

CHAPTER SEVENTY-FIVE

Duryodhana Humiliated

This chapter describes the glorious conclusion of the Rājasūya sacrifice, and how Prince Duryodhana was humiliated in King Yudhiṣṭhira's palace.

At the time of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice, many of his relatives and well-wishers endeavored to please him by performing necessary services. When the sacrifice was complete, the King adorned the priests, the exalted members of the assembly and his own relatives with fragrant sandalwood paste, flower garlands and fine clothing. Then they all went to the banks of the Ganges to perform the ritual bathing that marks the end of the sponsor's period of initiation for the sacrifice. Before the final bathing, there was much sporting in the river among the male and female participants. Sprinkled with aromatic water and other liquids, Draupadī and the other ladies appeared most beautiful, their faces shining with bashful laughter.

After the priests had executed the final rituals, the King and his queen, Śrīmatī Draupadī, bathed in the Ganges. Then all those present who belonged to the orders of varṇāśrama bathed. Yudhiṣṭhira put on new clothes and worshiped the learned brāhmaṇas, his family, friends and well-wishers, each in the particular manner suitable for them, and offered them all various gifts. The guests then departed for their homes. But King Yudhiṣṭhira was so anxious about his imminent separation from those who were dear to him that he compelled several of his relatives and closest friends, including Lord Kṛṣṇa, to remain in Indraprastha a bit longer.

King Yudhiṣṭhira's royal palace had been constructed by Maya Dānava, who had endowed it with many wonderful features and opulences. King Duryodhana burned with envy when he saw these riches. One day, Yudhiṣṭhira was seated with Lord Kṛṣṇa in his royal assembly hall. Attended by his subordinates and family members, he was manifesting magnificence equal to that of Lord Indra. At that time Duryodhana entered the hall in a fitful mood. Bewildered by the mystic craft of Maya Dānava, Duryodhana mistook parts of the solid floor for water and thus lifted his garment, while in one place he fell into the water, mistaking it for the solid floor. When Bhīmasena, the ladies of the court and the royal princes present saw this, they began to laugh. Although Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira tried

to stop them, Lord Kṛṣṇa encouraged their laughter. Thoroughly embarrassed, Duryodhana left the assembly hall in a fury and immediately departed for Hastināpura.

Texts 1-2:

Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: O brāhmaṇa, according to what I have heard from you, all the assembled kings, sages and demigods were delighted to see the wonderful festivities of King Ajātaśatru's Rājasūya sacrifice, with the sole exception of Duryodhana. Please tell me why this was so, my lord.

Text 3:

Śrī Bādarāyaṇi said: At the Rājasūya sacrifice of your saintly grandfather, his family members, bound by their love for him, engaged themselves in humble services on his behalf.

Texts 4-7:

Bhīma supervised the kitchen, Duryodhana looked after the treasury, while Sahadeva respectfully greeted the arriving guests. Nakula procured needed items, Arjuna attended the respectable elders, and Kṛṣṇa washed everyone's feet, while Draupadī served food, and generous Karṇa gave out the gifts. Many others, such as Yuyudhāna; Vikarṇa, Hārdikya; Vidura; Bhūriśravā and other sons of Bāhlīka; and Santardana, similarly volunteered for various duties during the elaborate sacrifice. They did so because of their eagerness to please Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, O best of kings.

Text 8:

After the priests, the prominent delegates, the greatly learned saints and the King's most intimate well-wishers had all been properly honored with pleasing words, auspicious offerings and various gifts as remuneration, and after the King of Cedi had entered the lotus feet of the Lord of the Sātvatas, the avabhṛtha bath was performed in the divine river Yamunā.

Text 9:

During the avabhṛtha celebration, the music of many kinds of instruments resounded, including mṛdaṅgas, conchshells, panavas, dhundhuris, kettledrums and gomukha horns.

Text 10:

Female dancers danced with great joy, and choruses sang, while the loud vibrations of vīnās, flutes and hand cymbals reached all the way to the heavenly regions.

Text 11:

All the kings, wearing gold necklaces, then set off for the Yamunā. They had flags and banners of various colors and were accompanied by infantrymen and well-adorned soldiers riding lordly elephants, chariots and horses.

Text 12:

The massed armies of the Yadus, Śṛṅjayas, Kāmbojas, Kurus, Kekayas and Kośalas made the earth tremble as they followed Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, the performer of the sacrifice, in procession.

Text 13:

The assembly officials, the priests and other excellent brāhmaṇas resoundingly vibrated Vedic mantras, while the demigods, divine sages, Pitās and Gandharvas sang praises and rained down flowers.

Text 14:

Men and women, all adorned with sandalwood paste, flower garlands, jewelry and fine clothing, sported by smearing and sprinkling one another with various liquids.

Text 15:

The men smeared the courtesans with plentiful oil, yogurt, perfumed water, turmeric and kuṅkuma powder, and the courtesans playfully smeared the men with the same substances.

Text 16:

Surrounded by guards, King Yudhiṣṭhira's queens came out on their chariots to see the fun, just as the demigods' wives appeared in the sky in celestial airplanes. As maternal cousins and intimate friends sprinkled the queens with liquids, the ladies' faces bloomed with shy smiles, enhancing the queens' splendid beauty.

