

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)

|| 1.9.41 ||

muni-gaṇa-nṛpa-varya-saṅkule 'ntaḥ-
sadasi yudhiṣṭhira-rājasūya eṣām
arhaṇam upapeda īkṣaṇīyo
mama dṛśi-gocara eṣa āvir ātmā

The lord of my life (mama ātmā), worthy of being seen (īkṣaṇīyah), who received the worship (arhaṇam upapeda) of all the greatest sages and kings (muni-gaṇa-nṛpa-varya-saṅkule) in the assembly (antaḥ sadasi) during the rājasūya sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira (yudhiṣṭhira-rājasūya eṣām), has become visible to my eyes (mama dṛśi-gocara eṣa āvih).

Bhīṣma relates his great fortune which is directly visible now,
to the necessity of attaining the Lord.

Kṛṣṇa was seen with amazement by the sages exclaiming “O
what beauty! What greatness!”

In the midst of the gathering composed of the best sages and
kings, during the rājasūya sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira, he received
(upapede) worship.

He, my soul, the lord of my life (mama ātmā), is now visible
to my eyes.

He has fulfilled my request.

|| 1.9.42 ||

tam imam aham ajam śarīra-bhājām
hr̥di hr̥di dhiṣṭhitam ātma-kalpitanām
pratidṛśam iva naikadhārkam ekam
samadhigato 'smi vidhūta-bheda-mohaḥ

Freed of the illusion of difference in the Lord's various forms (vidhūta-bheda-mohaḥ), I have attained the Lord (tam samadhigato asmi) who is one (ekam) though appearing to be many (na ekadhā pratidṛśam) like the sun seen by many people (arkam iva), who is the charioteer, but who is also in my heart (imam), the unborn (ajam) and is situated in the hearts of all the jīvas (śarīra-bhājām hr̥di hr̥di dhiṣṭhitam), who create their own bodies (ātma-kalpitanām).

Why do you not address the Lord directly but instead address him indirectly with word like vijaya-sakhe vijaya-ratha-kuṭumba me ratir astu and carāṇa-ratiḥ paramasya tasya me'stu and sa bhavatu me bhagavān gatiḥ."

This verse answers, indicating that Bhīṣma desires the Lord as
a charioteer.

I have attained that Lord (tam) who is the charioteer of Arjuna, holding the whip and bridle in his hands, who is now appearing in my heart (imam).

But the charioteer is not the Lord in the heart.

Because Kṛṣṇa the charioteer has already entered and pervaded my heart completely by practice, it is not possible for the paramātmā to enter.

He does not make his appearance just at this time (**ajam**).

Though he appeared to my eyes in this form at the time of battle, even before the battle he was already in my heart because of my spontaneous desire.

He is unborn because he has always been visible to me.

There is no fault on my part in this, but the Supreme Lord
alone situated in the heart ordains good fortune or misfortune
of the jīvas.

He is situated (**dhiṣṭhitam**) in the hearts of all jīvas (**śarīra-**
bhājām), who create their own bodies.

The missing “a” in (dhiṣṭhitam) is for meter.

The śruti says yathāgneḥ kṣudrā visphulinga vyuccaranti; the souls wander around like small sparks. (Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.1.20)

I know that the charioteer indicated by the word tam and the four-handed form in Dvārakā indicated by the word imam are not different.

The one sun in the sky appears to individual seers to be not one but many, above each person's head.

By such distinctive seeing the sun appears to be many.

Bhīṣma is free of such illusionary seeing (vidhūta-bhedamoha).

Though Kṛṣṇa appears in my heart, and in the hearts of Yudhisthira, Vasudeva, Uddhava, Nanda and the gopīs with various degrees of prema and type of love, with different pastimes for each, I know that this is one Kṛṣṇa only.

I know the various degrees of excellence of their prema and love.

But I can never give up my natural attachment to the form of Kṛṣṇa as the charioteer.

