

Part Forty-Five

DESCENTION OF RADHA KRISHNA TO GOLAK DHAM BRINDABAN

Ninety-Fifth Chapter

END OF KRISHNA'S LIFE ON EARTH ASCENSION OF PANDAVS TO HEAVEN



Death of Draupadi while the Pandavs were climbing up to heaven
(Courtesy: Bardhaman Edition of Mahabharata, 1820-1879).

Only Yudhishthir succeeded in reaching heaven. He tried to take the **loyal dog** that followed them but was refused entry. Dogs are unclean in Hinduism and thus was not allowed in Hindu heaven. It was really, a test for his *dharma* (duty to a very loyal dog).

The demise of the Pandav brothers and Draupadi occurred after the death of Sri Krishna [vide infra].

DHVAMSA [RUINATION] OF YADAV CLAN IN A NUTSHELL. WHY THEY HAD TO GO TO PRABAS

In accordance with Gandhari's curse to Krishna, Dwarka was falling to pieces. All kinds of strange things had been happening. Chaotic conditions were prevalent. Deceptive verbal and nonverbal communications became a current social process. Bullying, assaulting, addiction, prejudice, and mental disorder had been crawling and creeping under the skin of everyone.

The Yadavs in Dwarka had gone through a bunch of weasel-worded platitudes as they had lived with bad faith with each other for quite a few years. That had happened because of Gandhari's curse. All kinds of strange things had been happening. Chaotic conditions were prevalent. Deceptive verbal and nonverbal fracas were very much the order of the day at that time in this city state.

Whereupon, following Krishna's advice, all the able-bodied men along with Ram and Krishna came to Prabas. The old folks stayed behind looking after the city as did the women and children.

At Prabas, the men had holy dips in the Saraswati River. They felt very happy and gave alms to the Brahmins. And as it was a pleasure trip, the Yadav men enjoyed themselves drinking Soma Ras wine that was inspired by the magic of ancient India. They drank the whole day and night.

One day, they were having a picnic on the banks of the Saraswati River. By the late afternoon, they drank to their eyeballs, and some got the worse for wear. They swore at each other as alcohol took away the inhibitions. A serious brawl broke out among themselves.

In the end, fist fights broke out between them as the Yadav men were not susceptible to the average weapons because of a curse from Brahma. They killed themselves in hand-to-hand combat. Seeing the shameful affray, Shree Ram walked away to a quiet place by the river. He meditated, sitting in the *yoga sadhan* posture, during which, because of his *yoga shakti* [energy] he merged his *atma* (soul) with *Mahatma* (The Absolute). He left this mortal world and floated in a chariot of flowers to *Nij dham* [Heavenly abode].

A few days after Shree Ram passed away, downhearted Krishna strolled in the nearby forest without having a particular destination. After a while he took rest, sitting down with his right foot crossed over his left leg and leaning on the trunk of a peepal tree [khongnang in Manipuri, Bodh Tree in English, *Ficus religiosa* in botany, a variation of fig tree.]

It was sometime after, when a hunter named Jara, saw Krishna's bare pinkish sole of his right foot. From a distance. he mistook it to be the ear of a deer in the shade of large creepers. He took aim and shot his arrow that pierced the insole of Krishna's left foot and entered his body.

When Jara went over to retrieve his trophy. he was flabbergasted to find Shree Krishna lying down in a morbid state. He cried and asked Krishna for forgiveness, giving his reasons and wondering what type of life he would have in his next birth.

Seeing his great worries, Shree Krishna in a feeble tone of voice, reassured Jara that nothing would happen to him in his next birth. The incident happened because he (Krishna) willed him so.

Krishna told Jara to go away without any worry and said, "I have absolved you of all your sins, and until you die, you should keep company of sadhus. When you die you will surely come up to Veikunth". Hearing Krishna's blessings, the hunter got up, touched Krishna's feet, and left for home.

While this tragic event was taking place, elsewhere, Daruk was looking for Krishna. When he found Krishna's body, soaked in blood beneath the peepal tree, he nearly fainted. While he was crying, deeply dejected, Krishna told Daruk that he was glad that he came.

Then, Krishna directed Daruk to go to the city of Indraprastha and inform the Pandav brothers about his morbidity, and tell them also that, the whole Dwarkapur would be sinking under water except his Temple. It would be completely sunk under the sea in seven days. And he should ask Arjun to rescue his father, mother, women, and children.

And for you Daruk, Krishna told him to leave all the dharma and dedicate himself, body, and soul, to him. Krishna assured him that all his sins would be exonerated. Not only that, after his death, he would surely find Krishna.

As Krishna was giving the message to his charioteer Daruk, a chariot came from heaven and carried Krishna with four weapons, [1. Sharanga Bow, 2. Sudarshan Chakra, 3. Kaumudaki Gada, 4. Narayan Astra Celestial missile], high up to Veikunth. That was the end of Krishna's world of human form. The legend of Krishna died with it, but that was the beginning of his divine form. It was now the beginning of Kali Yug.

To carry out Shree Govind's mandate, Daruk got up and prostrated over and over by the wounded body of Shree Govind. He then said goodbye to his Lord and went straight to Hastinapur in Krishna's chariot.

In Hastinapur, Daruk gave his respects to Yudhisthir and other brothers. He narrated the whole episode to them and told Arjun what his Lord had particularly said to tell him.

The Pandav brothers were overwhelmed with profound sadness and emptiness at the loss of Krishna.

