

Pride of the Pandavas Humbled (concluded)

Arjuna's Lesson in Humility

Before Krishna passed away, He requested that Arjuna take care of the women and children that were left behind after He and the Yadava heroes were all gone. Rushing to honor that request, Arjuna hurried to Dwaraka to gather his charges before the city of Dwaraka sank into the ocean.

While Arjuna was escorting the women and children towards Hastinapur, a large gang of robbers attacked them. At that time, Arjuna tried to use all the weapons that had previously been at his command, but found that his power had been rendered ineffective. Experiencing tremendous frustration and humiliation, Arjuna could only watch as their wealth was looted and most of the women were carried off by the marauders. In despair, he brought the remainder of the survivors



to safety and gave them shelter in various regions of the kingdom.

Overwhelmed with sorrow after seeing his inability to save all the women and children of Dwaraka, and not knowing where to turn for consolation, Arjuna went to the ashram of Sage Vyasa. Approaching the sage, he said,

“How was it possible for five hundred thousand great Yadava heroes to be destroyed in such a short time? How was it possible that I could not protect the Yadava women from ordinary robbers despite all my efforts?”

Under the guidance of Sage Vyasa, Arjuna was then led to understand that in all the events surrounding the destruction of the Yadavas, as well as in all the events that occurred during the great war, it was the Divine plan that was unfolding according to the will of Krishna.

The Art of Positive Feeling Part Six



Overcoming Pride (concluded)



by Swami Jyotirmayananda

Vyasa explained that when Krishna's mission as an Avatara (Divine Incarnation) was over, He and all His people had to depart. If Krishna had wanted to save His relatives, He could have done so; but, since their work in this world was over, He allowed them all to be destroyed. The women that were captured by those robbers also were following their karmas. They had been *apsaras* in the heavenly world who, because of certain errors, had been cursed to enter into human embodiment and remain there until robbers released them from that bondage.

Thus, Vyasa helped Arjuna realize that it was Divine will, not the egoistic will of an individual, that was of utmost importance in this drama of the world-process. It was not his own strength that really won the battles for him, nor his own weakness that lost them. It was the Divine Krishna, driving the chariot, Who rendered their enemies lifeless. He, Arjuna, was merely acting as an instrument of Krishna's will.

Becoming Free of Ego

For the vast majority of people, ego is one's identity. Relaxation of ego is achieved only during sleep, when ego is set aside not by one's choice, but by an unconscious, biological process.

But when you are moving from normal to supernormal awareness, you begin to discover that ego is not the source of your inspiration and your initiative. In reality you are different from your ego. As that understanding grows, you learn to set aside the ego by your own choice through increasing intuitional understanding.

The art of becoming free of ego is indeed the subtlest art. However, it is acquired through a persistent process of personality integration by which you bring renewed health to your body, and to your conscious and unconscious mind. If you are physically healthy, it is possible for

you to detach from the body. If you are mentally healthy and serene, then it is possible for you to detach yourself from the mind. If your unconscious is not pressured by impure subtle desires, then it is possible for you to go beyond your ego.

As you balance yourself by right action, devotion, meditation, reflection, and of course, *satsanga* or good association, you begin to develop a harmonized personality. You realize that relaxing the ego is not so difficult, and begin to feel as if your spirit is like a bird flying through the newly opened window of a cage, free to soar beyond all limitations.

In daily life, therefore, you should be alert not to let conceit and egoism become prominent. You must subjugate the promptings of the ego day by day, and feel humbler than a blade of grass and yet mightier than mountains; lesser than a little glow worm, and yet more effulgent than the sun.

The flowers do not advertise their fragrance. The sun has no need to proclaim its luminosity by beating drums. The ocean has no need to sing the praises of its own profundity. The Himalayas have no need to brag about their lofty heights. So too, an aspirant who unfolds the fragrance of virtue, unravels the luminosity of spiritual wisdom, experiences the profundity of universal life, and ascends the heights of super-consciousness has no need to indulge in pride and its numerous expressions.

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