

Mahabaratha Tatparya Nirnaya
- Introduction by Prof.K.T.Pandurangi

Chapter XIX

The episodes of Lakshagriha, Bhimasena's marriage with Hidimba, Killing Bakasura, Draupadi svayamwara, Pandavas settling down in Indraprastha are described in this chapter. The details of these episodes are well-known. Therefore the special points of religious and moral conduct highlights in Tatparya Nirnaya and its commentaries will be briefly stated here.

Kanika's wrong advice to Duryodhana

This chapter starts with instructions of Kanika an expert in the evil policies of politics to Duryodhana. This Kanika was also known as Kalinga. Probably he hailed from Kalinga region. He was a person of Bharadvaja gotra and an adviser to Shatrujna the king of Sauvira. He told Duryodhana that when the close relatives like brothers, parents, teachers, and friends are our enemies, we should talk sweet outwardly and plan for destroying them. Heretics, robbers, thieves and poor persons should be employed to kill them by poison. Outwardly we should pretend to be religiously. Rituals, sacrifices etc should be performed. Taking people into confidence by these means we should hit our enemy when the time is ripe. In this way Kanika secretly advised Duryodhana to plan against Pandavas. Duryodhana approached his father Dhritarashtra and appealed to him to send out Pandavas to some other place. Initially Dhritarashtra said Pandavas are also my sons, they are well behaved, brave, they will add to the wealth and the reputation of our kingdom, and therefore, it is not proper to send them out. However, Duryodhana insisted that they should be sent out. He said he has mastered one hundred and thirty powerful hymns that will protect him from the enemies. Strong persons like Karna and Ashvatthama are on his side. He can take care of the kingdom without Pandavas. If Pandavas continue here they will create internal dissension in the family. They will insult and neglect you as blind person. I have thought of a way to send them, There is a temple of Vishnu with Shiva in the linga form at Varnavata. He is called Jayanta. There is a festival at this temple. Pandavas are the devotees of Vishnu. They may be sent to this place indraprastha the pretext of visiting this festival. Dhritarashtra asked Pandavas to go to this place with their mother Kunti. Bhimasena initially opposed this suggestion as he suspected some foul play behind it. However, he had to obey his brother. When they were about to leave Vidura gave them a hint of some calamity through the fire in a secret language.

Lakshagraha

Duryodhana had arranged a house prepared by lac outwardly well decorated through Purochana. This Purochana was Prahasta in his earlier birth at the time of Ramayana. When Vidura came to know it, he secretly arranged an underground channel for this house. Pandavas lived there for sometime. Purochana's sister came with her five children in the pretext of serving Pandavas. Her plan was to give poison to Pandavas while serving the food. Realising this Bhimasena used to take this food first and test it. No poison could affect him. One day she mixed the poison in food and gave it. Bhimasena took the whole

food mixed with poison and managed that others were not affected by it. Purochana's sister and her children slept. The house was put on fire. Bhimasena escaped through the underground channel with his mother and brothers.

Bhimasena took his mother and brothers on his shoulders and arms and went out of the burning house. He traveled throughout the night and reached the forest in which the demon Hidimba lived. Hidimba found out by the very smell that some human beings have come. He sent his sister to kill and bring them. However, Hidimba was attracted by the personality of Bhimasena. She assumed a beautiful form and approached him. In her earlier birth she was an apsara. She tried to become the spouse of Indra and compete with Sachi. Consequently she was cursed by Sachi to be born as demon. Now she desired to marry Bhima and get out of Daemon's life. Still earlier she had performed and had secured a boon from Bharati that she would enjoy the benefit of contact with Vayu and get out of her demon life. There was an avेशa of Bharati in her to provide this privilege. When she approached Bhima, he hesitated a little to agree to her request. He thought it is not proper to marry before his elder brother's marriage. Hidimba was angry that his sister became friendly with Bhimasena instead of killing him for his food. He pounced upon Bhimasena. They bitterly fought and ultimately Hidimba was killed. After killing him, Bhima continued his journey. Hidimba followed him and requested Kunti and Bhima again and again to agree to her request. At this juncture Sri Vedavyasa arrived. He advised Bhima to marry Hidimba. He married and sported with her for about six months. They got a powerful son. He became known as Ghatothkacha as his head was without any hairs and like a pot when he was born. He got vertical hairs later. Bhima asked Hidimba to go. She left with the promise that she would come with her son whenever he remembered her.

Bakasura Vadha

Pandavas went to the ashram of Salihotra. He taught them Veda, Vedanga and political science. They continued their journey and went through Matsya, Trigarta, Panchala and Kichaka regions. They were dressed as Brahmanas. Sri Vedavyasa met them again and asked them to go to Ekachakranagara and stay there for sometime. He took them to a Brahmanas house in that city. Pandavas had to live by bhikshatana. Dharmaraja asked them to collect the food from Vaisya householders only. They used to carry a huge jar place it in the foreyard of the house and stand in silence. They never expressly asked for Bhiksha. Dharmaraja had asked Bhima not to go. Arjuna and other brothers only were going for bhiksha. Dharmaraja thought if Bhima goes he will be identified by his personality and "hum" Kara as Bhima and Kauravas may discover them. When Bhima went earlier for a few days he used to get bhiksha by "hum" Kara only.

In the course of time, Pandavas heard the crying of the Brahmana family in whose house they were staying. On enquiry they found that they were required to offer a huge quantity of food and a person to daemon Bakasura who had made it a condition for the people living in Ekachakranagara. On hearing the plight of that Brahmana, Kunti deputed Bhima to go with the food and take Bakasura to task. She was confident that Bhima would destroy him. According to his mother's instruction, Bhimasena went with a cartful of food and challenged Bakasura. In the fight with him he tore him in two pieces and handed at the gate of the city. The citizens were happy and profusely honored Bhimasena.

