

Jayah

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(Translated from Malayalam by A. Purushothaman)

*vyāsaṃ vasisthanaptāraṃ śakteḥ pautramakalmaṣam
parāśarātmajaṃ vande śukatātaṃ taponidhim*

I bow to Vyāsa, the treasure of penance, devoid of *kalmaṣa*, father of Śuka, son of Parāśara, grandson of Śakti and great-grandson of Vasiṣṭha.

Vedas, Vyāsasūtras and Bhagavadgītā are the authoritative texts of *Sanātana Dharma*. These are the foundation stones of the great structure of *Sanātana Dharma*. Among these, Vyāsasūtras define the meaning of Upaniṣads, the head of Vedas. Gītā advises how the principles so defined should be implemented in daily life. In general, this trinity is called the *Prasthāna Traya*. In this trinity, the fundamental authorities are Upaniṣads. These are considered to be eternal and *apauruṣeya* (not of human origin). In this manner, *Sanātana Dharma* is *apauruṣeya*. As Buddhism, Christianity and Islam have their own founders, Hinduism does not have a founder. The basis of Hinduism is certain great principles based on traditional conventions. Individuals have a place in Hinduism only as the models of these principles.

Even though the status is this, if we look for an Ācārya for Hinduism, whom do we find? Vyāsa. How and Why? The great person named Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana became famous as Veda Vyāsa, since he divided the Vedas, since he organized and arranged the Vedas in four sections. The branches of Vedas were sustained only because these were arranged, organized and taught to each disciple. Otherwise, because of the volume, due to the lack of people capable of studying, Vedas might have been forgotten. It is Vyāsa who composed Brahmasūtras to define the meaning of Vedānta. It is Vyāsa who composed Mahābhārata which includes Bhagavadgītā. Thus the supreme Ācārya of *Sanātana Dharma* is Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana Vyāsa who, in the *Prasthāna Traya*, arranged Vedas, prepared the Sūtras and composed Bhagavadgītā.

During a certain period of time, a rule came into being that only the three classes, that too only men, are entitled to study Vedas. What is the status of people born in the last class

and women who constitute the majority of the body of the society? Are they denied the spiritual relief? The son of Parāśara became Veda Vyāsa. The Brahmins also accepted him as Ācārya. The son of Parāśara is also the son of Matsyagandha. Can the kind-souled one forget the class and race of his mother? No. Let the letter and sound of Vedas be kept as monopoly by the Brahmins; but the son of Satyavati decided that the ultimate fruit of Vedas should be made available to all. To make the principles of spirituality easily available to women and śūdras, Vyāsa composed a great voluminous work, Mahābhārata which became famous as the fifth Veda.

Vyāsa also clarified its purpose:

itihāsa purāṇābhyāṃ vedārthamupabṛmhayet (Ādi Parva, 1, 267)

By the aid of history and the Purāṇas, the Veda may be expounded (KMG). Vyāsa composed one hundred thousand ślokas for this purpose. By its inner strength and its volume, Mahābhārata is the best work in the world. The statement of the author

dharme cārthe ca kāme ca mokṣe ca bharatarṣabha

yadi hāsti tadanyatra yanne hāsti na tad kvacit (Ādi Parva 62.53)

O Bull among the Bharata monarchs! Whatever is spoken about virtue, wealth, pleasure and salvation may be seen elsewhere; but whatever is not contained in this is not to be found anywhere (KMG) is only a statement of facts, nothing else.

Vyasocchiṣṭam jagatsarvam,

the saying that there is nothing in the world, that is not said by Vyāsa is also true. In the former days, having placed the four Vedas on one side and the Bhārata on the other, these were weighed in the balance by the celestials assembled for that purpose. And as the latter weighed heavier than the four Vedas with their mysteries, from that period it has been called in the world Mahābhārata (the great Bhārata) (KMG).

tataḥ prabhṛti lokesmin mahābhāratamucyate (Ādi Parva, 1. 273).

bharatānām mahatjanma mahābhāratamucyate (Ādi Parva 62.39)

... from that period it hath been called in the world Mahābhārata (the great Bhārata) (KMG).

