

Bhishma Charithram



Dr.Jayanthi Parthasarathy B.D.S,M.S.,PhD



Sri Lakshmi Nrusimha ParabrahmaNe Nama:

Sri Navaneetha Krishna ParabrahmaNe Nama:

Srimate Sri Ramanujaya Nama: | Srimate Sri Nigamantha Maha DesikayaNama:

Srimate Sri Adivan Satakopa Yatheendra Maha Desikaya Nama:

Srimate Sri Lakshmi Nrisima Divya Paduka Sevaka Srivan Satakopa Sri Narayana

Yatheendra Maha Desikaya Nama: |

Srimate Srivan Satakopa Sri Ranganatha Yatheendra Maha Desikaya Nama:

Bhishma Charithram

**Based on Maha Mahopadyaya M V Ramanujachariar's
Sri Mahabharatha Parvangal – Adi Parva**

This document is prepared by Jayanthi Parthasarathy with
Asmad Acharyans Paripoorna Anugraham



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Sri Mahabharatha Parvangal – Adi Parva Chapters 102-107

Bhishma Pitamah stands as the towering moral conscience and the ultimate tragic patriarch of the Sri Mahabharatham, representing a **bridge between the divine and the mortal**. Born as **Dhrudavartha, the son of King Shantanu and the goddess Ganga**, he was a figure of unparalleled martial prowess and wisdom, yet his life was defined by the profound weight of renunciation. By taking his "terrible vow" of lifelong celibacy and renouncing his claim to the throne to facilitate his father's marriage, he transformed himself into **Bhishma**—one whose identity was forged in the fire of sacrifice. This oath, while noble in intent, became his golden cage; it bound him to the throne of Hastinapur regardless of who sat upon it, eventually forcing him to lead the armies of the unrighteous Kauravas against his beloved Pandava grandsons.

His character serves as a complex exploration of *Dharma*, illustrating the tragic paradox where a rigid adherence to a personal vow can lead to complicity in larger systemic injustice. Even in his defeat, Bhishma Pitamah remained a master of his destiny; gifted with the power to choose the moment of his death – Icha Mruthyu, he lay upon a bed of arrows to deliver his final, exhaustive discourses on statecraft and ethics, **transitioning from a fallen general to the ultimate sage of the epic**.

After the Great War, as Bhishma Pitamah lay on his bed of arrows (*Sharashaiya*), he shared the **Shanti Parva** and **Anushasana Parva**—the most



profound philosophical sections of the **Sri Mahabharatham**. His transition from a warrior to a teacher is seen as his final act of service to the world.

Bhishma Pitamah waited for the **Uttharayanam** (the northern solstice-movement of the sun) to leave his body. This was not merely about a calendar date; it symbolized a soul waiting for the moment of highest consciousness. His death marked the departure of the "Old Guard," leaving the Pandavas to navigate a new, more complicated era without their grandfather's protection.

Bhishma Pitamah's discourse to the new King Yudhishtira covered the essential duties of a leader, emphasizing that the king's happiness lies in the happiness of his subjects. According to Bhishma Pitamah, a successful ruler must master the following attributes to ensure the prosperity of the kingdom:

- **Dharma of a King (Raja dharma):**

- **Self-Restraint (Atma-Samyama):** A king who cannot govern his own senses and ego cannot hope to govern a nation. Bhishma Pitamah believed that internal mastery was the prerequisite for external power.
- **The "Six Faults":** He warned that a leader must abandon six specific vices: **sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, laziness, and procrastination.**
- **Strategic Secrecy:** He advised that while a king should be transparent in his justice, his strategic plans should be as "undiscoverable as the tracks of a fish in water."
- **The Balance of Softness and Severity:** A ruler should not be so soft as to be ignored, nor so harsh as to be feared by his own people. He used the analogy of the sun, which is bright but does not burn those who seek its warmth.

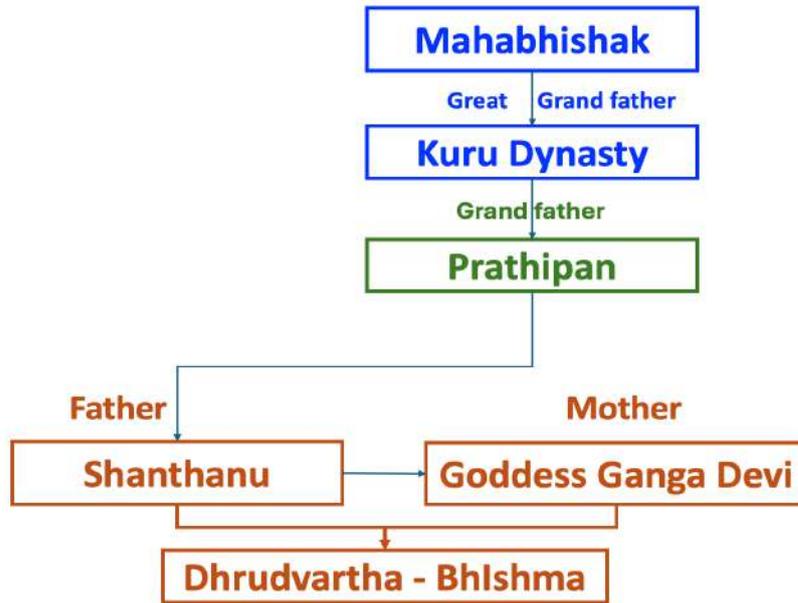


- **Selection of Ministers:** Bhishma Pitamah insisted that a king is only as good as his council. He urged Yudhishtira to surround himself with those who were not only brilliant but had the courage to tell the king the "bitter truth."
- **The Four Goals of Life:** He detailed the balance between **Dharma** (duty), **Artha** (prosperity), **Kama** (pleasure), and **Moksha** (liberation), explaining that an obsession with any one at the cost of the others leads to a soul's downfall.
- **The Vishnu Sahasranama:** At the request of Yudhishtira, Bhishma chanted the "Thousand Names of Lord Vishnu." He presented this as the ultimate spiritual tool—a way to find mental peace and clarity even amidst the chaos of a war-torn world.

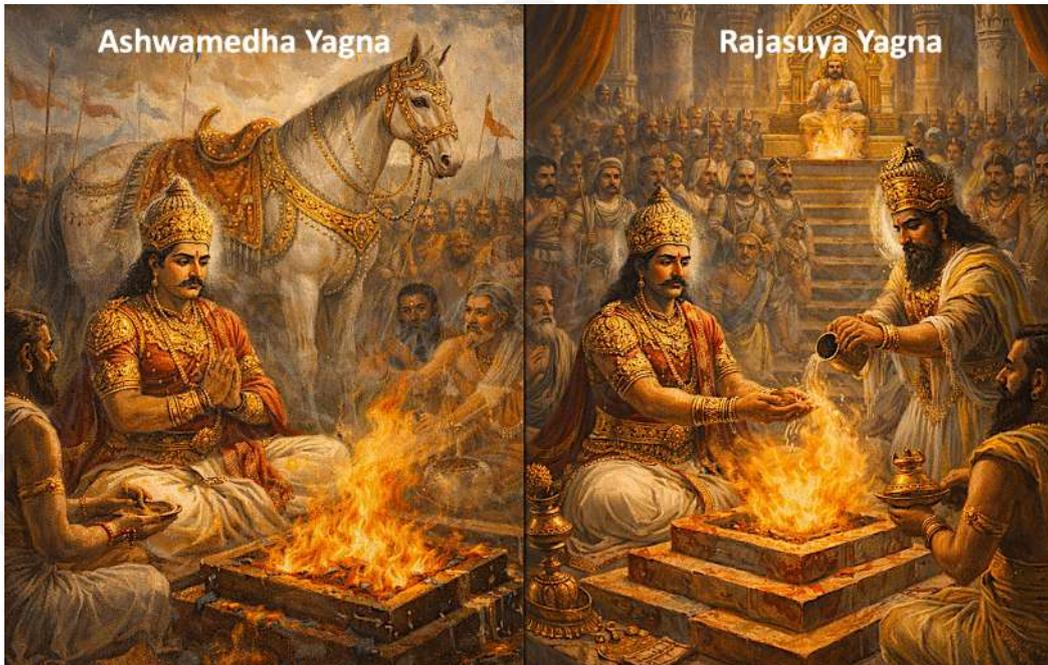
Bhishma Pitamah's ultimate teaching was that "**The King is the maker of his time.**" He rejected the idea that a leader is a victim of circumstances or "fate." Instead, he argued that through righteous action (*Dharma*), a leader creates the era they live in, whether it be an age of prosperity or an age of decline.



