

# CHAPTER ONE

## The Degraded Dynasties of Kali-yuga

The Twelfth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam begins with Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī predicting the kings of the earth who will appear in the future during the Age of Kali. Then he gives a description of the numerous faults of the age, after which the presiding goddess of the earth sarcastically berates the foolish members of the kingly order who perpetually try to conquer her. Next Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains the four varieties of material annihilation, and then he gives his final advice to Mahārāja Parīkṣit. Thereafter King Parīkṣit is bitten by the snake-bird Takṣaka and leaves this world. Sūta Gosvāmī concludes his narration of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to the sages at Naimiṣāraṇya forest by enumerating the teachers of the various branches of the Vedas and Purāṇas, relating the pious history of Mārkaṇḍeya Rṣi, glorifying the Supreme Lord in His universal form and in His expansion as the sun-god, summarizing the topics discussed in this literature, and offering final benedictions and prayers.

The First Chapter of this canto briefly describes the future kings of the dynasty of Magadha and how they become degraded because of the influence of the Age of Kali. There were twenty kings who ruled in the family of Pūru, in the dynasty of the sun-god, counting from Uparicara Vasu to Purañjaya. After Purañjaya, the lineage of this dynasty will become corrupted. Following Purañjaya there will be five kings known as the Pradyotanas, who are then followed by the Śiśunāgas, the Mauryas, the Śuṅgas, the Kāṇvas, thirty kings of the Andhra nation, seven Ābhīras, ten Gardabhīs, sixteen Kaṅkas, eight Yavanas, fourteen Turuṣkas, ten Gurunḍas, eleven Maulas, five Kilakilā monarchs and thirteen Bāhlikas. After this, different regions will be ruled over at the same time by seven Andhra kings, seven Kauśalas, the kings of Vidūra, and the Niṣadhas. Then the power of rulership in the countries of Magadha and so forth will fall to kings who are no better than śūdras and mlecchas and are totally absorbed in irreligion.

Texts 1-2:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The last king mentioned in our previous enumeration of the future rulers of the Māgadha dynasty was Purañjaya, who will take birth as the descendant of Bṛhadratha. Purañjaya's minister

Śunaka will assassinate the king and install his own son, Pradyota, on the throne. The son of Pradyota will be Pālaka, his son will be Viśākhayūpa, and his son will be Rājaka.

Text 3:

The son of Rājaka will be Nandivardhana, and thus in the Pradyotana dynasty there will be five kings, who will enjoy the earth for 138 years.

Text 4:

Nandivardhana will have a son named Śiśunāga, and his son will be known as Kākavarṇa. The son of Kākavarṇa will be Kṣemadharmā, and the son of Kṣemadharmā will be Kṣetrajña.

Text 5:

The son of Kṣetrajña will be Vidhisāra, and his son will be Ajātaśatru. Ajātaśatru will have a son named Darbhaka, and his son will be Ajaya.

Texts 6-8:

Ajaya will father a second Nandivardhana, whose son will be Mahānandi. O best of the Kurus, these ten kings of the Śiśunāga dynasty will rule the earth for a total of 360 years during the Age of Kali. My dear Parīkṣit, King Mahānandi will father a very powerful son in the womb of a śūdra woman. He will be known as Nanda and will be the master of millions of soldiers and fabulous wealth. He will wreak havoc among the kṣatriyas, and from that time onward virtually all kings will be irreligious śūdras.

Text 9:

That lord of Mahāpadma, King Nanda, will rule over the entire earth just like a second Paraśurāma, and no one will challenge his authority.

Text 10:

He will have eight sons, headed by Sumālya, who will control the earth as powerful kings for one hundred years.

Text 11:

A certain brāhmaṇa [Cāṇakya] will betray the trust of King Nanda and his eight sons and will destroy their dynasty. In their absence the Mauryas will rule the world as the Age of Kali continues.

Text 12:

This brāhmaṇa will enthrone Candragupta, whose son will be named Vārisāra. The son of Vārisāra will be Aśokavardhana.

Text 13:

Aśokavardhana will be followed by Suyāśā, whose son will be Saṅgata. His son will be Śāliśūka, Śāliśūka's son will be Somaśarmā, and Somaśarmā's son will be Śatadhanvā. His son will be known as Bṛhadratha.

Text 14:

O best of the Kurus, these ten Maurya kings will rule the earth for 137 years of the Kali-yuga.

