

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Canto One

With the
Sārārtha-darśinī commentary

by

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Canto One – Chapter Nine

Passing of Bhīṣma

The Passing Away of Bhīṣmadeva
in the Presence of Lord Kṛṣṇa

Section – VII

Bhīṣmadeva's Final Moments

(29 -43)

|| 1.9.38 ||

śita-viśikha-hato viśirṇa-damśaḥ
ksataja-paripluta ātatāyino me
prasabham abhisasāra mad-vadhārtham
sa bhavatu me bhagavān gatih mukundaḥ

O Kṛṣṇa (bhagavān)! Let my only goal be Mukunda (sah mukundaḥ bhavatu me gatih), who, afflicted by my sharp arrows (śita-viśikha-hataḥ), armor broken (viśirṇa-damśaḥ), covered in blood (ksataja-paripluta), rushed towards me (me abhisasāra), his enemy (ātatāyinaḥ), with great force (prasabham), in order to kill me (mad-vadha artham).

When Kṛṣṇa got down from the chariot he became covered with blood, because the earth was covered with rivers of blood from the slain warriors.

How did his armor get pierced?

It was struck by my sharp arrows.

I fired the arrows to increase the thrill of his anger.

In other words, he pierced the armor before Kṛṣṇa got down from the chariot.

With force (prasa**ab**ham) he protected Arjuna and came towards me with the intention “Today I will kill Bhīṣma with my own hands.”

The word abhisasāra is used to indicate a hero desiring to meet his lover.

In a similar manner I became extraordinarily happy when
Kṛṣṇa approached me in anger.

May my goal be no one else, only Mukunda, giver of
liberation, who acted in this way.

O Kṛṣṇa! I have offered only this prayer to you.

|| 1.9.39 ||

vijaya-ratha-kutumba ātta-totre
dhṛta-haya-raśmini tac-chriyekṣaṇīye
bhagavati ratir astu me mumūrṣor
yam iha nirīkṣya hatā gatāḥ sva-rūpam

Desiring to die (mumūrsoh), may I have prema for the Lord (bhagavati ratir astu me) who (protected) Arjuna's chariot (vijaya-ratha-kutumba) while holding a whip in his right hand (ātta-totre), the reins in his left hand (dhṛta-haya-raśmini), whose beauty must be seen (tad-śriyekṣaṇīye), and who bestowed liberation to those who died on the battle field after seeing him (yam iha nirīkṣya hatā gatāḥ sva-rūpam).

Bhīṣma has a desire that even the unrighteous should develop
prema for Kṛṣṇa, who is eager to protect his devotees.

Kṛṣṇa protected (kuṭumbe) Arjuna (vijaya) from the sinful.

He held a whip (totre).

He held the reins of the horses.

I, and not Arjuna, saw with my eyes, his beauty as he held the reins in his left hand, the whip in his right hand, while saying “Hum, hum” to speed the horses.

May I have prema for that Kṛṣṇa.

I desire to die now (mumūrṣoh), for having died, I will constantly see that sweetness.

If I am revived how will I see that, because the Lord has brought about an end to his pastimes on this earth?

Bhīṣma does not say “I am dying” but “I want to die.”

He could die when he chose, and now he had developed great greed for directly participating in Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes.

From this it is understood that the fighting pastimes are also eternal, what to speak of other pastimes.

Ⓚ's veshobh

“True, you have great attachment to my pastime as a charioteer, and relish that in each of your verses, spout them from your mouth. You pray for prema for me in that pastime. But having died, what is your proof that you will attain that pastime?”

“There is a well known saying **marane yā matiḥ sā gatiḥ**:
whatever you think of when you die, you attain that.”

Seeing you at present is the highest proof.

By seeing you those who die, even being killed by others in
this battle, even if they are demons, attain liberation (**sva-**
rūpam) of merging in brahman similar to the jñānīs.”

But I am a devotee, with thoughts just described, and dying while seeing you personally at the time of death, how can I not attain that pastime?

The form of Kṛṣṇa as the charioteer bestowed liberation even to unqualified persons (demons).

Simultaneously, at that time the most extraordinary of all the Lord's forms, full of the greatest sweetness, characterized by no power and great power made its appearance (for the devotees)."

|| 1.9.40 ||

lalita-gati-vilāsa-valguhāsa-
praṇaya-nirīkṣaṇa-kalpitorumānāḥ
kṛtam anukṛtavatya unmadāndhāḥ
prakṛtim agan kila yasya gopa-vadhvaḥ

The gopīs (gopa-vadhvaḥ) were worshipped (kalpita uru-mānāḥ) by Kṛṣṇa's expert actions (lalita-gati-vilāsa), emotional displays, words and glances (valgu-hāsa-praṇaya-nirīkṣaṇa). Attaining those qualities (kṛtam), they responded in harmony to his most extraordinary displays of love (anukṛta-vatya), blinded by the madness of love (unmada andhāḥ). How amazing (kila) ~~that these gopīs attained the~~ nature of Kṛṣṇa himself (yasya prakṛtim agan).

Ⓟ says to Bhṛṅga

“Though you are omniscient, the prema that you desire in my charioteer pastime is in Arjuna alone. It is understood that among all the associates with prema, he is the chief.”

That is not so.

Your dear gopīs have the most exalted prema among all devotees.

They are superior to Arjuna.

No one can dare to pray for their position.

Let that be!

I will be successful at my death just by indicating their nature.

Thus he speaks this verse.

He was expert at physical arts such as dancing in the rāsa-līlā,
expert in expressing mental qualities such as dhira-lalita,
expert in words with joking, expert with the eyes at glancing
to show all aspects of prema.

The gopīs were to be worshipped by all these skilful actions of
Kṛṣṇa.

In order to please them, Kṛṣṇa endowed them with all the
best, outstanding qualities of himself.

The result of their extreme prema, was that Kṛṣṇa, in giving all his own qualities, attempted to please them with conciliating love.

That display of love, which is without restraints for either party, showed extreme control of Kṛṣṇa by the gopīs and was filled with great bliss.

Control of the Lord, manifested as a result of Arjuna's prema,
was that Kṛṣṇa became his messenger and charioteer.

That role had restraints for both parties.

Arjuna could thus not attain intimacy with the Lord.

He became compliant by offering all his qualities to them
(gopīs).

They had a mutual friendship filled with happiness because of
mutual compliance.

Then he bestowed an extraordinary fortune—the dancing,
songs and speech during the rāsa-līlā.

And in response, the gopīs did the same (anukṛta-vatya).

In harmony with him, they offered him dancing, songs and speech in the rāsa-līlā.

There was no need to teach them anything.

They were blinded by the increase of great prema (unmadāndhāh).

They did not need practice.

How astonishing (kila)! They attained all his extraordinary qualities such as skills in dancing and singing.

Kṛṣṇa did not give his unique, extraordinary power to Arjuna.

Kṛtam can also refer to Kṛṣṇa's actions such as lifting Govardhana.

They imitated those actions.

Instead of unmada sometimes unmāda is seen.

This indicates madness in separation.

In that extreme state some of them even merged with the
Lord.

This is the highest level of exalted prema.

Since I am situated between the two limits, why can I not
attain your pastime as the charioteer, which I desire?