The history of the exalted birth of the Bharata princes is called the Mahābhārata (KMG).

mahatvād bhāravatvācca mahābhāratamucyate (Ādi Parva 1.274)

Being esteemed superior both in substance and gravity of import, it is denominated Mahābhārata on account of such substance and gravity of import (KMG). Thus due to excelling the Vedas, detailed description of Bharata race, superiority in substance and gravity of import, the

name Mahābhārata is indeed meaningful.

Vyāsa has given another name also for this.

jayo nāmetihāso'yam śrotavyo vijigīṣuṇā (Ādi Parva 62.20)

This history is called Jaya. It should be heard by those desirous of victory (KMG).

jayo nāmetihāso'yam śrotavyo jayamichhatā (Svargārohaṇa Parva 5.46)

This history is known by the name of Jaya. It should be heard by everyone desirous of victory (KMG). In other places also he has repeated the same idea and name of the work several times. Vyāsa has given the names Bhārata based on history, Mahābhārata based on superiority in substance and Jaya based on aim. Scholars begin the recitation of Jaya remembering Nārāyaṇa. Hence, Jaya is the name which they also approve. Because Mahābhārata became an epic through which the meaning of Vedas is explained, it became the fifth Veda and thus the eternal script-text only because its soul is Jaya and not because it is the history of Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas. History is governed by Time. Jaya which is revealed through this work is beyond Time.

Whose victory is celebrated by Vyāsa through Bhārata? What is the ultimate message of the epic Bhārata?

dharmā eva hato hanti, dharmo rakṣati rakṣitaḥ

tasmād dharmam na tyājāmi mā no dharmo hatovadhī (Vana Parva 313.128)

Yudhiṣṭhira said: If virtue is sacrificed, he that sacrifices it, is himself lost. So virtue also cherisheth the cherisher. Therefore taking care that virtue by being sacrificed may not sacrifice us, I never forsake virtue (KMG).

Kunti who proceeds to the forest in the end advises the son of Dharma:

dharmā te sthīyatām buddhirmanastu mahadastu te (Āśramavāsika Parva 17.21)

Let thy understanding be always devoted to righteousness. Let thy mind be always great (KMG).

While Bhīṣma advises on Dharma to Yudhiṣṭhira we see him bowing to Dharma and Kṛṣṇa: *namo dharmāya mahate namaḥ kṛṣṇāya vedhase* (Śānti Parva 60.6).

Bowing to Dharma who is supreme, unto Kṛṣṇa who is Brahma in full and unto the brāhmaṇas (KMG). In Bhārata, the nature of Dharma and its various modifications in form which occur based on differences in space, time and individuals such as *Varṇa Dharma*, *Āśrama Dharma*, *Sāmānya Dharma*, *Viśeṣa Dharma*, *Strī Dharma*, *Āpad Dharma*, *Rāja Dharma*, *Mokṣa Dharma*, etc., are discussed in detail. Perhaps Dharma is the word which is one of the words used in Bhārata most frequently. There are two aspects of Dharma: the aim and

the path. The author of Bhārata describes Dharma and Kṛṣṇa same as the aim with no difference whatsoever. The phrase,

yato dharmastato jayah

for victory is there, where righteousness is there (KMG) and

yataḥ kṛṣṇastato jayah (Bhīṣma Parva 21.13.14)

There is victory where Krishna is (KMG) are seen at many places in Bhārata. In these phrases, Dharma and Kṛṣṇa are shown as one and the same. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of Dharma.