Even thinking of the four-handed form of Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā is not interesting to me.

|| 1.9.43 ||

sūta uvāca

kṛṣṇa evaṁ bhagavati
mano-vāg-drṣṭi-vṛttibhiḥ
ātmany ātmānam āveśya
so 'ntaḥśvāsa upāramat

Suta said: Thus Bhīṣma (sah), absorbing himself in Kṛṣṇa (ātmanam kṛṣṇa evaṁ āveśya), bhagavān, the charioteer situated in his heart (bhagavati ātmany), using his mind, words and sight (mano-vāg-drṣṭi-vṛttibhiḥ), stopped his breathing (antaḥ śvāsa) and ceased external functions (upāramat).

He absorbed himself (**ātmānam āveśya**) in Kṛṣṇa, the charioteer, situated in his heart (**ātmani**), and stopped his breathing (**antaḥśvāsaḥ**).

Upāramat means he stopped external functioning.

Section – VIII

Honoring Bhīṣmadeva's
Departure and the events
thereafter (44-49)

|| 1.9.44 ||

sampadyamānam ājñāya
bhīṣmaṁ brahmaṇi niṣkale
sarve babhūvus te tūṣṇīm
vayāmsīva dinātyaye

The ignorant, who were like birds (vayāmsīva) who think that day has been destroyed at the approach of evening (dina atyaye), thought that Bhīṣma had attained the brahman (ājñāya bhīṣmaṁ niṣkale brahmaṇi sampadyamānam), and became silent (sarve te tūṣṇīm babhūvuh).

Bhīṣma had attained his cherished form of Kṛṣṇa as the charioteer, but the common people, not knowing this thought that he had entered into brahman.

That is expressed in this verse.

An example of ignorance is given.

Birds, thinking that the day has been destroyed at the end of day because they cannot see it, become silent.

The day has not actually be destroyed, because one understands that after some time, that day still exists, since after twelve hours daylight appears again.

The ignorant think that when Bhīṣma passed away he attained liberation.

The intelligent understand that at that very moment in an invisible form Bhīṣma fights on the ground with Kṛṣṇa holding the chariot wheel in his hand, and that in a future appearance of Kṛṣṇa, Bhīṣma will also appear with him.

Or **brahmaṇi niṣkali** can mean “into the brahman Kṛṣṇa, who wears a gold ornament.”

One should not explain that Bhīṣma merged into the brahman, since by giving him something devoid of his goal, this would be cheating his eternal associate Bhīṣma of prema, since Bhīṣma did not desire liberation, and since it would be improper for the Lord to give undesired results forcibly.

|| 1.9.45 ||

tatra dundubhayo nedur
deva-mānava-vāditāḥ
śaśamsuḥ sādhave rājñām
khāt petuḥ puṣpa-vrṣṭayah

Drums played by devatās and men sounded (tatra dundubhayo nedur
deva-mānava-vāditāḥ), the kings (rājñām) without hatred praised him
(sādhave śaśamsuḥ), and flowers fell from the sky (khāt petuḥ
puṣpa-vrṣṭayah).

Sādahavah rājñām means “those who were without hatred among the
kings.”

|| 1.9.46 ||

tasya nirharaṇādīni
samparetasya bhārgava
yudhisthirah kārayitvā
muhūrtaṁ duḥkhito 'bhavat

O Śaunaka of the Bhṛgu dynasty (bhārgava)! Yudhiṣṭhira (yudhisthirah) had last rites (nirharaṇādīni) of the departed Bhīṣma (~~samparetasya~~) performed (kārayitvā) and became sad for a moment (muhūrtaṁ duḥkhito abhavat).

Nirharanādīni means saṁskāras.

Though Bhīṣma is an eternal associate of the Lord, his amśa had entered into Vasu (who then descended from the heavenly planets to earth.)

Thus Bhīṣma is shown by the Lord to give up his body.

His amśa was situated in Vasu, and he himself attained the spiritual world.

yāvad adhikāram avasthitir ādhikārikāṇām: those designated by the Lord remain in their posts on earth as long as that Lord chooses. (Vedānta-sūtra 3.3.33)

Samparetasya can be analyzed as sam for samyak (completely), para for parameśvara (supreme lord) and itasya for prāptasya (obtained).

Thus the word means “of the person who attained the Supreme Lord completely.”

This is supported by the śruti explaining the details of liberation.

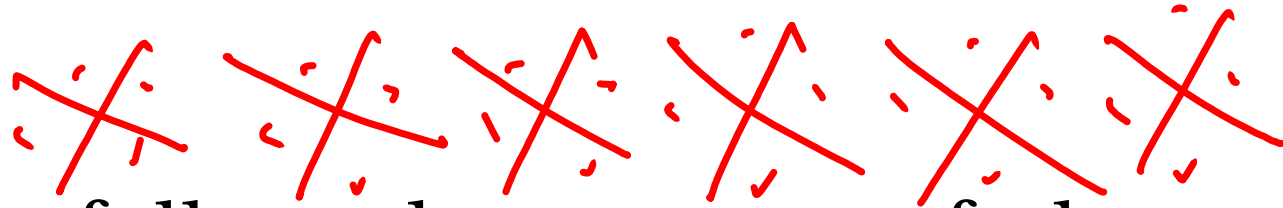
Tasya sarveṣu lokeṣu kāma-caṛo bhavati: the liberated soul is free to travel in all the planets as he pleases. (Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.25.2)

It has been said that Bhīṣma, an eternal associate of the Lord,
attained Kṛṣṇa as the charioteer in aprakāṣa-līlā.

Thus in the previous description of Bhīṣma stopping his
breath and giving up his body, one should say that he simply
became detached from (upāramat) his manifested body on
earth.

One should not say that he gave up a material body and gave up breathing.

Yudhiṣṭhira was sad for a short period.



This he did to follow the custom of the people (since he understood that Bhīṣma did not have a material body).

|| 1.9.47 ||

tuṣṭuvur munayo hr̥ṣṭāḥ
kṛṣṇam tad-guhya-nāmabhiḥ
tatas te kṛṣṇa-hṛdayāḥ
svāśramān prayayuh punaḥ

The sages in joy (munayah hr̥ṣṭāḥ) praised Kṛṣṇa (tuṣṭuvuh kṛṣṇam) with his confidential names (tad-guhya-nāmabhiḥ) and then with Kṛṣṇa in their hearts (tatas te kṛṣṇa-hṛdayāḥ) departed again for their hermitages (svāśramān prayayuh punaḥ).

Tad-guhya-nāmabhiḥ indicates that they said, “O Kṛṣṇa,
affectionate to the devotees, controlled by prema! We offer
respects to your affection nature.”

|| 1.9.48 ||

tato yudhiṣṭhiro gatvā
saha-kṛṣṇo gajāhvayam
pitaram sāntvayām āsa
gāndhārīm ca tapasvinīm

Then Yudhiṣṭhira (tatah yudhiṣṭhirah) went to Hastināpura (gajāhvayam gatvā) with Kṛṣṇa (saha-kṛṣṇah) and consoled Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī (pitaram tapasvinīm gāndhārīm ca sāntvayām āsa), who was overcome with grief (implied).

Pitaram means Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

|| 1.9.49 ||

pitṛā cānumato rājā
vāsudevānumoditaḥ
cakāra rājyaṁ dharmena
pitṛ-paitāmahaṁ vibhuḥ

With the permission of Dhṛtarāṣṭra (pitṛā ca anumato), and
agreement of Kṛṣṇa (vāsudeva anumoditaḥ), powerful
Yudhiṣṭhira (rājā vibhuḥ) ruled the ancestral kingdom (pitṛ-
paitāmahaṁ rājyaṁ cakāra) according to dharma
(dharmena).