Bhishma Pitamah lineage



Raja Mahabhishek history



Once, there lived an illustrious king named **Mahabhishek** of the Ikshvaku dynasty. Having performed one thousand *Ashvamedha Yagnas* and one hundred *Rajasuya Yagnas*, he pleased Indra, became a *Rajarishi* (royal sage), and eventually ascended to *Swarga Loka* (heaven).



One day, while the Devas were worshipping **Lord Brahma**, Goddess Ganga arrived to pay her respects. A sudden, heavy wind blew, slightly displacing her garments. While all the other Devas humbly lowered their heads in respect, Mahabhisak alone continued to gaze at her beauty.

Witnessing this lapse in conduct, Brahma cursed the king: **"You shall be reborn on Earth as a human before you can attain higher realms again. This Goddess Ganga, whose beauty attracted you, will be the one to cause you grief through deeds you dislike. You will only be relieved of this curse when you eventually become angry at her actions."**

After reflecting, Mahabhisak chose the virtuous King **Prathipan** to be his father. Meanwhile, Ganga departed, her mind occupied by the king who had been so captivated by her.





Vasus seeking redressal from Mother Ganga Devi

Let us now see who these vasu's are and their relationship to Bhishma Pitamah. The **Ashta Vasus** or Eight Vasus) are celestial beings who represent the fundamental elements of nature. They are

1. Apa – Water
2. Dhruva – Anila – Polestar stability
3. Soma – Moon – nourishment and the cosmic nectar
4. Dhara – Dhara – earth representing the supportive force
5. Anila – Wind – movement, life breath
6. Anala – Agni - Fire – transformation of energy
7. Prathyusha – Dawn – End of darkness
8. **Prabhasa – Dyaus – Light/sky, the chief among the Vasus**

While they are minor deities in the broader Hindu pantheon, they are central to the Mahabharatha as **Bhishma Pitamah** was an incarnation of one Prabhasa also known as Dyaus.



On her way, Goddess Ganga encountered the **eight Vasus** in *Swarga Loka*.



They appeared deeply dejected, and she enquired about the hardship causing their sorrow. The Vasus replied, "O greatest among rivers, we have been cursed by the great Rishi Vasishta to be born on Earth as humans due to our own transgressions." They then narrated their story:

Long ago, the eight Vasus descended to Earth with their wives. While wandering through sacred forests, they came upon the hermitage of **Maharishi Vasishta**. In his ashram lived **Nandini**, a divine cow of extraordinary beauty and power, born of the wish-fulfilling Kamadhenu. The wife of the Vasu named **Prabhasa** (also known as **Dyaus**) was captivated by Nandini. Upon learning that whoever drank the cow's milk would remain youthful for eternity, she begged her husband to steal the cow for her.

Though Dyaus was initially reluctant—knowing the consequences of offending a sage—his love for his wife clouded his judgment. He convinced the other seven Vasus to assist him, and together they stole Nandini and her calf while Vasishta was away.



When the Vasishta Maha Rishi returned, he used his yogic powers to identify the thieves. In a fit of righteous rage, he pronounced a devastating curse:



"Because you have stolen my beloved Nandini, all eight of you shall be born as mortals and undergo the sufferings of human life."

Stricken with horror, the Vasus fell at the sage's feet and begged for mercy. They explained that while all eight had participated, Dyaus had led the theft at his wife's urging. Softening slightly, Vasishta modified the curse: the seven who merely assisted would be freed from mortal existence immediately after birth. However, Dyaus, the primary perpetrator, was condemned to live a full, long mortal life.

To mitigate the curse, Vasishta granted Dyaus several concessions:

- He would be noble, illustrious, and renowned.
- He would be a master of all scriptures and weapons.
- He would be supremely virtuous and righteous.
- However, he would remain childless and never experience the joys of progeny.

This Vasu, Dyaus, was eventually born as Dhrudavartha to Ganga and Shantanu, later becoming the legendary **Bhishma**.





Accepting their fate, the Vasus sought a divine mother who could help them navigate their curse, as they were unwilling to be born to ordinary mortals. Upon encountering Ganga, they explained their predicament and pleaded, "O Goddess, please take human form and become our mother, so that we may be born through your divinity."

Ganga accepted their request but asked, "Who among the men of the world is capable of being your father?" The Vasus replied that **King Pratipa's son, Shantanu**—the reincarnation of the illustrious King Mahabhisak—would be the one.

The Vasus then proposed a difficult condition: "As we do not wish to remain in human form, you must cast us into your waters as soon as we are born, thus freeing us from our mortal shells immediately."

Ganga agreed but added a condition of her own: "I must leave one son alive to fulfill the King's desire for an heir." To this, the Vasus agreed, stating that each of them would contribute one-fourth of their celestial strength to that surviving son. However, they stipulated that this son must remain celibate and never have any progeny.

With all the conditions agreed upon, Ganga replied, "O pure ones, I shall do everything that is desired by the King and by you." Thus, the stage was set: King Mahabhisak (Shantanu) would be cursed with the hardship of losing his children, while the Goddess Ganga and the Vasus would fulfill their divine roles.



Meeting of Shanthanu and Ganga Devi and their marriage

The illustrious King **Pratipa**, after ruling his kingdom with excellence, entered the stage of *Vanaprastha* (forest dwelling). He went to the banks of the sacred river Ganga and engaged in rigorous penance for a long time. One day, an ethereal and virtuous lady emerged from the waters and seated herself upon the **mighty right lap** of the royal sage.

The learned King, well-versed in the nuances of *Dharma*, asked, "O beautiful lady, what is it that you desire of me?" Ganga replied that she had fallen in love with him and requested his hand in marriage. However, the King explained that it would be unrighteous for him to fulfill her request.

During their conversation, King Pratipa clarified: "By sitting upon my right lap, you have defined our relationship. According to the scriptures, the right lap is reserved for children and daughters-in-law; a wife or beloved should only sit



upon the left. Therefore, you shall become my daughter-in-law by marrying my son."

Ganga accepted this proposal but placed a significant condition upon the union: his son must never question her actions, no matter how strange they might seem. In return, she promised to bring him happiness and ensure his eventual spiritual liberation (*Mukti*). Eventually, Shantanu and Ganga were married, paving the way for her to fulfill her promise to the Vasus.



Vasus being born as their children and Shanthanu requesting his 8th son to survive

Ganga Devi and King Shantanu lived in great happiness, enjoying the pleasures of earthly life. However, a dark pattern emerged: Ganga gave birth to seven children, and immediately after each birth, she cast the infant into the Ganges. Though Shantanu was devastated by her actions, he remained silent, bound by his father's command and the fear that questioning her would cause her to leave him.

When the eighth child was born, Shantanu could no longer restrain his grief.



He stopped Ganga and demanded to know who she truly was and why she committed such heinous acts that surely invited great sin.

At this, Ganga Devi revealed her true identity as the daughter of **Jahnu Maharishi** (also known as Janhavi). She explained the divine plan: she was fulfilling a pact with the **eight Vasus**, who had been cursed by Maharishi Vasishta. Shantanu had been chosen as their father because of his extraordinary righteousness.