Draupadi Svayamwara

Sri Vedavyasa asked Pandavas to move further from Ekachakranagara. He informed that Draupadi Svayamwara is announced and they may go there. Since, Pandavas were moving the guise of Brahmanas the other Brahmanas also proposed to go to svayamwara and enjoy a big feast.

When Drupada had heard that the Pandavas were burnt down at Varnavata, he was very unhappy. He had a son Dhristadyumna and a daughter Draupadi. He had obtained these two by performing Putrakameshti ritual. He wanted to give his daughter Draupadi to Arjuna by marriage. Though he had heard that Pandavas were burnt down, he was not fully convinced of it. He hoped that Arjuna is alive somewhere and will arrive if svayamwara of Draupadi is announced.

Sri Krishna also knew that Pandavas were not burnt down. However, on hearing the news of the burning of their house, he went to Hastinavati, to offer his condolence to Dhritarashtra. He had to return to Dwaraka as the news of the death of Satrajita came to him. He returned to Dwaraka. Later on hearing the announcement of Draupadi svayamwara he went to the city of Drupada along with other yadavas. However, he had told Yadavas that their visit was only to see the svayamwara, but not to participate in it. In view of this Krishna he and Balarama did not participate in svayamwara.

On their way to the city of Drupada, Pandavas reached the bank of river Ganga at midnight. This disturbed the Gandharva chitrarath who was sporting in the water. He attacked Pandavas. Arjuna countered it forcefully. Chitrarath surrendered. Arjuna taught him agneyastra. He accepted adrishyavidya from him. This was not an exchange on equal basis. Agneyastra is much superior to adarshya vidya. Therefore Agneyastra was given as a gift and adrishyavidya was received as an offering. Gandharva suggested Arjuna that sage Dhaumya to be taken as a family priest. Pandavas agreed and took him as family priest.

At Drupada's city a grand svayamwara pedal was put up. Duryodhana, Karna, shishupala, Jarasandha etc large number of kings desirous of seeking the hand of Draupadi were present. Pandavas were sitting among Brahmanas. Dhristadyumna announced the terms to win the hand of Draupadi. A fish was tied to the branch of a tree. Its reflection was to be seen in the water kept below. The participants in svayamwara were required to hit the fish looking down its reflection in the water. He gave a bowl and five arrows. First Shishupala tried and failed. Then, Jarasandha, Shalya tried and failed. In the case of Karna a ticklish point is raised. According to North India recession of Mahabharatha Draupadi remarked that "Naham Variyam Sutham" I do not like to marry a charioteer. On the other hand when Arjuna asks Dhristadyumna whether a Brahmana can participate in the svayamwara contest, Dhristadyumna replies that "Brahmano Vatha Rajanyo Vaishyo va shudra aeva va?" Whether one is Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra if he can wield the bow and hit the mark, I shall give my sister. From this it is clear that Karna lost the chance by his incapacity but not on the ground of his caste. The North Indian version seems to be interpolation.

Finally Arjuna succeeds in hitting the mark and qualifies himself to seek the hand of Draupadi. After the event the usual fight among claimants takes place and Arjuna defeats them all. When

Pandavas return home and inform Kunti about their gain, another ticklish situation arises. Without knowing the nature of the gain, Kunti tells her sons that "you five share it". How could five brothers share one wife? This problem was solved by Sri Vedavyasa who arrived at that time. He informed Drupada, that the Pandavas are really Yama, Vayu, Indra and Ashwini Kumaras born as men. The wives of these are present in the body of Draupadi. Therefore, the marriage with Draupadi is really the marriage with their respective wives. With the grace of Vedavyasa Drupada saw their wives in the person of Draupadi and prostrated at the feet of Vedavyasa. The marriage was organized in a splendid way by Drupada.

Vidura informed Dhritarashtra about this marriage and advised him to bring Pandavas back to Hastinavati. Bhishma and Drona also advised him in the same way. He invited the Pandavas to come. They stayed in Dhritarashtra's palace for some days and then moved to Kunti's residence.

Pancha Patitva of Draupadi

The way in which the Pandavas dealt with Draupadi is quite interesting. In the person of Draupadi four women viz shyamala, Bharathi, Sachi and Usher were present. These were the wives of Yama, Vayu, Indra and Ashwini Kumaras who were now born as Pandavas. When Dharmaraja was in contact with Draupadi, Shyamala used to be actively present and others used to be in dormant state. Similarly when Bhimasena was in contact with Draupadi, Bharati used to be actively present and others in a dormant state. This process continued in other cases also. This avoided the overlapping of the contacts of these couples. The physical personalities of the wives were one but their actual presence was relative to their husbands. However, in the case of Vayu and Bharati, these were exclusively present when Bhima was in contact with Draupadi and were also present along with others when others were in contact. However, there was no overlapping of these two and the respective others so far as the contact is concerned. It only means that Vayu and Bharati were never dormant. The whole set up seems to be beyond human logic and human understanding. That is why it is called atimanusha.

Duryodhana had married Bhanumathi, the daughter of the king of Kashi even before Draupadi Svayamwara. She was Alakshmi Jyeshtha born at the time if Samudramathana before the birth of Lakshmi. She was a representative of inauspiciousness.

The differences between Duryodhana and Pandavas were growing. Therefore, Dhritarashtra and Pandavas were growing. Therefore, Dhritarashtra thought of settling Pandavas in a different place giving a portion of Kingdom to them a new capital city Indraprastha was built. Dharmaraja was duly coronated. Bhima was coronated as Yuvaraja.