

**Mahabharata: supplementary passages to Adiparvan**  
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**The Sarpasatra Verses**

- 01\_031=0000 शौनक उवाच  
01\_031\_0001 जनमेजयेन राज्ञा वै किमर्थं सूतनन्दन  
01\_031\_0002 सर्पसत्रान्तरे पृष्ठो व्यासशिष्यो महातपाः  
01\_031\_0003 पूर्वजानां कथां मां वै तन्नो वद महामते  
01\_031\_0004 सर्वज्ञः सर्वदर्शी च न ते ह्यविदितं क्वचित्

Shaunaka said:

Why indeed did King Janamejaya, at the end of the snake sacrifice, ask Vyasa's disciple of great austerities to tell him the story of his ancestors, oh son of Soota? Please tell me that, oh man of great intellect. You are all-knowing, you see everything, and there is nothing unknown to you.

- 01\_031=0004 सूत उवाच  
01\_031\_0005 सर्पसत्रे च संपूर्णं ऋत्विजश्चागतश्रमाः  
01\_031\_0006 धूमसंभ्रान्तनेत्रास्तु दशाष्टौ सुषुपुस्तदा

Soota said:

When the snake sacrifice had been completed, the eighteen ritviks, exhausted, their eyes weary from smoke, fell asleep.

- 01\_031\_0007 तेषु सुप्तेषु सर्वेषु राजा पारिक्षितस्तदा  
01\_031\_0008 यज्ञान्ते ऋषिणिर्नैव निद्रा कार्या कथंचन  
01\_031\_0009 इति स्मृत्युक्तवचनं स्मृत्वा तानृषिसत्तमान्  
01\_031\_0010 अणिमन्त्रितेनोदकेन ऋषिणिश्चाणि चारकैः  
01\_031\_0011 प्रोक्षयामास तेषां वै निद्रान्तं तु चिकीर्षवान्

When all of them thus fell asleep, the son of Parikshit, remembering the words of the smritis that say that on no account should sages fall asleep at the end of a sacrifice, sprinkled on those great sages water that had been sanctified through mantras by rishis and abhicharakas, wishing to wake them up.

01\_031\_0012 एतस्मिन्नन्तरे तत्र मूर्च्छामापुः सुदीर्घिकाम्  
01\_031\_0013 अचेतनांश्च मुनयस्तान्दृष्ट्वा दुःखितोऽवत्

But instead, the sages, in the meantime, became unconscious and entered a long-lasting swoon, seeing which he became sad.

01\_031\_0014 तदा सःसदो विप्राः प्रोचुश्च जनमेजयम्  
01\_031\_0015 धिग्धित्ते चेष्टितं राजन्ब्राह्मणान्हतवानसि  
01\_031\_0016 ब्रह्महत्याष्टादश वै कृतास्त्वया नराधिप  
01\_031\_0017 चर तर्धान्यनेकानि पश्चाच्छुद्धिमवाप्स्यसि

Then the brahmanas present in the assembly told Janamejaya: “Fie upon you, oh king! What you have done is a shame! You have killed the brahmanas. You have just committed eighteen brahmahatyas. Go and visit numerous teerthas and after that you shall be purified.

01\_031\_0018 एतस्मिन्नन्तरे तत्र वागुवाचाशरीरिणः  
01\_031\_0019 दुःखितं चिन्तयाक्रान्तं राजानं जल्लयन्निव  
01\_031\_0020 ब्रह्महत्याविमोक्षार्थं कृत्वा चण्डं निळीयुतम्  
01\_031\_0021 अष्टादशारत्निकं च तद्वासः परिधाय च  
01\_031\_0022 पाण्डवानां कथा ह्यत्र अष्टादशकपर्वकम्  
01\_031\_0023 शृणु त्वं ऽरतं च ततः शुद्धिमवाप्स्यसि

In the meantime, an incorporeal voice was heard there, which said, as if bringing the king overpowered by worry back to life: “To absolve yourself from the sin of brahmahatya, oh king, make a cloth with a veil and embedded with eighteen precious stones. Wear it and listen to the Bharata, the eighteen-parva story of the Pandavas, here itself, and then you shall be purified.”

01\_031\_0024 इति तद्वचनं श्रुत्वा ऋषिः श्वानुमोदितः  
01\_031\_0025 वासस्तदुक्तं वासित्वा व्यासं सत्यवतः सुतम्  
01\_031\_0026 प्रश्रयावनतो राजा पप्रच्छ पूर्वजां कथाम्  
01\_031\_0027 तामहं वर्णयिष्यामि शृणुध्वं ऽो मुनयः

Listening to these words and encouraged by the sages, he wore a cloth as instructed by the incorporeal voice and bowing down before Vyasa, the son of Satyavati, asked him to tell him the story of his ancestors. That story I shall now tell you, oh great sages, please listen to it.

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– Translation: Satya Chaitanya