king, Dhritrarashtra,  
vṛddho rājā kurūdvahaḥ

गान्धारीं शिश्रिये धीमान्

leaned on Gandhari  
gāndhārīm śīśriye dhīmān

सहसैव गतासुवत् ॥

and suddenly fell unconscious.  
sahasaiva gatāsuvat (6.21)

विदुरादयश्च ते सर्वे

Vidura and all the others  
vidurādayaś ca te sarve

रुरुदुर्दुःखिता भृशम् ।

cried out with tremendous grief.  
rurudur duḥkhitā bhṛśam

इतरास्तु स्त्रियः सर्वाः

All the other women,  
itarās tu striyaḥ sarvāḥ

कुन्त्या सह सुदुःखिताः ॥

along with Kunti, were extremely sad.  
kuntya saha suduḥkhitāḥ (7.8,10)

अथाब्रवीत्पुनर्वाक्यं

Then, more was spoken  
athābravīt punar vākyaṁ

धृतराष्ट्रो युधिष्ठिरम् ।

by Dhritarashtra to Yudhishtira.  
dhṛtarāṣṭro yudhiṣṭhiram

अनुजानीहि मां राजंस्

“O King, give me permission to leave  
anujānīhi mām rājans

तापस्ये भरतर्षभ ॥

and practice penance.”  
tāpasye bharatarṣabha (7.11)

व्यास उवाच

Vyasa said,  
vyāsa uvāca

अनुज्ञां लभतां राजा

Let the king leave.

anujñām labhatām rājā

मा वृथेह मरिष्यति ।

Don't let him here die in vain.

mā vṛtheha mariṣyati

राजर्षीणां पुराणानाम्

The path of the ancient royal sages,

rājarṣīṇām purāṇānām

अनुयातु गतिं नृपः ॥

let the king follow.

anuyātu gatiṁ nṛpaḥ (8.4,5)

एष एव परो धर्मो

This is the greatest duty

eṣa eva paro dharmo

राजर्षीणां युधिष्ठिर ।

for royal sages, O Yudhishtira.

rājarṣīṇām yudhiṣṭhira

समरे वा भवेन्मृत्युर्

Either they should die in battle

samare vā bhaven mṛtyur

वने वा विधिपूर्वकम् ॥

or in the forest, according to scriptural rules.

vane vā vidhi-pūrvakam (8.12)

वैशम्पायन उवाच

Rishi Vaishampayana said,

vaiśampāyana uvāca

एतावदुक्त्वा वचनम्

After Vyasa said this,

etāvad uktvā vacanam

अनुज्ञाप्य च पार्थिवम् ।

Dhritarashtra, received permission to leave

anujñāpya ca pārthivam

तथास्त्विति च तेनोक्तः

from Yudhishtira who said, "Tathastu,"

tathāstv iti ca tenoktaḥ

कौन्तेयेन ययौ वनम् ॥

and he left for the forest.

kaunteyena yayau vanam (8.18)

ततो निष्क्रम्य नृपतिस्

Then, King Dhritarashtra, coming out  
tato niṣkramya nṛpatis

तस्मादन्तःपुरात्तदा |

from his apartment,  
tasmād antaḥ-purāt tadā

समवेतांश्च तान्सर्वान्

(seeing) everyone assembled,  
samavetāṁś ca tān sarvān

पौरजानपदानथ ||

citizens and non-citizens ...  
paurajān apadān atha (13.11)

ब्राह्मणांश्च महीपालान्

brahmanas and kings,  
brāhmaṇāṁś ca mahīpālān

नानादेशसमागतान् |

gathered together from many places,  
nānā-deśa-samāgatān

ततः प्राह महातेजा

then spoke the great King  
tataḥ prāha mahātejā

धृतराष्ट्रो महीपतिः ||

Dhritarashtra.  
dhṛtarāṣṭro mahīpatiḥ (13.12)

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

Dhritarashtra said,  
dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca

शन्तनुः पालयामास

King Shantanu once ruled  
śantanuḥ pālayāmāsa

यथावत्पृथिवीमिमाम् |

this kingdom.  
yathāvat pṛthivīm imām

तथा विचित्रवीर्यश्च

So too did Vichitravirya,  
tathā vicitravīryaś ca

भीष्मेण परिपालितः ||

supported by Bhishma.  
bhīṣmeṇa paripālitaḥ (14.1)

यथा च पाण्डुर्भ्राता मे

My brother, Pandu,  
yathā ca pāṇḍur bhrātā me

दयितो भवतामभूत् |

beloved to you all,  
dayito bhavatām abhūt

स चापि पालयामास

he also ruled,  
sa cāpi pālayāmāsa

यथावत्तच्च वेत्थ ह ||

as you all know.  
yathāvat tac ca vettha ha (14.2)

मया च भवतां सम्यक्

By me also were you ruled.  
mayā ca bhavatām samyak

छुश्रूषा या कृतानघाः |

O sinless ones, if my service was good  
chuśrūṣā yā kṛtānaghāḥ

असम्यग्वा महाभागास्

or if it was not good, you noble people  
asamyagvā mahābhāgās

आस्तत्क्षन्तव्यमतन्द्रितैः ||

should forgive me wholeheartedly.  
tat kṣantavyam atandritaiḥ (14.3)

अवश्यमेव वक्तव्यम्

What must be said  
avaśyam eva vaktavyam

इति कृत्वा ब्रवीमि वः |

I have said to you.  
iti kṛtvā bravīmi vaḥ

युधिष्ठिरो महातेजा

Now, the glorious Yudhishtira  
yudhiṣṭhiro mahātejā

भवतः पालयिष्यति ||

will rule you.  
bhavataḥ pālayiṣyati (14.13,12)

इत्युक्तास्तेन ते राज्ञा

Having been thus addressed by the king,  
ity uktās tena te rājñā

पौरजानपदा जनाः |

the citizens and non-citizens,  
paurajān apadā janāḥ

नोचुर्बाष्पकलाः किञ्चिद्

with tears in their eyes, could say nothing,  
nocur bāṣpa-kalāḥ kiñcid

वीक्षां चक्रुः परस्परम् ||

but only looked at each other.  
vīkṣāṃ cakruḥ parasparam (14.17)