She explained that the first seven sons were now liberated and back in their celestial abodes. As for the eighth son—originally the Vasu named **Dyaus**—he would remain on Earth. She revealed that the other seven Vasus had infused him with a portion of their own strength, making him the most powerful, knowledgeable, and wise among men. She named him **Gangadhathtan** (the gift of Ganga).

Ganga then informed Shantanu that her time on Earth had come to an end. She said, "This son of yours, Dyaus, will live a long life and be respected by all. I shall take him with me now to be trained by the greatest sages, and he will return to you as a youth. Should you ever need me, I will appear."

With these words, Ganga disappeared into the waters with the infant. Though Shantanu returned to his capital, Hastinapur, with a heavy heart, he resumed his duties, ruling his kingdom with the same virtue that had once made him a favorite of the gods.

Bhishma's early childhood days

After King Shantanu was forced to part with Ganga, she took the infant (Dhrudavartha) to the celestial realms to prepare him for his monumental

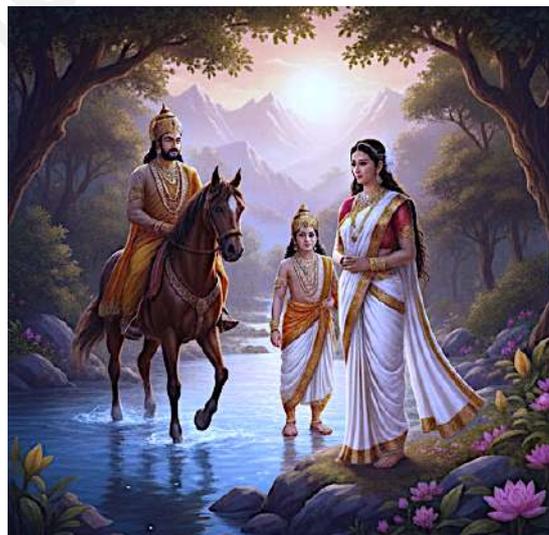


destiny. His childhood was unlike that of any other mortal; he was raised in the company of gods and sages, receiving a holistic education that spanned both the physical and metaphysical worlds.

He mastered the **Vedas and Vedangas** under the tutelage of the sage **Vasishta**, while **Brihaspati**, the preceptor of the Devas, initiated him into the complexities of statecraft and the duties of a king. For his military training, he was mentored by **Parashurama**, the legendary warrior-brahmin, from whom he learned the secrets of every celestial weapon. Additionally, he acquired the vast knowledge of **Shukracharya**, the master of political science and ethics.

By the time he returned to his father on the banks of the Ganges, he possessed the radiance of a Vasu, the unflinching discipline of an ascetic, and a profound sense of *Dharma*. This balance of immense physical power and deep humility marked his return. He emerged not just as a prince, but as a **Maharathi** (a warrior of the highest order) whose wisdom and prowess were already legendary before he even stepped foot in Hastinapur.

Ganga Devi gives Dhrudavartha back to Shantanu – reunion of father and son





The reunion on the banks of the Ganges was a moment of profound cosmic and emotional significance. For many years, King Shantanu had wandered the riverbanks, haunted by the memory of Ganga and the sons he had lost. One afternoon, while hunting, he observed the river's flow mysteriously obstructed; the mighty Ganges had ceased to move because a handsome youth was practicing his archery, creating a dam made entirely of a dense web of arrows.

Struck by the boy's incredible prowess, Shantanu was approached by the Goddess Ganga, who appeared in her ethereal and resplendent form. She proudly introduced the boy as their eighth son, announcing that he had mastered the wisdom of the sages and the weaponry of the gods. As Ganga Devi handed the youth over to his father, the reunion marked the transition of a celestial being into a mortal prince. Shantanu was overjoyed, his heart swelling with pride as he brought the "Crown Prince" back to Hastinapur.

The prince's arrival ushered in a new golden age for the kingdom. His presence was marked by an aura of pristine virtue and a strength that made the citizens feel protected by a living deity. While his mother Ganga Devi had prepared him with divine wisdom and weapons,

Dhrudavartha to Bhishma transition

The transition from **Dhrudavartha** to **Bhishma** is one of the most selfless and haunting turning points. **It was born not out of a battlefield, but out of a son's extreme love for his father.**



The Father's Melancholy

Sometime after the prince's return, King Shantanu fell in love with **Satyavati**, a woman of extraordinary beauty and the daughter of the Chief of the Fishermen. However, her father placed an impossible condition upon the marriage: "Satyavati will marry you only if her children, and not your son, inherit the throne of Hastinapur." Shantanu, who loved the prince deeply and knew he was the perfect heir, refused to do such an injustice. He returned to his palace, but he grew thin and silent, consumed by his hidden grief.

Bhishma Pratigya — The "Terrible" Vow

When the prince discovered the cause of his father's sorrow, he immediately went to Satyavati's father to negotiate. To ensure his father's happiness, he took two life-altering oaths that were said to have caused the heavens to shower flowers in awe:

1. **Renunciation of Power:** He first vowed to renounce his right to the throne, ensuring that Satyavati's future sons would be the kings of Hastinapur.
2. **The Vow of Celibacy:** When the fisherman pointed out that the prince's future children might still challenge Satyavati's lineage, the prince took an even more difficult path. He raised his hand and swore an oath of **lifelong celibacy** (*Brahmacharya*), ensuring he would never have heirs to contest the throne.

It was at this moment, because of this "Bhisham" (terrible and firm) vow, that the celestials and the people gave him the name **Bhishma**. When Shantanu learned of this ultimate sacrifice, he was moved to tears.



The Name "Bhishma"

As he uttered these oaths, the celestial beings (*Devas*) showered blossoms from the heavens and cried out in one voice, "**Bhishma! Bhishma!**" (meaning *The Terrible* or *The Formidable*), in honor of the staggering and selfless nature of his sacrifice. From that moment on, his birth name was eclipsed by this title, which reflected a willpower that even the gods found awe-inspiring.

In recognition of this ultimate act of filial devotion, he was granted the boon of **Iccha-Mrityu** (Death at Will). This divine gift meant that Time and Death themselves were stayed; they had no power to take him until he himself gave the command for his soul to depart. This boon would eventually play a crucial role at the end of the Great War, allowing him to choose the most auspicious moment to leave his mortal coil.

The Legacy of the Vow

While Bhishma's vow was a peak of personal virtue, it created a vacuum in the



lineage of Hastinapur. Because he could not be king and could not have children, the stability of the Kuru dynasty began to rest on Satyawati's descendants—who unfortunately proved to be less resilient than the "Grandsire" himself.

The Paradox of Bhishma

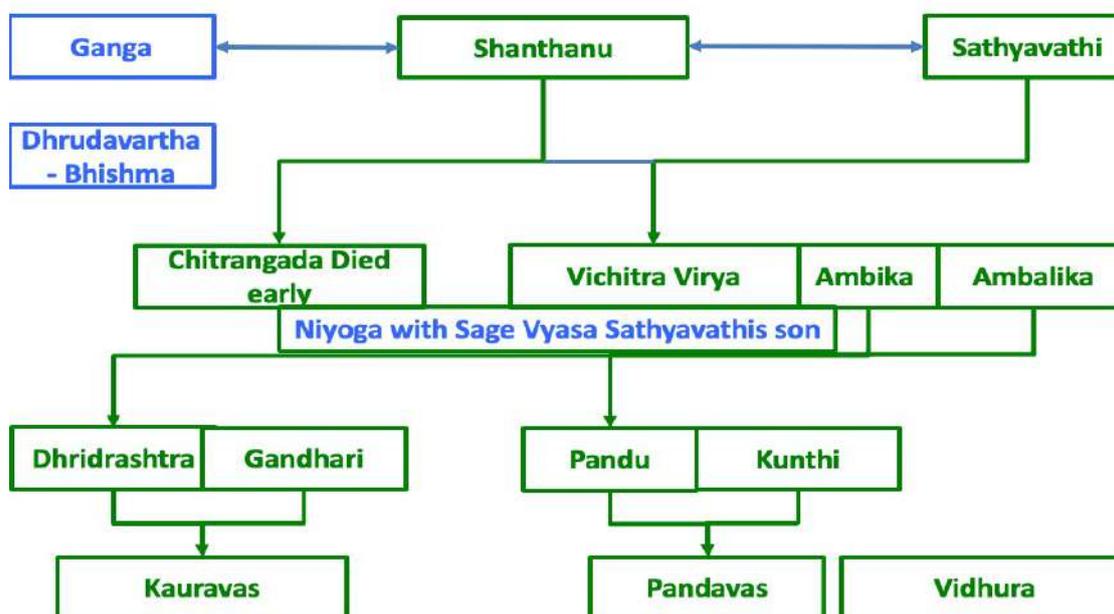
This vow made Bhishma the ultimate guardian of the Kuru throne, yet it also became his silent curse. By swearing to protect the crown of Hastinapur, he inadvertently bound his immense power to the physical seat of authority rather than to the morality of those who occupied it. This legalistic bond eventually forced him into a heartbreaking position during the Kurukshetra War: he was compelled to lead the armies of the **Kauravas**, despite knowing their cause was unrighteous.