Text 17:

As the queens squirted water from syringes at their brothers-in-law and other male companions, their own garments became drenched, revealing their arms, breasts, thighs and waists. In their excitement, the flowers fell from their loosened braids. By these charming pastimes they agitated those with contaminated consciousness.

Text 18:

The emperor, mounted upon his chariot drawn by excellent horses wearing golden collars, appeared splendid in the company of his wives, just like the brilliant Rājasūya sacrifice surrounded by its various rituals.

Text 19:

The priests led the King through the execution of the final rituals of patnī-saṁyāja and avabhṛthya. Then they had him and Queen Draupadī sip water for purification and bathe in the Ganges.

Text 20:

The kettledrums of the gods resounded, along with those of human beings. Demigods, sages, forefathers and humans all poured down showers of flowers.

Text 21:

All the citizens belonging to the various orders of varṇa and āśrama then bathed in that place, where even the most grievous sinner can immediately be freed from all sinful reactions.

Text 22:

Next the King put on new silken garments and adorned himself with fine jewelry. He then honored the priests, assembly officials, learned brāhmaṇas and other guests by presenting them with ornaments and clothing.

Text 23:

In various ways King Yudhiṣṭhira, who had totally dedicated his life to Lord Nārāyaṇa, continuously honored his relatives, his immediate family, the other kings, his friends and well-wishers, and all others present as well.

Text 24:

All the men there shone like demigods. They were adorned with jeweled earrings, flower garlands, turbans, waistcoats, silk dhotīs and valuable pearl necklaces. The lovely faces of the women were beautified by their matched earrings and locks of hair, and they all wore golden belts.

Texts 25-26:

Then the highly cultured priests, the great Vedic authorities who had served as sacrificial witnesses, the specially invited kings, the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras, demigods, sages, forefathers and mystic spirits, and the chief planetary rulers and their followers — all of them, having been worshiped by King Yudhiṣṭhira, took his permission and departed, O King, each for his own abode.

Text 27:

As they all glorified the wonderful Rājasūya-yajña performed by that great saintly King and servant of Lord Hari, they were not satiated, just as an ordinary man is never satiated when drinking nectar.

Text 28:

At that time Rājā Yudhiṣṭhira stopped a number of his friends, immediate family members and other relatives from departing, among them Lord Kṛṣṇa. Out of love Yudhiṣṭhira could not let them go, for he felt the pain of imminent separation.

Text 29:

My dear Parīkṣit, the Supreme Lord remained there for some time to please the King, after first sending Sāmba and the other Yadu heroes back to Dvārakā.

Text 30:

Thus King Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, was at last relieved of his burning ambition, having by the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa successfully crossed the vast and formidable ocean of his desires.

Text 31:

One day Duryodhana, while observing the riches of King Yudhiṣṭhira's palace, felt greatly disturbed by the magnificence of both the Rājasūya sacrifice and its performer, the King, whose life and soul was Lord Acyuta.

Text 32:

In that palace all the collected opulences of the kings of men, demons and gods were brilliantly manifest, having been brought there by the cosmic inventor, Maya Dānava. With those riches Draupadī served her husbands, and Duryodhana, the prince of the Kurus, lamented because he was very much attracted to her.

Text 33:

Lord Madhupati's thousands of queens were also staying in the palace. Their feet moved slowly, weighed down by their hips, and the bells on their feet tinkled charmingly. Their waists were very slender, the kunḁuma from their breasts reddened their pearl necklaces, and their swaying earrings and flowing locks of hair enhanced the exquisite beauty of their faces.

Texts 34-35:

It so happened that Emperor Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, was sitting just like Indra on a golden throne in the assembly hall built by Maya Dānava. Present with him were his attendants and family members, and also Lord Kṛṣṇa, his special eye. Displaying the opulences of Brahma himself, King Yudhiṣṭhira was being praised by the court poets.

Text 36:

Proud Duryodhana, holding a sword in his hand and wearing a crown and necklace, angrily went into the palace in the company of his brothers, O King, insulting the doorkeepers as he entered.

Text 37:

Bewildered by the illusions created through Maya Dānava's magic, Duryodhana mistook the solid floor for water and lifted the end of his garment. And elsewhere he fell into the water, mistaking it for the solid floor.

Text 38:

My dear Parīkṣit, Bhīma laughed to see this, and so did the women, kings and others. King Yudhiṣṭhira tried to stop them, but Lord Kṛṣṇa showed His approval.

Text 39:

Humiliated and burning with anger, Duryodhana turned his face down, left without uttering a word and went back to Hastināpura. The saintly persons present loudly cried out, “Alas, alas!” and King Yudhiṣṭhira was somewhat saddened. But the Supreme Lord, whose mere glance had bewildered Duryodhana, remained silent, for His intention was to remove the burden of the earth.

Text 40:

I have now replied to your question, O King, concerning why Duryodhana was dissatisfied on the occasion of the great Rājasūya sacrifice.