Ninety-Sixth Chapter

RETURN OF BASUDEV-KRISHNA (ADOPTING PARENTS) TO VEIKUNTH

As mentioned earlier, Basudev-Krishna felt his time for playing leelas was over and wanted to return to Gokul. And to fulfil the curse from Gandhari, he willed the hunter Jara, to shoot him through his foot. That was the only way Krishna could be killed. He was lying on his side, just breathing, waiting for Arjun to come.

To see Hari's *Nirvana* (moksha), [deliverance from the suffering of births and rebirths, or emancipation], all the devas from heaven came down to Prabas tirth. All the munis, rishis and *Prajapati* [Lord of the beings, Brahma in the Vedic period], and other deities also arrived.

Everyone was singing Krishna's praise and throwing handfuls of flowers to him. Arjun had now, arrived. He bowed to Krishna with torrents of tears running down his cheeks. Shree Krishna [still alive] when he saw Arjun, could not help shedding some tears. With a frail voice Krishna asked Arjun to hold him up and seat him down in his lap.

Arjun obliged with tender loving care. Shree Govind looked around with humanness in his heart. He felt that the end of his time had come and closed his eyes. Arjun burst into a loud sob and lost consciousness.

There was beating of *Dudhbi* [Vedic drums of war and peace] in heaven. Various flowers rained down from heaven. No one, even the devas missed how Shree Hari left Prabas and ascended to heaven. Everyone at Prabas was mournful, and left for home, still reciting the attributes of Krishna.

Daruk also went back to Dwarka carrying the sad news. He told Basudev and Ugrasen. There were feelings of sadness, stupor, and stagnation all over Dwarka. Everyone cried calling Krishna with their hands resting on their heads.

Many went looking for their dead relatives at Prabas. Parents for children. Grandparents for their grandsons. Wives for husbands. Everyone prepared the funeral pyre for the dead and offered rice grains, sesame seeds and flowers on it. Many parents out of love for their children, collapsed and lost their lives. Many women fulfilled the Sati dharma by climbing on the burning pyres of their husbands.

Basudev, having not found Ram and Krishna among the dead bodies, passed away. Devaki and Rohini ended their lives by sitting on top of the burning *chita* [funeral pyre] of Basudev. The lady wife of Shree Ram and the family of Shree Govind followed suit. They had their [moksha] (emancipation).

The rest of the dead bodies that were not claimed, were cremated by Arjun with the offering of *Pindu Dan* [gift of God] at the tirth. Arjun, thereafter, headed to Dwarka. He was able to control his emotions as he

was taught by Krishna [in Gita] at the beginning of the Mahabharat War.

From Dwarka, he took with him all the women, children and old people who had survived, to Indraprastha. Before he left, he saw the sea rising over Dwarkapur, steadily submerging the city except the Mani Mandir.

On arrival in Hastinapur, Arjun narrated the grim story which made everyone grief-stricken and inconsolable. It was such a blow that Arjun decided that there was no point living anymore now that Krishna had passed away. He sent for Brajanav, whom he made the king of Madhupur after the *abhishek* [anointing or consecration].

The Pandav brothers were deciding to leave this world and go to heaven.

DEATH OF FOUR PANDAV BROTHERS & DRAUPADY. ASCENSION OF YUDHISTHIR TO HEAVEN

Although, little is known about what happened to the Pandav brothers after the Mahabharat war, we do get some inklings. Here is the account of the last phase of the five Pandavs and Draupadi after the death of Krishna.

Yudhistir became the ruler of Indraprastha and Hastinapur after the Mahabharat war. After the demise of Krishna, unable to bear the loss, the Pandav brothers renounced the world, leaving the kingdom in the hands of their sole heir- Parikshit, [the son of Abhimanyu and Uttara, and grandson of Arjun].

Having done that solemn duty, the five Pandav brothers, along with Draupadi left Hastinapur on their way towards the north [of India], and to the sacred Meru (Sumeru) five-peaked mountain in the Himalayas, considered to be the centre of all physical and metaphysical universe.

The four younger brothers and Draupadi died on the way, at different heights, in the freezing ice of the Himalayas. Draupadi was the first. Only Yudhisthir, because he was extremely virtuous, survived. He eventually, succeeded in reaching heaven. Golak-Nath Krishna and Basudev-Krishna also, returned to their respective *dhams* [abodes].

ADDENDUM FROM THE TRANSLITERATOR

The life story of Krishna in various ancient texts, such as Bhagwad Puran, Vishnu Puran, and Harivansh Puran, abounds in many versions that differ from each other in certain minor details. The main story line, however, is just the same. After all, Krishna's life story goes back to 3,228 BCE, to the beginning of Kali Yug (the current epoch after the death of Krishna).

Bhagwad Puran [Bhagawad means lord, an epithet of Hindu deities; Puran means Ancient] is the holy text for Vaishnavism, especially Gouranga [Bengali] Vaishnavism in North India.

Bhagawad puran puts more emphasis on Krishna, unlike in Vishnu Puran, which was first composed in the 10th century in the Tamil country of south India.

Bhagawad puran contains 18,000 verses (slokas), 335 chapters (Adhya) which is presented in 12 cantos (sections). [Bhagawad Gita contains only 700 verses in 18 chapters].

Krishna's date of birth also varies. According to Bhagawad Puran, the date of Krishna's birth was July 21 3228 BCE. Date of Krishna's death was February 18 102 BCE. Krishna's 5250th birthday fell on 6&7 September 2023 while I was writing this book.

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