The characters of Mahābhārata can be classified into two: those who observe Dharma and those who do not. Among those who observe Dharma, there are those who live with those of similar nature and those who, while living with those who do not observe Dharma, do not leave their Dharma. There are those, who do not obey Dharma and not having the mental strength to obey it, influenced by situations, in spite of knowing what their Dharma is. There are also those who obey Dharma, without heeding to adverse situations. Dharma's son and others live in the shadow of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of Dharma, and achieve the righteous victory. Vidura, in spite of staying with Kauravas who do not obey Dharma, lived respecting, obeying and advising Dharma. Yudhiṣṭhira proves that, Dharma can be maintained even if one has the authority to rule. Vidura proves that even the dependent can live without leaving Dharma. Gāndhārī is the soul of such greatness who, when her son seeking victory came to her requesting her blessings, raising beyond the love for her son, praised the greatness of Dharma.

śṛṇu mūḍha vacomahyaṃ yato dharmastato jayah (Śalya Parva 63.62)

Listen, O fool, to these words of mine, viz., thither is victory where righteousness is there (KMG).

tvatsamā nāsti loke'sminnadya sīmantiṇī śubhe (Śalya Parva 63.59)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Gāndhārī: O auspicious dame, there is now no lady like thee in the world (KMG).

King Dhṛtarāṣṭra is the unfortunate one, who in spite of knowing what Dharma is, could not obey it, due to the love for his son. Karṇa's situation is more unfortunate than all these. Even though he was blessed with a great birth, due to the turn of fortune, he was forced to grow up among the uncultured and live with people who do not obey Dharma. Even though Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of Dharma invited him to the side of Dharma's son, even though he knew that his side is moving towards destruction, he was unable to accept it due to his bondage to the surroundings. A scene from the battlefield of Karṇa Parva: Yudhiṣṭhira fights against Karṇa. The hero bow-man easily overcame Yudhiṣṭhira. Yudhiṣṭhira began

to retreat. Karṇa ran after and approached him:

pavitrikartumātmānam skandhe samspr̥śya pāṇinā (Karṇa Parva 49.52)

The son of Rādha, then pursuing Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Pāṇḍu, cleaned himself by touching him in the shoulder with his own fair hand (KMG). To clean himself by touching the shoulder of the embodiment of Dharma! This occurs in the battlefield. Karṇa is facing his defeated younger brother. Karṇa, who was able to honour Dharma even in the fatal battlefield, You are blessed! O great Sage, I bow to you, who could keep the victory flag of Dharma fluttering high even in the bloody battlefield!

The great Sage has only one regret. With uplifted arms, I am crying aloud but nobody hears me. From righteousness is wealth as also pleasure. Why should not righteousness, therefore be courted? For the sake neither of pleasure, nor of fear, nor of cupidity, should anyone cast off righteousness. Indeed, for the sake of even life one should not cast off righteousness. Righteousness is eternal. Pleasure and pain are not eternal. Jiva is eternal. The cause, however of Jiva's being invested with a body is not so (KMG). Thus the author of Bhārata proclaims the excellence of Dharma in the verses, famous as Bhārata Sāvitrī. The ultimate message of the epic of Bhārata is the victory of Dharma. The ultimate essence of Bhārata is the all encompassing victory of the Lord, the embodiment of Dharma.

dhāraṇād dharmamityāhur dharmo dhārayate prajāḥ

yat syād dhāraṇasaṃyuktaṃ sa dharma iti niścaya (Karṇa Parva 69.58)

For the growth of creatures have percepts of morality been declared. That which is connected with inoffensiveness is religion. Dharma protects and preserves the people. So it is the conclusion of Pandits that what maintains is Dharma (KMG).

