

Shloka

Salutation to Lord Vishnu incarnate, the benefactor of the people (लोकानाम्), the one who whisked away Draupadi's (कृष्णायाः) grief, the guide (literally charioteer) of Arjuna (पार्थः).

Note the use of the चतुर्थी विभक्तिः in connection with the word नमः ("नमः स्वस्ति स्वाहा स्वधा अलं वषट् योगाच्च।")

Main text

There is, among the places the Kurus ruled (कुरुषु), a city Hastinapura by name. Shantanu, the son of the light of the race of the moon (Glorification as a glorious scion of the line), Prateepa, ruled over it. He begot a son, Devavrata in Ganga. He (Devavrata) though attained of youth, vowed lifelong celibacy (ब्रह्मचर्यम्) for the sake of his father (पितुरपेक्षया). He became known as Bheeshma from then onward. The father, happy with him (at his gesture), granted him the boon of choice (in terms of time) in the matter of death (स्वच्छन्दमरणं), married a maiden of the fisher-people (दाशकन्या), Satyawati, begot a son Vichitraveerya from her, and himself was assigned an end by Dharma (died). Bheeshma, bore (दधत्) his child-brother's kingdom for him and later, after the latter had attained to youth, making him King, made (चकार) him a Grhastha (relevant: गृहमेधिन्) with the help of the daughters of the Kaashee King. He also having died (उपरतः : dead) not long from then, Satyawati, desiring propagation of the race, with Shantanu's son's (Bheeshma's) approval, engaged (नियोजयामास) her son Paaraashara (Parashaara's son, Shree Vedavyaasa), the son of a young woman (कानीन, begotten by the unmarried Satyawati), in the task of causing her elder daughter-in-law (ज्येष्ठा सुषा) Ambikaa to beget progeny. She (Ambikaa), disgusted (बीभत्समाना शानच्) at his form, approached him with her eyes closed (स्वचक्षुषी पिधाय). In her was born a son reflective of her stance (blind). Him they called (आहुः) Dhrtaraashtra. Dissatisfied with this grandson, that daughter of a fisherman's wife (दाशेयी, Satyawati), engaged him (Vyaasa) with (the task of ...) her younger daughter-in-law Ambaalikaa. She, on his arrival (तत्समागमे) became scared as a doe (हरिणीभूतेवाभवत्, might have blanched at the sight of Vyaasa). In her was born a son in that likeness (pale, perhaps weak). He was named Paandu. Assigned again to him by her mother-in-law (Satyawati), who was not satisfied (अनभिमत) (with the outcome), that second one (in the order of daughter-in-laws in the family) sent a low-caste woman (शूद्रा, her servant, perhaps) made up and outfitted suitably (possibly in an attempt at impersonation). In that woman, in whom that very uncommon meeting roused eagerness was a son by name Vidura, endowed with all good qualities, born.

Owing to the eldest's (eldest brother's) blindness from birth on (जात्यन्धता) and the youngest's being the offspring of a Brahmin father and Shoodra mother (पारशव), the middle (brother) Paandu became the king. The son of Ambika (आम्बिकेयः) obtained the maiden of Subala, Gaandhaari as wife. When she (Gaandhaari) heard (शुश्राव) about herself given away (दिसितम्, दातुम् इच्छा दित्वा) to such a groom, so that in the husband jealousy may not arise, she covered her eyes well (सम्यग्बद्ध्वा, might mean tightly) too with a cloth (पटैः), becoming like a blind (woman), was thus true to fidelity. Pandu obtained two wives, Kunttee and Maadri by name.

That king, accompanied by a great host (बलेन, with army) and his wife (भार्यया सहितः सभार्या) went to a forest on a hunt on a certain occasion. He, killing (घ्नन्, शानच्?) deer (मृगान्), boars (वराहान्), buffaloes (महिषान्), wild dogs (श्वापदान्), and others (as he roamed) here and there (तत्र तत्र), suddenly (यदृच्छया) made the male (पुमांसम्) of a deer couple (हरिणमिथुनस्य) in play the target (शरव्यम्) of his arrow. He (the deer), pierced (ताडितः) strongly (बलवत्, seen in an instance of अनुनासिक सन्धिः) in the heart (मर्मणि) by that arrow, giving up his deer form and in the form of a sage, said with grief (सव्यथमाह): "O King! (राजन्, सम्बोधन प्रथमा विभक्तिः), am I not (अहं किल) a sage by name Kindama? with desire to enjoy freely by my own impulse I followed a dual state (द्वन्द्वधर्मम् अचरम्) (as a sage and a deer). This being the state of affairs (ईदृशे, ईदृशे सति, सति सप्तमी प्रयोगः), seeing what (कम्) slight (लवम्) crime (in it) have you assaulted (me)? It is not as per custom (साम्प्रतम्) for you to harm (पीडयितुम्) innocent (निरपराधो) well respected people like me (as a sage) or a deer going about non-violently on the journey of life. The King's weapon (शस्त्रम्) is for containing the violent person (हिंस्रस्य) and not to cause grief to troubled (or poor) people. If you killed me without analysis, on that account, let your death result by contact with a female", and having thus cursed him, passed away (विरतासुरभूत्).