

CHAPTER ONE

The Curse upon the Yadu Dynasty

This chapter gives a hint of the destruction of the Yadu dynasty, which took place owing to the appearance of an iron club. Hearing this narration is a great impetus for becoming detached from the material world.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa expertly arranged the great Kurukṣetra battle between the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas and thus removed to a great extent the earth's burden. But the Supreme Lord, whose influence is inconceivable, was not yet satisfied, because of the continued presence of the undefeatable Yadu family. The Lord desired to bring about the destruction of the Yadu dynasty so that He could completely wind up His pastimes on the earth and go back to His own abode. Using the pretense of a curse by an assembly of brāhmaṇas, He withdrew His entire dynasty from the surface of the earth.

By Śrī Kṛṣṇa's desire, many great sages, headed by Nārada and Viśvāmitra, assembled at the holy place named Piṇḍāraka, near the city of Dvārakā. The young boys of the Yadu family, absorbed in a playful mood, also arrived there. These boys dressed Sāmba in the guise of a pregnant woman about to give birth and inquired from the sages about the fruitfulness of Sāmba's so-called pregnancy. The sages cursed the mocking boys by saying, "She will give birth to a club that will destroy your family." The Yadus, frightened by this curse, immediately lifted the garment from Sāmba's abdomen and found a club. Hurrying to the assembly of Ugrasena, the King of the Yadus, they offered a report of everything that had taken place. Fearing the brāhmaṇas' curse, Yadurāja Ugrasena ordered the club ground to powder and thrown into the ocean. Within the ocean, a fish swallowed the last remaining lump of iron, and the waves carried all the bits of ground powder to the shore, where they were implanted and eventually grew into a grove of canes. Fishermen caught the fish, and a hunter named Jarā used the iron lump found in its belly to fashion an arrow. Although the Supersoul, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, understood what was happening, He did not wish to do anything to counteract it. Rather, in the form of time He sanctioned these events.

Text 1:

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by Balarāma and surrounded by the Yadu dynasty, executed the killing of many demons. Then, further to remove the burden of the earth, the Lord arranged for the great Battle of Kurukṣetra, which suddenly erupted in violence between the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas.

Text 2:

Because the sons of Pāṇḍu were enraged by the numerous offenses of their enemies, such as duplicitous gambling, verbal insults, the seizing of Draupadī's hair, and many other cruel transgressions, the Supreme Lord engaged those Pāṇḍavas as the immediate cause to execute His will. On the pretext of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, Lord Kṛṣṇa arranged for all the kings who were burdening the earth to assemble with their armies on opposite sides of the battlefield, and when the Lord killed them through the agency of war, the earth was relieved of its burden.

Text 3:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead used the Yadu dynasty, which was protected by His own arms, to eliminate the kings who with their armies had been the burden of this earth. Then the unfathomable Lord thought to Himself, "Although some may say that the earth's burden is now gone, in My opinion it is not yet gone, because there still remains the Yādava dynasty itself, whose strength is unbearable for the earth."

Text 4:

Lord Kṛṣṇa thought, "No outside force could ever bring about the defeat of this family, the Yadu dynasty, whose members have always been fully surrendered to Me and are unrestricted in their opulence. But if I inspire a quarrel within the dynasty, that quarrel will act just like a fire created from the friction of bamboo in a grove, and then I shall achieve My real purpose and return to My eternal abode."

Text 5:

My dear King Parīkṣit, when the supreme almighty Lord, whose desire always comes to pass, had thus made up His mind, He withdrew His own family on the pretext of a curse spoken by an assembly of brāhmaṇas.

Texts 6-7:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the reservoir of all beauty. All beautiful things emanate from Him, and His personal form is so attractive that it steals the eyes away from all other objects, which then seem devoid of beauty in comparison to Him. When Lord Kṛṣṇa was on the earth, He attracted the eyes of all people. When Kṛṣṇa spoke, His words attracted the minds of all who remembered them. By seeing the footsteps of Lord Kṛṣṇa, people became attracted to Him, and thus they wanted to offer their bodily activities to the Lord as His followers. In this way Kṛṣṇa very easily spread His glories, which are sung throughout the world by the most sublime and essential Vedic verses. Lord Kṛṣṇa considered that simply by hearing and chanting those glories, conditioned souls born in the future would cross beyond the darkness of ignorance. Being satisfied with this arrangement, He left for His desired destination.