Since it is the Lord who creates and maintains creatures, the Lord, who is the base of all these, is the ultimate Dharma. The method to attain that embodiment of Dharma is also included in Dharma. For if one does not have the craving for spirituality, life will become a waste. Whatever is born of truth, cannot become untruth. Hence observance of Dharma maintains life. What is the phase of Dharma, which is principally advised by the author of Bhārata?

saha yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā puro vāca prajāpatiḥ

anena prasaviṣyadhvaṃ eṣa vo'stviṣṭakāmadhuk (Gītā 3.10)

In olden times, the lord of creation, creating men and sacrifice together, said: Flourish by means

of this (sacrifice). Let this (sacrifice) be to you (all) the dispenser of all objects cherished by you (KMG).

yajñāṛthād karmaṇo'nyatra loko'yam karmabandhanaḥ (Gītā 3.9)

This world is fettered by all work other than which is (performed) for sacrifice (KMG). No one can abide even for a moment without doing work. If that work should not become cause for attachment, that should be performed for sacrifice. What is meant by **performed for sacrifice**? There is a mantra: *Yajño vai Viṣṇu*. Thus work performed for sacrifice means work performed for the Lord. This is what the Lord advised Pārtha as well: Whatever you do, eating, performing sacrifice, giving alms, doing penance, doing everything - do for me. All right, is there a relation between sacrifice and Jaya (victory)? The subject of Bhārata is the victory of sacrifice. How can this be in agreement, when earlier it was said that it is the victory of Dharma, and now it is the victory of sacrifice? Sacrifice is the method of achieving Dharma. Only if the method is faultless, one can attain the aim. Through the Dharma of sacrifice, one attains the ultimate Dharma. Here, Dharma of sacrifice means work performed for the Lord. Does the author of Jaya give opportunity to state that sacrifice is the method? Let us see.

Based on the technique of indicating a number through a combination of letters (*kaṭapayādi*) Jaya means the number 18. There are 18 Parvas in Bhārata. There are 18 chapters in Gītā. The total number of Akṣauhiṇis that took part in the Bhārata war from both sides is 18. The war lasted for 18 days. Kunti, Gāndhāri and Dhṛtarāṣṭra perished in the forest fire, 18 years after the war.

evam varṣāṇyatītāni dhṛtarāṣṭrasya dhīmataḥ

vanavāse tathā trīṇi nagare daśa pañca ca (Āśramavāsika Parva 39.25)

Even thus did king Dhṛtarāṣṭra make his exit from this world after having passed three years in the forest and ten and five years in the city (KMG). The Vṛṣṇi race perished due to the curse of Gāndhāri after thirty six (twice eighteen) years elapsed. Thus when we see many eighteens, we should think that it did not happen due to chance, but it is used purposefully. So what? Then we can consider it as a symbol. Of what? Of sacrifice. How is that?

In Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, where it deals with sacrifice, we note this:

aṣṭādaśotkamavaram yeṣu karmam (1.2.7)

Here, *aṣṭādaśam* (18) suggests the 18 persons required: 16 *ritviks*, the *yajamāna* and his wife, for performing the sacrifice. Thus 18 implies sacrifice. Whose sacrifice is suggested

here? The sacrifice of all those, who observe Dharma, especially son of Dharma. A great sacrifice performed by *jīva*, the son of Dharma, for the ultimate soul, using the five work organs, five knowledge organs, five *prāṇās*, mind and intellect is dealt with in detail in this work.

The Ācārya of Gītā advises that everything should be performed for the Lord. While Gītā advises that

svakarmanā tamabhyarcya siddhiṃ vindati mānavah (18.46)

Even performing all actions at all times having refuge in me, he obtaineth through my favour, the seat that is eternal and imperishable (KMG), this is what is meant. When one's work is performed for sacrifice, that becomes *svadharma*, a spiritual quest.