Texts 15-17:

My dear King Parīkṣit, Agnimitra will follow as king, and then Sujyeṣṭha. Sujyeṣṭha will be followed by Vasumitra, Bhadraka, and the son of Bhadraka, Pulinda. Then the son of Pulinda, named Ghoṣa, will rule, followed by Vajramitra, Bhāgavata and Devabhūti. In this way, O most eminent of the Kuru heroes, ten Śuṅga kings will rule over the earth for more than one hundred years. Then the earth will come under the subjugation of the kings of the Kāṇva dynasty, who will manifest very few good qualities.

Text 18:

Vasudeva, an intelligent minister coming from the Kāṇva family, will kill the last of the Śuṅga kings, a lusty debauchee named Devabhūti, and assume rulership himself.

Text 19:

The son of Vasudeva will be Bhūmitra, and his son will be Nārāyaṇa. These kings of the Kāṇva dynasty will rule the earth for 345 more years of the Kali-yuga.

Text 20:

The last of the Kāṇvas, Suśarmā, will be murdered by his own servant, Balī, a low-class śūdra of the Andhra race. This most degraded Mahārāja Balī will have control over the earth for some time.

Texts 21-26:

The brother of Balī, named Kṛṣṇa, will become the next ruler of the earth. His son will be Śāntakarna, and his son will be Paurṇamāsa. The son of Paurṇamāsa will be Lambodara, who will father Mahārāja Cibilaka. From Cibilaka will come Meghasvāti, whose son will be Aṭamāna. The son of Aṭamāna will be Anīṣṭakarmā. His son will be Hāleya, and his son will be Talaka. The son of Talaka will be Purīṣabhīru, and following him Sunandana will become king. Sunandana will be followed by Cakora and the eight Bahus, among whom Śivasvāti will be a great subduer of enemies. The son of Śivasvāti will be Gomatī. His son will be Purīmān, whose son will be Medaśirā. His son will be Śivaskanda, and his son will be Yajñaśrī. The son of Yajñaśrī will be Vijaya, who will have two sons, Candravijña and Lomadhi. These thirty kings will enjoy sovereignty over the earth for a total of 456 years, O favorite son of the Kurus.

Text 27:

Then will follow seven kings of the Ābhīra race from the city of Avabhṛti, and then ten Gardabhīs. After them, sixteen kings of the Kaṅkas will rule and will be known for their excessive greed.

Text 28:

Eight Yavanas will then take power, followed by fourteen Turuṣkas, ten Guraṇḍas and eleven kings of the Maula dynasty.

Texts 29-31:

These Ābhīras, Gardabhīs and Kaṅkas will enjoy the earth for 1,099 years, and the Maulas will rule for 300 years. When all of them have died off there will appear in the city of Kilakilā a dynasty of kings consisting of Bhūtananda, Vaṅgiri, Śīśunandi, Śīśunandi's brother Yaśonandi, and Pravīraka. These kings of Kilakilā will hold sway for a total of 106 years.

Texts 32-33:

The Kilakilās will be followed by their thirteen sons, the Bāhlikas, and after them King Puṣpamitra, his son Durmitra, seven Andhras, seven Kauśalas and also kings of the Vidūra and Niṣadha provinces will separately rule in different parts of the world.

Text 34:

There will then appear a king of the Māgadhas named Viśvasphūrji, who will be like another Purañjaya. He will turn all the civilized classes into low-class, uncivilized men in the same category as the Pulindas, Yadus and Madrakas.

Text 35:

Foolish King Viśvasphūrji will maintain all the citizens in ungodliness and will use his power to completely disrupt the kṣatriya order. From his capital of Padmavatī he will rule that part of the earth extending from the source of the Gaṅgā to Prayāga.

Text 36:

At that time the brāhmaṇas of such provinces as Śaurāṣṭra, Avantī, Ābhīra, Śūra, Arbuda and Mālava will forget all their regulative principles, and the members of the royal order in these places will become no better than śūdras.

Text 37:

The land along the Sindhu River, as well as the districts of Candrabhāgā, Kauntī and Kāśmīra, will be ruled by śūdras, fallen brāhmaṇas and meat-eaters. Having given up the path of Vedic civilization, they will have lost all spiritual strength.

Text 38:

There will be many such uncivilized kings ruling at the same time, O King Parīkṣit, and they will all be uncharitable, possessed of fierce tempers, and great devotees of irreligion and falsity.

Texts 39-40:

These barbarians in the guise of kings will devour the citizenry, murdering innocent women, children, cows and brāhmaṇas and coveting the wives and property of other men. They will be erratic in their moods, have little strength of character and be very short-lived. Indeed, not purified by any Vedic rituals and lacking in the practice of regulative principles, they will be completely covered by the modes of passion and ignorance.

Text 41:

The citizens governed by these low-class kings will imitate the character, behavior and speech of their rulers. Harassed by their leaders and by each other, they will all suffer ruination.