Text 8:

King Parīkṣit inquired: How could the brāhmaṇas curse the Vṛṣṇis, who were always respectful to the brāhmaṇas, charitable, and inclined to serve senior and exalted personalities and whose minds were always fully absorbed in thought of Lord Kṛṣṇa?

Text 9:

King Parīkṣit continued inquiring: What was the motive for this curse? What did it consist of, O purest of the twice-born? And how could such a disagreement have arisen among the Yadus, who all shared the same goal of life? Please tell me all these things.

Text 10:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The Lord, who bore His body as the amalgamation of everything beautiful, dutifully executed the most auspicious activities while on the earth, although He was, in fact, without any endeavor already satisfied in all desires. Residing in His abode and enjoying life, the Lord, whose glorification is in itself magnanimous, now wanted to annihilate His dynasty, as there still remained some small part of His duty to be carried out.

Texts 11-12:

The sages Viśvāmitra, Asita, Kaṇva, Durvāsā, Bhṛgu, Aṅgirā, Kaśyapa, Vāmadeva, Atri and Vasiṣṭha, along with Nārada and others, once performed fruitive rituals that award abundant pious results, bring great

happiness and take away the sins of Kali-yuga for the whole world by merely being recounted. The sages duly executed these rituals in the home of the chief of the Yadus, Vasudeva, the father of Lord Kṛṣṇa. After Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was staying in Vasudeva's house as time personified, respectfully sent the sages off at the conclusion of the ceremonies, they went to the holy place called Piṇḍāraka.

Texts 13-15:

To that holy place, the young boys of the Yadu dynasty had brought Sāmba, son of Jāmbavatī, dressed in woman's garb. Playfully approaching the great sages gathered there, the boys grabbed hold of the sages' feet and impudently asked them with feigned humility, "O learned brāhmaṇas, this black-eyed pregnant woman has something to ask you. She is too embarrassed to inquire for herself. She is just about to give birth and is very desirous of having a son. Since all of you are great sages with infallible vision, please tell us whether her child will be a boy or a girl."

Text 16:

Thus ridiculed by deceit, the sages became angry, O King, and told the boys, "Fools! She will bear you an iron club that will destroy your entire dynasty."

Text 17:

Upon hearing the curse of the sages, the terrified boys quickly uncovered the belly of Sāmba, and indeed they observed that therein was an iron club.

Text 18:

The young men of the Yadu dynasty said, "Oh, what have we done? We are so unfortunate! What will our family members say to us?" Speaking thus and being very disturbed, they returned to their homes, taking the club with them.

Text 19:

The Yadu boys, the luster of their faces completely faded, brought the club into the royal assembly, and in the presence of all the Yādavas they told King Ugrasena what had happened.

Text 20:

O King Parīkṣit, when the inhabitants of Dvārakā heard of the infallible curse of the brāhmaṇas and saw the club, they were astonished and distraught with fear.

Text 21:

After having the club ground to bits, King Āhuka [Ugrasena] of the Yadus personally threw the pieces, along with the remaining lump of iron, into the water of the ocean.

Text 22:

A certain fish swallowed the iron lump, and the bits of iron, carried back to the shore by the waves, implanted themselves there and grew into tall, sharp canes.

Text 23:

The fish was caught in the ocean along with other fish in a fishermen's net. The iron lump in the fish's stomach was taken by the hunter Jarā, who fixed it as an arrowhead at the end of his shaft.

Text 24:

Knowing fully the significance of all these events, the Supreme Lord, though capable of reversing the brāhmaṇas' curse, did not wish to do so. Rather, in His form of time, He gladly sanctioned the events.