With this, Jaya implies the supreme soul which pervades everything and the performance of *svadharma* dedicated to it. What is implied is the victory of sacrifice, the victory of Dharma in the form of *sādhana* and *siddhi*. Then there is a doubt: If Dharma is said to be the work performed, dedicated to the Lord, as *sādhana*, does it not become evident that influence of fate is more important than man's effort? Let it be. So what? Do not some people say that it is foolishness to rely on faith, and that is the reason for India's dismal state of affairs. This is a lament without properly understanding the position of and interrelation between fate and effort. Let us consider the story of Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas. Kauravas thought that they can achieve everything at all times with their might. The great warriors such as Bhīṣma and Droṇa were on their side as well. Each of them alone were capable of conquering the world. The Kauravas had more military strength and equipment. They conducted the affairs without considering the propriety or otherwise, righteousness or otherwise, defying good men, mocking at advices and even challenging Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The question is: Did they not achieve many things? The answer is, yes, indeed. But in the end, they destroyed others and they themselves perished.

vardhatyadharmeṇa narastato bhadraṇi paśyati

tataḥ sapatnāñjayati samūlastu vinaśyati (Vana Parva 94.4)

A man may be seen to prosper by his sins, obtain good therefrom and vanquish his foes. Destruction however overtakes him to the roots (KMG). What about the Pandavas? They had done everything with the permission and blessings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Still, did they not suffer from many afflictions? Yes, but the fact is: In any dangerous or difficult situation, they had an inner satisfaction. Always they had the faith that they are living for Dharma and

Dharma will save them. They also had the comfort arising out of this belief. There is an internal flow of satisfaction between and below the pains and difficulties that occur, while following a great ideal. This makes them adhere to Dharma and brave to perform. While searching for the root of Dharma, Manu also adds the phrase

ātmanastuṣṭireva ca (Manu 2.6)

after stating Vedas, and the cannons of experts of Veda, their operations and rituals. This satisfaction of *ātma* is the biggest compensation received by the observer of Dharma. Pāṇḍavas had enough of this. This is what supported them in the life struggle. The reason for the firmness-at-war (*Yudhiṣṭhira*) of the Pāṇḍavas is the state of being the son of Dharma (*Dharmaputra*). What about Duryodhana and others? While enjoying the kingdom and supreme power, they were burning inside. What is the experience and opinion of their father Dhṛtarāṣṭra who possesses the eye of *prajñā*?

daivam puruṣakāreṇa na śakyamativartitum.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra repeatedly says that human effort does not have the ability to overcome the will of god; Sañjaya reminds him the same thing.

If this is so, is it sufficient to depend on *daivam* and do nothing? If one has the firm belief that everything is being done by *daivam*, then there is nothing to be done. It is sufficient if you are conscious that you are only an instrument. But this is the supreme state. Till you are conscious that you are an individual, you should do your Dharma, remembering the God, with faith and the *ātman's* courage derived thereof. What did the son of wind (Hanuman) who is proud to be *dāśosmi kosalendrasya* (I am servant of King of Kosala) tell Rāvaṇa? Even if hundred hundred thousand Rāvaṇas oppose me together they will not be up to my little finger. Then, you, wicked, what can you do against me?

yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pāṛtho dhanurdharaḥ

tatra śrīvijayabhūtir dhruvā nīṭirmatirmama

(Gītā 18.78)

Thither where Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yoga (is) thither where the great bowman (Pārtha) is, thither, in my opinion are prosperity and victory and greatness and eternal justice (KMG). Only Vijaya who is ready to fight the enemies, with his bow, supported by Kṛṣṇa will have prosperity and Dharma. The reason for the miserable condition of Bharat is that it is steeped with laziness and injustice, devoid of any sense of duty or courage to carry out its Dharma. The seed for this was sown, not by the adherence to truth or attention to Dharma or interest in

religion; but by the classes of Śakunis who look for exploiting these to achieve their selfish goals. Now, is there a place for human effort, without fate? Human effort can work only up to the extent permitted by *daiva*. All those who swear by human effort, will declare loudly at the dusk of their life, in the light of their life experiences, in the sacred presence of the sequence of failures, at the nadir of desperation, that they were wrong, *daivam* tricked them by giving them a slight feeling of independence. Look at what Bhīṣma says to Yudhiṣṭhira (Śānti Parva 177.11):

