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Dhritarashtra's Mourning

Strī Parva
Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 8

Swami Tadatmananda
Arsha Bodha Center

वैशम्पायन उवाच

Rishi Vaishampayana said,
vaiśampāyana uvāca

हते पुत्रशते दीनं

After all 100 of his sons had died,
hate putra-śate dīnaṃ

छिन्नशाखमिव द्रुमम् ।

like a tree whose branches had all been cut off,
chinna-śākham iva drumam

पुत्रशोकाभिसन्तप्तं

afflicted by grief for his sons,
putra-śokābhisantaptaṃ

धृतराष्ट्रं महीपतिम् ॥

was King Dhritarashtra.
dhṛtarāṣṭraṃ mahīpatim (1.4)

अभिगम्य महाप्राज्ञः

The wise Sanjaya approached him
abhigamya mahāprājñaḥ

सञ्जयो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ।

and said this:
sañjayo vākyaṃ abravīt

किं शोचसि महाराज

"O King, why do you grieve?
kiṃ śocasī mahārāja

नास्ति शोके सहायता ॥

Grieving is of no help."
nāsti śoke sahāyatā (1.5,6)

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

King Dhritarashtra said,
dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca

किं नु बन्धुविहीनस्य

For one who has lost his family
kiṁ nu bandhu-vihīnasya

जीवितेन ममाद्य वै ।

like me, what is the use is living now?
jīvitena mamādya vai

लूनपक्षस्य इव मे

Like a bird without wings,
lūna-pakṣasya iva me

जराजीर्णस्य पक्षिणः ॥

old and decrepit, am I.
jarā-jīrṇasya pakṣiṇaḥ (1.11)

परिणामश्च वयसः

My time has passed,
pariṇāmaś ca vayasah

सर्वबन्धुक्षयश्च मे ।

my whole family has been destroyed,
sarva-bandhu-kṣayaś ca me

सुहृन्मित्रविनाशश्च

my friends have died --
suhṛn-mitra-vināśaś ca

दैवयोगादुपागतः ।

all this is due to daiva.
daiva-yogād upāgataḥ

कोऽन्योऽस्ति दुःखिततरो

Who else could be more grieved,
ko 'nyo 'sti duḥkhitataro

मया लोके पुमानिह ॥

here in the world, than me ?
mayā loke pumān iha (1.19)

सञ्जय उवाच

Sanjaya said,
sañjaya uvāca

पुत्रगृद्ध्या त्वया राजन्

O King, due to attachment to your sons
putra-gr̥ddhyā tvayā rājan

प्रियं तस्य चिकीर्षता ।

and your desire for their welfare,
priyaṁ tasya cikīrṣatā

पश्चात्तापमिदं प्राप्तं

this remorse has arisen.
paścāt-tāpam idaṁ prāptaṁ

न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥

You should not grieve.
na tvaṁ śocitum arhasi (1.29)

विस्फुलिङ्गा इव ह्येतान्

These tears are like sparks of fire
visphuliṅgā iva hyetān

दहन्ति किल मानवान् ।

that consume people.
dahanti kila mānavān

जहीहि मन्युं बुद्ध्या वै

Drive off your anger with your intellect.
jahīhi manyuṁ buddhyā vai

धारयात्मानमात्मना ॥

Cheer yourself by your mental strength.
dhārayātmānam ātmanā (1.36)

विदुर उवाच

Vidura said,
vidura uvāca

सर्वे क्षयान्ता निचयाः

Everything collected will finally be lost.
sarve kṣayāntā nicayāḥ

पतनान्ताः समुच्छ्रयाः |

Everything that rises high must finally fall.
patanāntāḥ samucchrayāḥ

संयोगा विप्रयोगान्ता

All unions end in separation.
saṁyogā viprayogāntā

मरणान्तं हि जीवितम् ||

Life indeed ends in death.
maraṇāntaṁ hi jīvitam (2.3)

प्रज्ञया मानसं दुःखं

Mental suffering can be overcome by wisdom
prajñayā mānasaṁ duḥkhaṁ

हन्याच्छारीरमौषधैः |

like illness can be overcome by medicine.
hanyāc chārīram auśadhaiḥ

एतज्ज्ञानस्य सामर्थ्यं

This is the power of wisdom.
etaj jñānasya sāmartyaṁ

न बालैः समतामियात् ||

Equanimity cannot be attained by the childish.
na bālaiḥ samatām iyāt (2.21)

शोकस्थानसहस्राणि

A thousand reasons for grief,
śoka-sthāna-sahasrāṇi

भयस्थानशतानि च |

and a hundred reasons for fear --
bhaya-sthāna-śatāni ca

दिवसे दिवसे मूढम्

every day, these afflict a fool,
divase divase mūḍham

आविशन्ति न पण्डितम् ||

but not a wise person.
āviśanti na paṇḍitam (2.13)

यथा जीर्णमजीर्णं वा

Just as old clothes or new clothes
yathā jīrṇam ajīrṇaṁ vā

वस्त्रं त्यक्त्वा तु वै नरः |

a person casts off
vastraṁ tyaktvā tu vai naraḥ

अन्यद्रोचयते वस्त्रम्

and wears new clothes,
anyad rocayate vastram

एवं देहाः शरीरिणाम् ||

thus it is for the bodies of embodied souls.
evaṁ dehāḥ śarīriṇām (3.6)