Even as he stood as the Commander-in-Chief against his beloved **Pandavas**, his heart and soul remained with them. His life thus became a profound study in the "tragedy of duty"—where a man of perfect personal character finds himself an instrument of injustice because of a promise made in a different era

Bhishma then became the leader of the Kuru dynasty – the forefather of the Pandavas and Kauravas.



Pandavas and Kauravas Lineage



Kurukshetra war

The **Kurukshetra War**, the central event of the *Mahabharata*, was a monumental 18-day conflict fought between two groups of cousins: the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Driven by a complex struggle for the throne of Hastinapura, the war took place on the sacred plains of Kurukshetra and served as a profound battleground for **Dharma** (righteousness). It was not merely a physical clash of vast armies, but a spiritual turning point that saw the delivery of the *Bhagavad Gita* by Lord Krishna.

While the war ended on the 18th day, its spiritual climax occurred on the **Sharat Alpa** (the bed of arrows). Here, the dying patriarch Bhishma waited for the auspicious **Utharayana** (the northward journey of the sun) to leave his mortal coil, bestowing ultimate wisdom upon the world.



1. Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam

As the war concluded, King Yudhishtira was consumed by grief and moral doubt. Lord Krishna led the Pandavas to Bhishma Pitamah, the repository of all knowledge. Yudhishtira asked six fundamental questions, most notably: "*Who is the one refuge for all? By praising whom can man attain salvation?*" In response, Bhishma Pitamah chanted the **Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam**—the thousand names of Lord Vishnu.

- **The Essence:** He taught that the constant contemplation of the Supreme Being is the greatest Dharma, capable of liberating a soul from the cycle of birth and death.
- **The Setting:** It was delivered in the presence of Lord Krishna, who is the very subject of the hymn, making it a unique moment where the Lord heard His own glories from His greatest devotee.

2. Bhishma Stuti

Before his soul departed, Bhishma offered a final prayer known as the **Bhishma Stuti** (found in the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, 1.9.32–42). Unlike the Sahasranama, which is a litany of names, the Stuti is a deeply personal and poetic surrender.

- **The Vision:** Bhishma describes Krishna as He appeared on the battlefield—covered in dust, with flowing hair and glistening sweat—capturing the **Parthasarathi** (Arjuna's Charioteer) form.
- **The Surrender:** He prays that his mind, which had been occupied with worldly duties and war, may now merge eternally into the lotus feet of Krishna.



- **The Paradox:** He acknowledges the irony of the Supreme Lord, who is impartial, yet takes the side of His devotees to establish righteousness.



Bhishma Pitamah reciting Bhishma Stuti

The Core Themes of the Stuti

1. The Offering of the Mind (Mati)

Bhishma begins the first sloka by surrendering his Mati (intellect/thoughts). For a Kshatriya warrior who lived a life of rigid vows and intellectual complexity, this final act is the ultimate "letting go of his earthly connections - sambandham". He offers a mind that is Vitṛṣṇā—thirstless and free from worldly attachments.



2. Meditation on the "Battlefield Krishna"

Most devotees prefer to meditate on Krishna playing the flute in Vrindavan.

However, Bhishma's devotion is unique. He meditates on:

- **The Dust-Covered Lord:** He describes Krishna's hair covered in the dust raised by the hooves of horses.
- **The Wounded Lord:** He remembers with love how his own arrows pierced Krishna's body, and how the Lord wore those wounds like "ornaments" of love for His devotee.
- **The Vow-Breaker:** He glorifies the moment Krishna ran at him with a chariot wheel, breaking His own promise to save Arjuna.

3. The Recognition of Supreme Divinity

Bhishma acknowledges that the person standing before him the charioteer of Arjuna – Parthasarathy - is the same Unborn, Primeval Lord who resides in the hearts of all beings. He compares the Lord to the Sun, which appears to be many when reflected in different pots of water, though it is only one.

Structure of the 12 Slokas

The Stuti follows a beautiful progression of thought:

1.9.32 - Surrender of the intellect to the All-pervading Lord.

1.9.33 – 34 - Vivid description of Krishna's physical beauty on the battlefield.

1.9.35 – 38 - Recalling specific "Leelas" (pastimes) of the Kurukshetra war.

1.9.39 – 40 - The Lord's interaction with the Gopis and the Pandavas.

1.9.41 – 42 - Final realization of Oneness and the departure of the soul



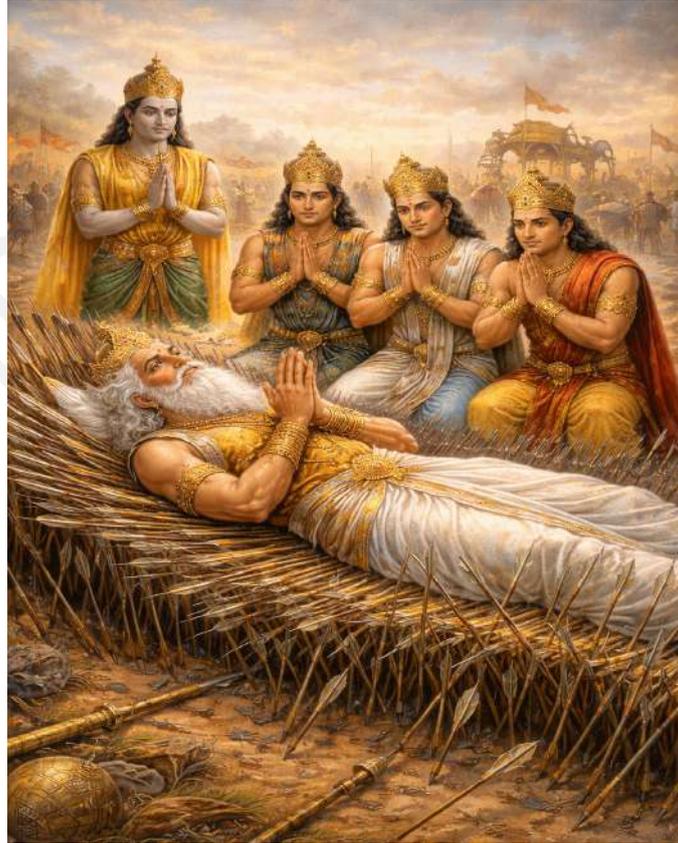
1. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.32

श्रीभीष्म उवाच

इति मतिरुपकल्पिता वितृष्णा
भगवति सात्वतपुङ्गवे विभूमि ।
स्वसुखमुपगते क्वचिद्विहर्तुं
प्रकृतिमुपेयुषि यद्भवप्रवाहः ॥
śrī-bhīṣma uvāca

iti matir upakalpita vitṛṣṇā
bhagavati sātvata-puṅgave vibhūmni
sva-sukham upagate kvacid vihartuṁ
prakṛtim upeyuṣi yad-bhava-pravāhaḥ || 32 ||

Bhishma Pitamah begins his final prayer by focusing his entire consciousness on Lord Krishna. This sloka is the pinnacle of **Bhakti Yoga**, showing how the Raja rishi transitions from the world of action to the world of pure spirit.





Padha artham Word for word meaning

1. **śrī-bhīṣmaḥ uvāca:** - Śrī Bhīṣma said
2. **iti:** - thus
3. **matiḥ:** - my mind / intelligence / cognitive faculty
4. **upakalpitā:** - offered / dedicated / surrendered
5. **vitṛṣṇā:** - freed from all worldly desires or "thirst"
6. **bhagavati:** - unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead
7. **sātvata-puṅgave:** - unto the leader of the Sātvatas (devotees/Yadus)
8. **vibhūmni:** - unto the Almighty / All-pervading One
9. **sva-sukham:** - in His own self-contained bliss
10. **upagate:** - situated / attained
11. **kvacit:** - sometimes
12. **vihartum:** - to enjoy divine pastimes (Lilas)
13. **prakṛtim:** - material nature / the physical energy
14. **upeyuṣi:** - accepting / assuming a form within
15. **yad-bhava:** - from whom (the Lord)
16. **pravāhaḥ:** - the stream of creation / the flow of the unisloka

As he lay on the threshold of death, Bhishma Pitamah declared that he was now offering his purified, "thirstless" mind, one completely stripped of all worldly attachments, royal duties, and ego unto the Supreme Lord Krishna. He recognized Krishna not just as Arjuna's Charioteer, but as the **Vibhūmni**, the all-pervading Almighty who is eternally satisfied in His own internal bliss. Bhishma acknowledged that although the Lord is self-sufficient, He occasionally accepts a form within material nature to conduct His divine pastimes, and it is from this very Lord that the entire stream of universal creation flows. By directing his Mati (intellect) toward the "Leader of the



Devotees," Bhishma effectively gathered all the scattered energies of his long life and poured them into the single point of Krishna's presence.

The word **vitṛṣṇā** (thirstless) is crucial here. Bhishma was a man of many responsibilities protecting the throne of Hastinapur, fulfilling his terrible vow, and fighting the Mahabharatha Kurukshetra war. In this sloka, he tells us that the preparation for a "good death" involves drying up the thirst for these external roles so that the mind becomes a clean vessel to be offered to the Divine.

2. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.33

त्रिभुवनकमनं तमालवर्णं
रविकरगौरवराम्बरं दधाने ।
वपुरलककुलावृताननाब्जं
विजयसखे रतिरस्तु मेऽनवद्या ॥
tri-bhuvana-kamanam tamāla-varṇam
ravi-kara-gaura-vara-ambaram dadhāne
vapur alaka-kulāvṛtānanābjam
vijaya-sakhe ratir astu me 'navadyā

This sloka in Bhishma Stuti is one of the most celebrated slokas in Sanskrit literature for its "Vira-Bhakti" (heroic devotion). Here, Bhishma Pitamah describes the staggering beauty of Krishna as the **Parthasarathy**(Arjuna's Charioteer).



Padha artham Word-for-Word Meaning

1. **tri-bhuvana-kamanam:** - The most desirable/beautiful in all the three worlds.
2. **tamāla-varṇam:** - Having a complexion like the dark-blue Tamala tree.
3. **ravi-kara:** - Sunrays.
4. **gaura:** - Golden/Glittering.
5. **vara-ambaram:** - Wearing exquisite (yellow) garments.
6. **dadhāne:** - Possessing / Wearing.
7. **vapuḥ:** - The transcendental body.
8. **alaka-kula:** - Clusters of hair (curls).
9. **āvṛta:** - Covered/Smeared.
10. **ānana-abjam:** - Lotus-like face (= face; = lotus).
11. **vijaya-sakhe:** - To the friend of Arjuna (Vijaya).
12. **ratih:** - Deep attraction / attachment / love.
13. **astu:** - Let there be.
14. **me:** - My / for me.
15. **anavadyā:** - Pure / flawless / without any other blemishes.



In this profound meditation, Bhishma Pitamah prays for his soul to be eternally and flawlessly attracted to **Vijaya-Sakhe**, the divine friend of Arjuna. He visualizes the Lord's transcendental body, which possesses a complexion as deep and dark as the **Tamala tree**, contrasted beautifully by silken yellow robes that shimmer like concentrated **sunlight**. Bhishma's memory specifically captures the raw, heroic beauty of the Lord on the battlefield: His **lotus-like face** framed by dark, curling locks of hair that were disheveled and covered in the dust raised by the war horses. To the dying patriarch, this image of the Supreme Lord serving His devotee amidst the chaos of battle is the most beautiful sight in all the three worlds, and he desires no other object for his final thoughts.

The word **anavadyā** (flawless/pure) is significant in the sloka. Usually, seeing someone covered in dust and sweat is not considered "beautiful" in a worldly sense. However, for Bhishma, the dust on Krishna's face represented the **Lord's labor of love for His devotees**. By calling this beauty "flawless," Bhishma indicates that divine love (Bhakti) transforms even the grit of a battlefield into a celestial ornament.

3. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.34

युधि तुरगरजोविधूमविष्वक्-
कचलुलितश्रमवार्यलङ्कृतास्ये ।
मम निशितशरैर्विभिद्यमान-
त्वचि विलसत्कवचेऽस्तु कृष्ण आत्मा ॥ ३४ ॥
yudhi turaga-rajo-vidhūmra-viṣvak-
kaca-lulita-śramavāry-alaṅkṛtāsye
mama niśita-śarair vibhidyamāna-
tvaci vilasat-kavace 'stu kṛṣṇa ātmā



Bhishma Pitamah reaches the height of his "Kshatriya Devotion." Bhishma describes the moment he attacked Krishna, and how the wounds from his arrows didn't hurt the Lord but instead looked like beautiful decorations.



Padha artham – word for word meaning

1. **Yudhi** - On the battlefield
2. **turaga-rajah** - The dust raised by the horses' hooves
3. **vidhūmra** - Turned smoky / greyish
4. **viṣvak-** All around / disheveled
5. **kaca** - Hair
6. **lulita** - Scattered / agitated
7. **śrama-vāry** - The water of perspiration (sweat)
8. **alañkṛtāsye** - Whose face was decorated
9. **mama** - My
10. **niśita-śaraiḥ** - By the sharp arrows
11. **vibhidyamāna** - Being pierced
12. **tvaci** - The skin / surface of the body



13.villusat - Shining / brilliantly manifest

14.kavace - The armor

15.astu - Let there be

16.me - My

17.mumukṣuḥ - Desiring liberation / fixed attraction

Bhishma Pitamah meditates on the Lord Krishna who stood directly in his line of fire. He recalls the Lord's face, which was "decorated" by a mixture of **perspiration** and the **greyish dust** kicked up by the horses' hooves. He describes how the Lord's hair was scattered and agitated by the speed of the chariot. Most incredibly, Bhishma speaks of his own **sharp arrows** piercing the Lord's skin and shining armor. To any other person, this would be a scene of violence; but to Bhishma, these wounds were the "love-bites" of a warrior-devotee. He prays that his mind may be forever fixed on this specific form of the Lord—the one who wore the wounds inflicted by His devotee as if they were precious ornaments.

This sloka explains why Bhishma is one of the twelve **Mahajans** (great authorities on Truth). He understood a secret: when a devotee interacts with the Lord in a "mood of chivalry" (Vira-Rasa), even an arrow sent with devotion is accepted by the Lord as a flower. Krishna did not retreat from Bhishma's arrows; He accepted them to show the world the intensity of Bhishma's strength and the depth of His own love for His "grandfather."

4. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.35

सपदि सखिवचो निशम्य मध्ये
निजपरयोर्बलयो रथं निवेश्य ।
स्थितवति परसैनिकायुरक्षणा
हतवति पार्थसखे रतिर्ममास्तु ॥



sapadi sakhi-vaco niśamya madhye
nija-parayor balayo ratham niveśya
sthitavati para-sainikāyur akṣṇā
hṛtavati pārtha-sakhe ratir mamāstu

Bhishma Pitamah transitions from describing Krishna's physical appearance to meditating on His **magnanimous character** as the "Charioteer of Arjuna." He recalls the very beginning of the war (the Bhagavad Gita moment) and the terrifying power of Krishna's glance.



Padha artham Word-for-Word Meaning

1. **Sapadi** - Immediately / acting quickly
2. **sakhi-vacaḥ** - The words of His friend (Arjuna)
3. **niśamya** - Upon hearing
4. **madhye** - In the middle
5. **nija-parayoḥ** - Between his own and the opposing
6. **balayoḥ** - Armies



7. **ratham** - The chariot
8. **niveśya** - Having placed / stationed
9. **sthitavati** - While staying there
10. **para-sainika** - The opposing soldiers
11. **āyuh** - Life span / duration of life
12. **akṣṇā** - By His eyes / vision
13. **hṛtavati** - One who took away / diminished
14. **pārtha-sakhe** - Unto the friend of Pritha's son Partha - Arjuna
15. **ratiḥ mama astu** - Let my attraction be fixed

Bhishma Pitamah recalls the dramatic moment at the start of the war when, **immediately upon hearing** the request of His friend Arjuna, Krishna drove the chariot into the "no-man's land" **between the two massive armies**. Bhishma meditates on the Lord as He sat there, majestic and composed. He observes that simply by **looking at the opposing army** with His divine eyes, Krishna had already "taken away" or diminished the lifespans of the soldiers (including Bhishma's own). He realized that the victory was decided the moment Krishna glanced at the Kaurava forces. Bhishma prays that his final devotion remains fixed on this **Pārtha-sakhe** (Friend of Arjuna), who controls the destiny of millions with a single look.

In this sloka, Bhishma highlights the "Kala" (Time) aspect of Krishna. While the soldiers were busy sharpening their swords and preparing for battle, Bhishma the visionary saw that Krishna's **akṣṇā** (eyes) were the real weapons. This refers to the philosophy that the Lord's glance activates material nature and, in this context, decides the end of those standing against Dharma. Bhishma isn't bitter about his life being "taken"; he is in awe of the efficiency and grace with which the Lord performs His cosmic duties.



5. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.36

व्यवहितपृतनामुखं निरीक्ष्य
स्वजनवधाद्विमुखस्य दोषबुद्ध्या ।
कुमतिमहरदात्मविद्यया य-
श्चरणरतिः परमस्य तस्य मेऽस्तु ॥
vyavahita-pṛtanā-mukhaṁ nirīkṣya
sva-jana-vadhād vimukhasya doṣa-buddhyā
kumatim aharad ātma-vidyayā yaś
caraṇa-ratiḥ paramasya tasya me 'stu

Bhishma Pitamah meditates on the moment of the Gita-upadesha. He recalls how Arjuna was overwhelmed by "ill-placed" compassion and how Krishna's transcendental instructions removed that ignorance.



1. **Vyavahita** - Separated / distanced
2. **pṛthan-mukha** - Looking at the faces of others (kinsmen)
3. **pariśamya** - Observing / seeing
4. **svajanam** - His own kinsmen / relatives



5. **vadhād** - From the thought of killing
6. **vimukhasya** - Who was turning away / asloka
7. **doṣa-buddhyā** - With the notion of sin / wrong-headedness
8. **kumatim** - Poor intelligence / bewildered mind
9. **aharat** - He removed / destroyed
10. **ātma-vidyayā** - By the knowledge of the Self (Bhagavad Gita)
11. **yaḥ** - He who (Krishna)
12. **caraṇa-ratiḥ** - Attraction for the lotus feet
13. **paramasya** - Of the Supreme
14. **tasya** - His
15. **me** - My
16. **astu** - Let there be

Bhishma Pitamah in this sloka recalls the scene where Arjuna, looking upon the faces of his own relatives and teachers standing on the battlefield, was suddenly seized by a bewildered mind. Thinking it was a **sin** to kill his own kinsmen, Arjuna turned away from his duty in a state of "poor intelligence" and meditates on how Lord Krishna, out of His causeless abundant mercy, **destroys that ignorance** by imparting **Atma-vidya** - the transcendental knowledge of the soul. He marvels at how the Lord's words transformed a weeping warrior back into a heroic instrument of Dharma. Bhishma then prays that his own soul may find ultimate and eternal attraction at the **lotus feet** of that Supreme Person who is the source of all liberating knowledge.

Bhishma emphasizes that Arjuna's hesitation wasn't true "mercy" it was a "mistaken intellect" because Arjuna was identifying himself and his enemies by their physical bodies. Bhishma, who is about to leave his own body, appreciates the **ātma-vidyā** knowledge of oneself, more than anyone else at



this moment. He acknowledges that Lord Krishna is not just a driver of chariots, but the **driver of the intellect**, who steers the soul from the darkness of bodily identification to the light of spiritual reality.

6. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.37

स्वनिगममपहाय मत्प्रतिज्ञा-
मृतमधिकर्तुमवप्लुतो रथस्थः ।
धृतरथचरणोऽभ्ययाच्चलद्गु-
हृरिव हन्तुमिभं गतोत्तरीयः ॥

sva-nigamam apahāya mat-pratijñām
ṛtam adhikartum avapluto rathasthaḥ
dhṛta-ratha-carāṇo 'bhyayāc caladgur
harir iva hantum ibhaṁ gatottarīyaḥ

Bhishma Pitamah recalls the most dramatic moment of the war—when Krishna broke His own vow to protect the honor of His devotee. This sloka captures the "God of Love" becoming the "God of Fury."



Padha Artham – Word for word meaning

1. **sva-nigamam** - His own selfpromise / vow



2. **apahāya** - Giving up / abandoning
3. **mat-pratijñām** - My (Bhishma's) vow
4. **adhikam** - Higher / more important
5. **kartum** - To make / to fulfill
6. **avaplutaḥ** - Jumping down (from the chariot)
7. **ratha-sthaḥ** - From the chariot seat
8. **dhṛta-ratha-caraṇaḥ** - Taking up the wheel of the chariot
9. **abhyayāt** - Ran toward
10. **calat-guḥ** - Making the earth tremble
11. **hariḥ** - Lord Hari
12. **iva** - Like
13. **hantum** - To kill
14. **ibham** - An elephant
15. **ari-mat** - The enemy – me Bhishma

Bhishma Pitamah in this sloka recalls with immense love how Lord Krishna **abandoned His own promise** (not to lift a weapon) just to **fulfill my vow** (that I would force Him to take up arms). He meditates on the sight of the Lord **jumping down from the chariot** and charging toward him with a **broken chariot wheel** in His hand. Bhishma describes the scene with power: the Lord ran so forcefully that the **earth trembled** under His feet, looking exactly like a **mighty lion** rushing to slay a rogue elephant. In this moment, Bhishma saw the Lord's supreme grace—that God would rather be called a "vow-breaker" than let His devotee's words prove false.

This is the pinnacle of the relationship between Bhishma and Krishna.

Bhishma had vowed: "I will fight so fiercely that Krishna will have to pick up a weapon to save Arjuna." Krishna had vowed: "I will not pick up a weapon." By



picking up the wheel, Krishna "lost" the battle of vows, but "won" the battle of love. Bhisma calls Him **Hari** (the one who steals the heart) in this sloka because he was completely captivated by the Lord's willingness to sacrifice His own reputation for the sake of a devotee.

7. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.38

शितविशिखहतो विशीर्णदंशः
क्षतजपरिप्लुत आततायिनो मे ।
प्रसभमभिससार मद्वधार्थं
स भवतु मे भगवान् गतिर्मुकुन्दः
śīta-viśikha-hato viśīrṇa-damśaḥ
kṣataja-paripluta ātatāyino me
prasabham abhisasāra mad-vadhārthaṁ
sa bhavatu me bhagavān gatiṁ mukundaḥ

Bhisma Pitamah continues the description of Krishna's charge. This sloka is incredibly poignant because it describes the physical intensity of the Lord's "fury" - which Bhisma understood to be an act of supreme grace.





Padha Artham Word for word meanings

1. **śīta-viśikha-hato** - Wounded by my sharp arrows
2. **viśīrṇa-damśaḥ** - With His armor shattered / broken
3. **kṣataja-paripluta** - Smearred with blood (from the wounds)
4. **ātatāyino me** - Toward me, the aggressor / attacker
5. **prasabham** - Forcefully / with great speed
6. **abhisasāra** - He rushed toward
7. **mad-vadhārtham** - For the purpose of killing me
8. **sa** - He (the Lord)
9. **bhavatu** - Let Him become
10. **gatiḥ** - My ultimate destination / refuge
11. **mukundaḥ** - Lord Mukunda (the giver of liberation)

Bhishma Pitamah meditates on the breathtaking sight of the Lord rushing toward him to take his life. He recalls how Krishna was **wounded by his sharp arrows**, His **armor shattered**, and His body **smearred with blood**. Despite being the "aggressor" (ātatāyinaḥ) who had caused these wounds, Bhishma watched in awe as the Lord rushed toward him **forcefully**, intending to slay him with the chariot wheel. Rather than feeling fear, Bhishma recognized this as the most merciful act possible—the Lord coming personally to "deliver" His devotee from the battlefield. He prays that this same **Lord Mukunda**, the giver of liberation who looked so terrifying yet beautiful in His anger, becomes his **ultimate destination** and refuge.

The term **ātatāyinaḥ** is very powerful. In Vedic law, an atatayi is a criminal or an aggressor who deserves death. Bhishma, in his humility, calls himself an aggressor because he was shooting arrows at the Lord. However, he realized



that Krishna's "anger" was actually **transcendental love**. By rushing to "kill" Bhishma, Krishna was actually rushing to liberate him. This is why Bhishma calls Him **Mukundha**—the one who grants Mukti (liberation). He sees the Lord's blood-stained body not as a sign of defeat, but as a testament to how far the Lord will go to interact with His devotee.

Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam

Mukundha: - nama 518

Sankara Bashyam: One who gives salvation or Mukthi.

Parasara Bhattar Bashyam : He who gives us Moksham. **Mukthim Dhadhathi Ithi Mukundha:**

Nammazhwar in Thiruvaimozhi - Thirukkannapuram Padhigam 9.10.5

Bhagavan gives Moksham at the end of the earthly life.

saraNam Agum * thana thAL adaindhArkkellAm
maraNam AnAl * vaigundham kodukkum pirAn *
araN amaindha madhiL sUzh * thirukkaNNapurath
tharaNiyALan * thanadhanbarkku anbAgumE

சரணம்ஆகும்* தனதாள் அடைந்தார்க்குஎல்லாம்*
மரணம்ஆனால்* வைகுந்தம் கொடுக்கும்பிரான்*
அரண்அமைந்தமதிள்சூழ்* திருக்கண்ணபுரத்
தரணியாளன்* தனதுஅன்பர்க்கு அன்புஆகுமே.

Nammazhwar Thiruvaimozhi 10.6.3

naNNinam nArAyaNanai nAmangaL pala solli
maN ulagil vaLam mikka vAttARRAn vandhu inRu
viN ulagam tharuvAnAy viraiginRAn vidhi vagaiyE
eNNinavARu AgA ik karumangaL ennenjE!



நண்ணினம் நாராயணனை* நாமங்கள் பலசொல்லி*
மண்உலகில் வளம்மிக்க* வாட்டாற்றான் வந்துஇன்று*
விண்உலகம் தருவானாய்* விரைகின்றான் விதிவகையே*
எண்ணின வாறுகா* இக்கருமங்கள் என்நெஞ்சே!

Archavatharam–Divya desam–SAlagrAmam–Mukthinath - Mukthinathan



8. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.39

विजयरथकुटुम्ब आत्तोत्रे
धृतहयरश्मिनि तच्छ्रियेक्षणीये ।
भगवति रतिरस्तु मे मुमूर्षो-
र्यमिह निरीक्ष्य हता गताः स्वरूपम् ॥
vijaya-ratha-kuṭumbha ātta-totre
dhṛta-haya-raśmini tac-chriyekṣaṇīye
bhagavati ratir astu me mumūrṣor
yam iha nirīkṣya hatā gatāḥ sva-rūpam



Bhishma Pitamah continues his meditation, moving from the specific actions of the war to the universal mercy of Bhagavan. He highlights that Krishna's presence was so powerful that even those on the "wrong side" of the war were liberated simply by seeing Him.



Padha artham Word-for-Word Meaning

vijaya-ratha - The chariot of Vijaya (Arjuna)

kuṭumbhe - Protecting / taking care of as if a family member

ātta-totre - With a whip in His (right) hand

dhṛta-haya-raśmini - Holding the reins of the horses (in His left hand)

tac-chriyā - By that beautiful form

īkṣaṇīye - Most worthy of being seen / most attractive

bhagavata - Unto the Personality of Godhead

ratiḥ astu - Let there be my attraction

me mumūrṣoḥ - In me, who is now wishing to die / leave the body

yam - Whom

iha - In this world (on the battlefield)

nirīkṣya - By seeing / witnessing



hatāḥ - Those who were killed

gatāḥ - Attained

sva-rūpam - Their original spiritual form

As he prepares to leave his mortal body, Bhishma Pitamah prays that his final and ultimate attraction be fixed upon Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He visualizes the Lord in His most humble yet majestic role as **Arjuna's charioteer**, standing with a **whip** in His right hand and the **reins of the horses** in His left. Bhishma notes that Krishna protected Arjuna's chariot with the same care a person would give their own family. He marvels at the "causeless mercy" of this moment: every single soldier who died on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, regardless of which side they fought for, was **liberated** and attained their original **spiritual form** simply by looking upon that most attractive face at the moment of death.

This sloka reveals a deep secret of the Mahabharata war. Usually, those who die in battle attain temporary "heavenly planets." However, because **the Supreme Lord was physically present**, the battlefield was transformed into a place of total liberation. Bhishma acknowledges that while he fought for the Kauravas, the Lord's presence ensured that even "enemies" were treated with the mercy of a savior. To Bhishma, there is no greater sight than the Lord laboring for His devotee's protection.

9. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.40

ललितगतिविलासवल्गुहास-
प्रणयनिरीक्षणकल्पितोरुमानाः ।
कृतमनुकृतवत्य उन्मदान्धाः
प्रकृतिमगन् किल यस्य गोपवध्वः ॥



lalita-gati-vilāsa-valguhāsa-
praṇaya-nirīkṣaṇa-kalpitorumānāḥ
kṛtam anukṛtavatya unmadāndhāḥ
prakṛtim agan kila yasya gopa-vadhvaḥ

Bhishma's meditation shifts from the intense "Heroic" energy of the battlefield to the sweet, "Erotic" devotion (Madhurya Rasa) of the Gopis. He acknowledges that the same Lord who drove Arjuna's chariot is the one who stole the hearts of the damsels of Vraja.



**Parthasarathy and Yamuna Dheera Vihari are one and the same Lord Sri
Krishna**

Padha artham Word-for-Word Meaning

Lalita - Attractive / delicate / charming

Gati - Movements / gait

Vilāsa - Pastimes / playful gestures

valgu-hāsa - Sweet / enchanting smiles

praṇaya - Intimate love / affection



nirīkṣaṇa - Glances / looking upon

Kalpita - Created / manifested

urumānāḥ - High honors / great respect / overwhelmed

kṛta-manu-kṛta-vatyah - Imitating the acts (of the Lord)

unmada-andhāḥ - Blinded by madness (of love)

prakṛtim - The nature / original state

aguḥ - Attained

yasya - Whose

Tat That (love)

Bhishma Pitamah meditates on the Lord as the beloved of the **Gopis of Vrindavan**. He recalls how they were completely overwhelmed and "blinded" by an intense, **mad love** for Krishna, triggered by His **charming movements**, playful gestures, and **enchanted smiles**. Bhishma remembers how these women, in their state of transcendental ecstasy, would often **imitate the Lord's own activities** (such as lifting Govardhan Hill or killing demons) to feel His presence when He was away. He recognizes that through this pure, unalloyed affection, they attained the highest state of spiritual liberation. Even as a warrior bound by duty, Bhishma bows to this supreme form of love, praying to enter that same state of total absorption in the Divine.

This sloka is significant because it shows Bhishma's vast spiritual realization. He sees no difference between the **Parthasarathy** (the dusty Charioteer) and the **Venugopala** (the flute-playing lover). To Bhishma, both roles are expressions of Krishna's "Atmarama" nature—His ability to be completely self-satisfied while simultaneously reciprocating perfectly with the different moods of His devotees.



10. Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.41

मुनिगणनृपवर्यसङ्कुलेऽन्तः
सदसि युधिष्ठिरराजसूय एषाम् ।
अर्हणमुपपेद ईक्षणीयो
मम दृशिगोचर एष आविरात्मा ॥
muni-gaṇa-nṛpa-varya-saṅkule 'ntaḥ-
sadasi yudhiṣṭhira-rājasūya eṣām
arhaṇam upapeda īkṣaṇīyo
mama dṛṣi-gocara eṣa āvir ātmā

Bhishma Pitamah recalls the **Rajasuya sacrifice** performed by King Yudhishtira. This was a pivotal moment where the entire world's assembly of kings, sages, and scholars officially recognized Krishna's supremacy.



Padha artham Word-for-Word Meaning

1. muni-gaṇa - Great sages and scholars
2. nṛpa-varya - The great kings and leaders



3. **saṅkule** - In the great assembly / gathering
4. **antaḥ-sadasi** - In the inner pavilion / royal assembly
5. **yudhiṣṭhira** - Of King Yudhishtira
6. **rājasūye** - During the Rajasuya sacrifice
7. **arhaṇam** - Worship / the first honoring
8. **upapeda** - Received / was offered
9. **īkṣaṇīyaḥ** - The object of all eyes / most attractive
10. **mama** - My
11. **dṛṣi-gocaraḥ** - Within the range of my vision
12. **eṣaḥ** - This very (Krishna)
13. **āvīrātmā** - The Soul of all souls

Bhishma Pitamah recalls the magnificent **Rajasuya Sacrifice** of King Yudhishtira, where an assembly of the world's most exalted **sages and kings** had gathered. He remembers how, in that inner pavilion, Lord Krishna was selected to receive the **Arhaṇam**—the very first worship of the ceremony—above all others. Bhishma reflects that the same Lord who was the **object of everyone's eyes** and adoration in that royal hall is now physically present **within his own vision** at the moment of his death. He recognizes this Person as the **Āvirātmā**, the Super soul residing in the hearts of all living beings and finds ultimate peace knowing he is dying in the presence of the One whom the entire world worships.

This sloka connects the supreme Bhagavan with the Krishna - the friend on the battlefield. Bhishma is confirming that the person standing before him is not just a mortal prince, but the **Supreme Reality** recognized by the greatest minds of the age (like Vyasa and Narada). It validates his life's long wait for this moment.



11.Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.42

तमिममहमजं शरीरभाजां
हृदि हृदि धिष्ठितमात्मकल्पितानाम् ।
प्रतिदृशमिव नैकधार्कमेकं
समधिगतोऽस्मि विधूतभेदमोहः ॥
tam imam aham ajam śarīra-bhājām
hṛdi hṛdi dhiṣṭhitam ātma-kalpitānām
pratidṛśam iva naikadhārkam ekam
samadhi-gato 'smi vidhūta-bheda-mohaḥ

Having surrendered his mind, visualized the battlefield, and remembered the Lord's mercy, Bhishma Pitamah now reaches the state of ultimate realization. This sloka describes the "oneness" of his focus as he prepares to exhale his final breath.

Padha artham Word-for-Word Meaning

Tam- Him (the Lord)

Imam - This one (standing before me)

Aham - I

aja-śarīra-bhājām - Of the unborn (living entities) who have accepted bodies

hṛdi - In the heart

hṛdi - In every heart (repeated for emphasis)

dhiṣṭhitam - Situated / Residing

ātma-kalpitānām - Created by Himself / according to His own will

pratidṛśam - In every eye / in every perspective

iva - As if

naika-dhā - In many ways / as many



arkam - The sun

eka-dha - Which is one

samadhi-gato 'smi - I have now attained / reached (this realization)

vidhūta-bheda-mohaḥ - Having been freed from the delusion of duality/difference



In this concluding prayer, Bhishma Pitamah declares that he has finally attained the highest state of **Samadhi**, having been completely **freed from the delusion of duality**. He realizes that the very Krishna standing before his eyes is the same Supreme Soul residing in the **hearts of all living beings**. To explain this, he uses a beautiful analogy: just as the **one sun** in the sky appears as many when reflected in different pots of water, the one Supreme Lord appears differently to different people, though He remains **One**. Bhishma sees through



the "reflection" of the physical body and recognizes the singular, divine Light of Krishna. With this realization, he sheds all confusion and prepares to merge his consciousness into the Lord.

The phrase **vidhūta-bheda-mohaḥ** is the key to Bhishma's departure. Throughout his life, he had to navigate "differences"—Dharma vs. Adharma, Pandavas vs. Kauravas, his vow vs. his desire. In this final moment, all those dualities vanish. He sees only Krishna.

Srimad Bhagavatham 1.9.43

सूत उवाच

कृष्ण एवं भगवति मनोवाग्दृष्टिवृत्तिभिः ।

आत्मन्यात्मानमावेश्य सोऽन्तःश्वास उपारमत् ॥

sūta uvāca

kṛṣṇa evaṁ bhagavata mano-vāg-dṛṣṭi-vṛttibhiḥ

ātmāny ātmānam āveśya so 'ntaḥśvāsa upāramat





Padha Artham Word for word meaning

sūta uvāca - Suta said

kṛṣṇa - Unto Lord Krishna

evam - Thus

bhagavati - The Personality of Godhead

manasā - With the mind

vāk - Speech

dṛṣṭi - Sight / Vision

vṛttibhiḥ - By the activities / functions

ātmany ātmānam - The soul into the Supersoul

āveśya - Having absorbed / merged

so 'ntaḥ-śvāsa - His breathing stopped / internalized

upāramat - He became silent / ceased activities

Suta tells the assembled sages that Bhishma Pitamah, having thus absorbed his **mind**, his **speech**, and his **vision** entirely in Lord Krishna (the Supreme Personality of Godhead), became completely still. By integrating all his life-senses into the Super soul, his external breathing ceased, and he passed away in a state of perfect peace. He did not simply "die"; he withdrew his consciousness from the material world and placed it firmly into the Divine.

Due to this selfless sacrifice, for his father, Shantanu, he was granted the boon of **Iccha-Mrityu** (death only when he chooses). It was this specific boon that allowed Bhishma to wait on his bed of arrows for the auspicious moment to recite the Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam and the Bhishma Stuti we just made a humble attempt to understand the simple meanings.



Ohm Namo Narayana

Sarvam Sri Krishnarpanam Asthu