*yadi vāpyupapadyeta pauruṣam nāma karhicit
anviṣyamāṇam tadapi daivamevāvadhiṣṭate*

Exertion is futile in what is due to chance. Or if the existence of anything like exertion (as an agent in the production of results) be admitted, a deeper search would discover destiny at the bottom (KMG). If we dedicate all our efforts to Lord, fully conscious that the power of Lord is operating through us, life will succeed. Life will transform to sacrifice. What is seen in Mahābhārata is the Dharma-sacrifice of Dharma's son, war-sacrifice of Arjuna and the knowledge-sacrifice of Vyāsa. All those who perform their *svadharma* dedicated to the Lord are performing sacrifices. The ultimate aim of such sacrifice is the realisation of the Lord. Vyāsa clearly states that the ultimate aim of Bhārata and all scriptures is constant consciousness of Dharma.

*ālodya sarvaśāstrāṇi vicārya ca punaḥ punaḥ
idamekaṃ suniṣpannaṃ dhyeyo nārayaṇaḥ sadā*

What is obtained by checking all scriptures carefully is this: Man's duty is to remember the Lord always. But then, in Bhārata, is it not that this is stated relatively few times only? From one point of view this is true. But there is a reason for this. As it is stated that

parokṣapriyā hi devāḥ Gods are fond of the indirect,

Vyāsa has also adopted a similar method. Through the story of Kauravas and others, who struggled life-long, without considering the purity or otherwise of the method adopted for obtaining wealth, pleasure and authority and failed, through the victory and peace of soul attained by Pāṇḍavas dependent on Lord, Vyāsa is glorifying the greatness of dependence on Lord, indirectly. There also he achieves this through the greatly vast idea of Dharma, without using the signs such as devotion to Lord or deliverance. There also he has used an indirect way,

dharmadarthasca kāmasca sa dharmāḥ kiṃ na sevyate?

From righteousness is wealth as also pleasure. Why should not righteousness therefore be courted? (KMG), Vyasa asks. Ordinary man is a slave of wealth and pleasure. He will open his eye if he hears that he will get them. Let him court Dharma, even if it is with this aim. Gradually, he will get convinced about the futility of wealth and pleasure and leaving them, he will look for the Lord, the eternal Dharma. This kind view prompted Vyāsa to adopt this indirect method. If the method is faultless, aim will be achieved automatically. In Bhāgavatam, Nārada accuses Vyāsa that this method is not altogether right. He advises Vyāsa to compose Bhāgavatam, entirely glorifying God. There Vyāsa adopts the direct method.

dharmasya hyāpavargasya nārthorthāyopakalpyate

Dharma, the method for deliverance is not for obtaining wealth. Similarly, in the beginning, he says: the subject of Bhāgavatam is also Dharma, but it is

projjitakaitavam, devoid of any lie.

In Bhārata, Vyāsa described Dharma, stating with a bit of a lie, that courting Dharma will achieve pleasure. But in Bhāgavatam, the subject is Dharma devoid of any lie, devoid of any desire. Leaving the indirect method of Bhārata, Vyāsa has adopted the direct method in Bhāgavatam. Even then, this does not mean that the indirect way is a failure. Due to the vast nature of Bhārata, it has become very difficult for humans to read it from beginning to end and to absorb the lessons from it. What culture remains in the end, after reading from beginning to end and thinking about it? Everything is the Lord's play. Gāndhāri saw that behind the Bhārata war were the hands of Kṛṣṇa, a great manipulator of false plays. That vision empowered this great lady to curse even Kṛṣṇa. But that great person of illusion accepted the curse also saying that even that is his will. The Lord himself made Gāndhāri to pronounce the curse, residing in her as her inner soul.

Thus this Veda of victory celebrates the all encompassing victory of sacrifice, the form of method, and the victory of ultimate Dharma, the form of aim. Let us also think a little on the explanation of Veda achieved by Bhārata.

The first mantra of Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, considered as the first among the ten Upaniṣads is

īśāvāsyamidam sarvaṃ yad kiñca jagatyām jagat

tena tyaktena bhūñjīthā mā ḡrdhaḥ kasyasvidhanam

Know that the entire universe of fixed and movable beings is pervaded by the supreme Lord. Enjoy, dedicating everything to him. Do not covet anything. Because, everything belongs to the

supreme Lord.

Just as we worship Ganga using water from Ganga, dedicating the entire wealth, given by the Lord to the Lord himself, dedicating the entire power given by the Lord to court him, lead life. The echo of this mantra is reverberating in the advice given by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna:

sarvadharmān parityajya māmekaṃ śaraṇam vraja

ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ

(Gīta 18.66)

Forsaking all (religious) duties, come to me as thy sole refuge. I will deliver thee from all sins. Do not grieve (KMG). This is the Lord's pledge, Arjuna's expectation and the hope of mankind.

It is very difficult to confirm that the principal message of Mahābhārata is this, only this. The status of Gītā, the heart of Bhārata and other works composed by Vyāsa is also somewhat like this. It may be possible to establish that the principal message of Bhārata is one of Dharma of Āśrama and Varṇa, *Rājanīti*, *Daṇḍhanīti*, political science, economics, material progress, enjoyment of pleasures, family relations, relations in society, ancient history, human life, *Viveka*, *Vairāgya*, Dharma of alms, spiritual knowledge or any such matter. It may be possible to locate the definitions, criticisms, supporting texts, sub-texts and characters representing these in it. If an investigation is started taking a subject considering it to be the principal topic of Mahābhārata, that subject will become the tap root and main trunk of the great tree of Mahābhārata, and all other topics will transform suitably to become the branches, leaves etc., of the tree. Anyone can take anything from this treasure. The viewer will discover things according to his nature and taste only. Each one of us is living in a thought-world of his own. Even then, the way shown here appears to be a vast way, which is able to include all of them. If one considers the introduction and conclusion, one can see that the subject is the victory of Dharma. Vyāsa suggests the all-encompassing and complete word Dharma as the supreme aim and its way, without using any other word with narrow meaning. The publications of that Dharma in its various planes, times and situations are evident through other ideals. The message of Bhārata is

dharmo rakṣati rakṣitaḥ, Virtue also cherisheth the cherisher (KMG).

The embodiment of Dharma is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and its methodology is sacrifice. Hence *jayo nāmetihāsoyam śrotavyo mokṣamicchate* (Swargārohaṇa Parva 5.51)

This history is known by the name of Jaya. It should be heard by everyone desirous of emancipa-

tion, (KMG). If one wants to attain the highest place, one should extol this history of Jaya, celebrating the victory of Dharma and sacrifice.

yadi dharmam yathāsakti janmaprabhṛti sevate

tataḥ sa puruṣo bhūtvā sevate niyataṁ sukham (Anuśāsana Parva 100.37)

If the jīva, according to the best of his power, follows righteousness from the day of his birth, he then succeeds in enjoying, when reborn, happiness without interruption (KMG).

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Translator's Note:

(1) KMG denotes English translation by Kisari Mohan Ganguli. Available on the internet at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/m01/>

(2) The śloka numbers follow *Śrīmanmahābhāratam*, caturdharavamśāvatamsa śrīmannīlakaṇṭhaviracita bhāratabhāvadīpākhyāṭīkāyā sametam. Delhi: Nag Publishers, 1988-1991. 9 v., ISBN: 8170811821.

(3) The śloka starting *ālodya* cannot be located in the recension with Nīlakaṇṭha commentary. According to BORI and Gita Press editions, it occurs in the chapter 124, Anuśāsana Parva of the Southern Recension.