गर्भस्थो वा प्रसूतो वा

An unborn child, a newly born child,
garbhastho vā prasūto vā

ऽप्यथ वा दिवसान्तरः ।

a child on some other day,
'pyatha vā divasāntaraḥ

यौवनस्थोऽपि मध्यस्थो

a youth, a middle-aged person,
yauvanastho 'pi madhyastho

वृद्धो वापि विपद्यते ॥

or an old person is subject to dying.
vṛddho vāpi vipadyate (3.12,13)

वैशम्पायन उवाच

Rishi Vaishampayana said,
vaiśampāyana uvāca

प्राक्कर्मभिस्तु भूतानि

Due to past karma, creatures
prāk-karmabhis tu bhūtāni

भवन्ति न भवन्ति च ।

are born and die.
bhavanti na bhavanti ca

एवं सांसिद्धिके लोके

When the world is known to be like this,
evaṁ sāṁsiddhike loke

किमर्थमनुतप्यसे ॥

why do you grieve?
kim artham anutapyase (3.14)

विदुरस्य तु तद्वाक्यं

This teaching of Vidura -
vidurasya tu tad vākyaṁ

निशम्य कुरुसत्तमः ।

having heard it, Dhritarashtra,
niśamya kuru-sattamaḥ

पुत्रशोकाभिसन्तप्तः

afflicted by grief for his sons,
putra-śokābhisantaptaḥ

पपात भुवि मूर्च्छितः ॥

fainted and fell to the ground.
papāta bhuvi mūrchitaḥ (8.1)

अथ दीर्घस्य कालस्य

Then, after a long time,
atha dīrghasya kālasya

लब्धसञ्ज्ञो महीपतिः ।

the king, recovering his consciousness,
labdha-sañjño mahīpatiḥ

विललाप चिरं कालं

cried for a long time,
vilalāpa ciram kalam

पुत्राधिभिरभिप्लुतः ॥

immersed in grief for his sons.
putrādhibhir abhiplutaḥ (8.5)

पुत्रनाशेऽर्थनाशे च

When sons, wealth,
putra-nāśe 'rtha-nāśe ca

ज्ञातिसम्बन्धिनामपि ।

and family are all destroyed,
jñāti-sambandhinām api

प्राप्यते सुमहद्दुःखं

one suffers terrible grief
prāpyate sumahad-duḥkham

विषाग्निप्रतिमं विभो ॥

like poison or fire, O Vyasa.
viṣāgni-pratimam vibho (8.7)

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

King Dhritarashtra said,
dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca

येनाभिभूतः पुरुषो

A person overcome by loss
yenābhibhūtaḥ puruṣo

मरणं बहु मन्यते ।

considers death to be better.
maraṇam bahu manyate

तच्चैवाहं करिष्यामि

That (suicide) I will do
tac caivāham kariṣyāmi

अद्यैव द्विजसत्तम ॥

today, O Vyasa.
adyaiva dvija-sattama (8.8,9)

व्यास उवाच

Rishi Vyasa said,
vyāsa uvāca

अवश्यं भवितव्ये च

Inevitable was the eventual
avaśyaṃ bhavitavye ca

कुरूणां वैशसे नृप ।

destruction of the Kauravas, O King.
kurūṇāṃ vaiśase nṛpa

कस्माच्छोचसि ताञ्शूरान्

Why do you grieve for those brave warriors
kasmāc chocasi tāñ śūrān

गतान्परमिकां गतिम् ॥

who have gone to heaven?
gatān paramikāṃ gatim (8.16)

न च दैवकृतो मार्गः

The path determined by past karma
na ca daiva-kṛto mārgaḥ

शक्यो भूतेन केनचित् ।

cannot be controlled by anyone,
śakyo bhūtena kenacit

घटतापि चिरं कालं

even if they try for a long time.
ghaṭatāpi ciram kālam

नियन्तुमिति मे मतिः ॥

This is my conclusion.
niyantum iti me matiḥ (8.18)

मम चैव नियोगेन

Due to my advice,
mama caiva niyogena

विधेश्चाप्यनिवर्तनात् ।

and due to the inevitability of past karma,
vidheś cāpy anivartanāt

पाण्डवानां च कारुण्यात्

and out of compassion for the Pandavas,
pāṇḍavānām ca kāruṇyāt

प्राणान्धारय भारत ॥

you should go on living, O King.
prāṇāndhāraya bhārata (8.42)

पुत्रशोकसमुत्पन्नं

The grief for dead sons
putra-śoka-samutpannaṁ

हुताशं ज्वलितं यथा ।

is like a blazing fire.
hutāśaṁ jvalitaṁ yathā

प्रज्ञाम्भसा महाराज

O King, with the water of wisdom,
prajñāmbhasā mahārāja

निर्वापय सदा सदा ॥

you should extinguish it forever.
nirvāpaya sadā sadā (8.44)

इदं तु वचनं श्रुत्वा

Having heard these words
idaṁ tu vacanaṁ śrutvā

तव दैवनियोगजम् ।

of yours about the force of past karma,
tava daiva-niyogajam

धारयिष्याम्यहं प्राणान्

I will go on living
dhārayiṣyāmy ahaṁ prāṇān

यतिष्ये च नशोचितुम् ॥

and I will try not to grieve.
yatiṣye ca naśocitum (8.47)

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

King Dhritarashtra said,
dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca