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**War or Peace:
Choice or Destiny?**

Udyoga Parva
Chapter 70-77

Swami Tadatmananda
Arsha Bodha Center

युधिष्ठिर उवाच

Yudhishtira said,
yudhiṣṭhira uvāca

श्रुतं ते धृतराष्ट्रस्य

O Krishna, you have heard what Dhritarashtra
śrutaṁ te dhṛtarāṣṭrasya

सपुत्रस्य चिकीर्षितम् ।

and his son intend to do.
saputrasya cikīrṣitam

एतद्धि सकलं कृष्ण

O Krishna, all of this is
etad dhi sakalaṁ kṛṣṇa

सञ्जयो मां यदब्रवीत् ॥

as Sanjaya told me.
sañjaya māṁ yad abravīt (70.6)

अप्रदानेन राज्यस्य

Without returning the kingdom,
apradānena rājyasya

शान्तिमस्मासु मार्गति ।

he seeks peace with us.
śāntim asmāsu mārgati

लुब्धः पापेन मनसा

Being greedy, with a sinful mind,
lubdhaḥ pāpena manasā

चरन्नसममात्मनः ॥

he acts unfairly towards us.
carann asamam ātmanaḥ (70.8)

वृद्धो राजा धृतराष्ट्रः
The old king Dhritarashtra
vṛddho rājā dhṛtarāṣṭraḥ

स्वधर्मं नानुपश्यति |
does not understand his duty.
svadharmam nānupaśyati

पश्यन्वा पुत्रगृद्धित्वान्
Or if he does understand, due to attachment to his son
paśyan vā putra-gṛddhitvān

मन्दस्यान्वेति शासनम् ||
his leadership is weak.
mandasyānveti śāsanam (70.11)

पञ्च नस्तात दीयन्तां
Unto us should be given five
pañca nas tāta dīyantām

ग्रामा वा नगराणि वा |
villages or towns.
grāmā vā nagarāṇi vā

न च तानपि दुष्टात्मा
But the evil-minded
na ca tān api duṣṭātmā

धार्तराष्ट्रोऽनुमन्यते ||
Duryodhana did not agree to give them.
dhārtarāṣṭro 'numanyate (70.16,17)

तत्र नः प्रथमः कल्पो
O Krishna, our main intention
tatra naḥ prathamam kalpo

यद्वयं ते च माधव |
is that the Kauravas and us
yad vayanam te ca madhava

प्रशान्ताः समभूताश्च
should be at peace, treated fairly,
praśāntāḥ sama-bhūtāś ca

श्रियं तानश्रुवीमहि ||
and enjoy the kingdom's wealth.
śriyam tān aśnuvīmahi (70.42)

तत्रैषा परमा काष्ठा
It would be the greatest
tatraiṣā paramā kaṣṭhā

रौद्रकर्मक्षयोदया |
of all destructive, terrible deeds
raudra-karma-kṣayodayā

यद्वयं कौरवान्हत्वा
if we were to kill the Kauravas
yad vayanam kauravan hatvā

तानि राष्ट्राण्यशीमहि ||
and enjoy the kingdom.
tāni rāṣṭrāṇy aśīmahi (70.43)

सर्वथा वृजिनं युद्धं

In all ways, war is sinful.

sarvathā vṛjinaṁ yuddhaṁ

को घ्नन्न प्रतिहन्यते |

Who can kill without being killed?

ko ghnana na pratihanyate

हतस्य च हृषीकेश

And, O Krishna, for one who has been killed,

hatasya ca hr̥ṣīkeśa

समौ जयपराजयौ ||

victory and defeat are the same.

samau jaya-parājayau (70.53)

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

तत्र किं मन्यसे कृष्ण

O Krishna, what do you think

tatra kiṁ manyase kṛṣṇa

प्राप्तकालमनन्तरम् |

on this occasion?

prāpta-kālam anantaram

कथमर्थाच्च धर्माच्च

From welfare and righteousness, how

katham arthāc ca dharmāc ca

न हीयेमहि माधव ||

can we avoid straying, O Krishna?

na hīyemahi mādhave (70.76)

उभयोरेव वामर्थे

For the sake of you and the Kauravas,

ubhayor eva vām arthe

यास्यामि कुरुसंसदम् ||

I will go to the camp of the Kauravas.

yāsyāmi kuru-saṁsadam (70.79)

शमं तत्र लभेयं चेद्

Then, if I succeed in bringing peace
śamaṁ tatra labheyam ced

युष्मदर्थमहापयन् ।

without sacrificing your welfare,
yuṣmad-artham ahāpayan

पुण्यं मे सुमहद्राजंश्

O Yudhishtira, for me it will be a great, holy deed
puṇyam me sumahad rājamś

चरितं स्यान्महाफलम् ॥

producing great benefits.
caritam syān mahā-phalam (70.80)

भीमसेन उवाच

Bhima said,
bhīmasena uvāca

न जातु गमनं तत्र

Going there can never
na jātu gamanam tatra

भवेत्पार्थ निरर्थकम् ।

be useless, O Yudhishtira.
bhavet pārtha nirarthakam

अर्थप्राप्तिः कदाचित्स्याद्

Perhaps it will be successful,
artha-prāptiḥ kadācit syād

अन्ततो वाप्यवाच्यता ॥

or at least we will be blameless (for having tried).
antato vāpy avācyatā (70.88)

यथा यथैव शान्तिः स्यात्

The way to peace
yathā yathaiva śāntiḥ syāt

कुरूणां मधुसूदन ।

with the Kauravas, O Krishna,
kurūṇām madhusūdana

तथा तथैव भाषेथा

tell them that.
tathā tathaiva bhāṣethā

मा स्म युद्धेन भीषयेः ॥

Do not make them fear war.
mā sma yuddhena bhīṣayeḥ (72.1)

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

जिज्ञासन्तो हि धर्मस्य

Those who examine dharma
jijñāsanto hi dharmasya

संदिग्धस्य वृकोदर ।

which is uncertain, O Bhima,
saṁdigdhasya vṛkodara

पर्यायं न व्यवस्यन्ति

cannot arrive at a conclusion about
paryāyaṁ na vyavasyanti

दैवमानुषयोर्जनाः ॥

what is due to daiva and what is due to effort.
daiva-mānuṣayor janāḥ (75.5)

स एव हेतुर्भूत्वा हि

That which is the cause
sa eva hetur bhūtvā hi

पुरुषस्यार्थसिद्धिषु ।

for accomplishing goals,
puruṣasyārtha-siddhiṣu

विनाशेऽपि स एवास्य

can also cause one's destruction.
vināśe 'pi sa evāsya

संदिग्धं कर्म पौरुषम् ॥

(The results of) human effort is uncertain.
saṁdigdhaṁ karma pauruṣam (75.6)

अन्यथा परिदृष्टानि

Situations understood in one way
anyathā paridṛṣṭāni

कविभिर्दोषदर्शिभिः ।

by wise ones who understand problems,
kavibhir doṣa-darśibhiḥ

अन्यथा परिवर्तन्ते

can turn out differently
anyathā parivartante

वेगा इव नभस्वतः ॥

like the changing force of the wind.
vegā iva nabhasvataḥ (75.7)

सुमन्त्रितं सुनीतं च

Even if well-advised, well-executed,
sumantritaṃ sunītaṃ ca

न्यायतश्चोपपादितम् |

and supported by reason --
nyāyataś copapāditam

कृतं मानुष्यकं कर्म

deeds done by people
kṛtaṃ mānuṣyakaṃ karma

दैवेनापि विरुध्यते ||

can be opposed by daiva.
daivenāpi virudhyate (75.8)

यदन्यद्विष्टभावस्य

Also, other things done
yad anyad diṣṭa-bhāvasya

पुरुषस्य स्वयङ्कृतम् |

by a person subject to daiva
puruṣasya svayaṅ-kṛtam

तस्मादनवरोधश्च

can be unopposed by that daiva.
tasmād anavarodhaś ca

विद्यते तत्र लक्षणम् ||

This is the nature (of daiva and effort).
vidyate tatra lakṣaṇam (75.10)

दैवमप्यकृतं कर्म

But what is due to daiva, not effort,
daivam apy akṛtaṃ karma

पौरुषेण विहन्यते |

can be counteracted by effort,
pauruṣeṇa vihanyate

शीतमुष्णं तथा वर्षं

like cold and heat, rain,
śītam uṣṇaṃ tathā varṣaṃ

क्षुत्पिपासे च भारत ||

hunger and thirst, O Bhima.
kṣut-pipāse ca bhārata (75.9)

लोकस्य नान्यतो वृत्तिः

In the world, there is no other way
lokasya nānyato vṛttiḥ

पाण्डवान्यत्र कर्मणः |

except action, O Bhima.
pāṇḍavānyatra karmaṇaḥ

एवम्बुद्धिः प्रवर्तेत

With this understanding, one should act
evam-buddhiḥ pravarteta

फलं स्यादुभयान्वयात् ||

and receive results due to both (daiva and effort).
phalaṃ syād ubhayānvayāt (75.11)

य एवं कृतबुद्धिः सन्
One with such wisdom
ya evaṁ kṛta-buddhiḥ san

कर्मस्वेव प्रवर्तते |
who engages in action
karmasv eva pravartate

नासिद्धौ व्यथते तस्य
will not be disturbed by failure
nāsiddhau vyathate tasya

न सिद्धौ हर्षमश्नुते ||
or elated by success.
na siddhau harṣam aśnute (75.12)

श्वोभूते धृतराष्ट्रस्य
Tomorrow, to Dhritarashtra's
śvobhūte dhṛtarāṣṭrasya

समीपं प्राप्य पाण्डव |
palace I will go, O Bhima,
samīpaṁ prāpya pāṇḍava

यतिष्ये प्रशमं कर्तुं
and strive for peace
yatiṣye praśamaṁ kartuṁ

युष्मदर्थमहापयन् ||
without sacrificing your welfare.
yuṣmad-artham ahāpayan (75.15)

शमं चेत्ते करिष्यन्ति
If they agree to peace,
śamaṁ cet te kariṣyanti

ततोऽनन्तं यशो मम |
then great glory will be mine.
tato 'nantam yaśo mama

भवतां च कृतः कामस्
Your desire will be fulfilled
bhavatām ca kṛtaḥ kāmas

तेषां च श्रेय उत्तमम् ||
and the greatest good will come to them.
teṣām ca śreya uttamam (75.16)

ते चेदभिनिवेक्ष्यन्ति
But if they are stubborn
te ced abhinivekṣyanti

नाभ्युपैष्यन्ति मे वचः |
and do not agree to my proposal,
nābhyupaiṣyanti me vacaḥ

कुरवो युद्धमेवात्र
the Kauravas will then
kuravo yuddham evātra

रौद्रं कर्म भविष्यति ||
engage in a frightful war.
raudraṁ karma bhaviṣyati (75.17)

अर्जुन उवाच

Arjuna said,
arjuna uvāca

तव वाक्यं तु मे श्रुत्वा

Having listened to your statements,
tava vākyaṁ tu me śrutvā

प्रतिभाति परन्तप ।

O Krishna, it seems
pratibhāti parantapa

नैव प्रशममत्र त्वं

that peace cannot be gained
naiva praśamam atra tvam

मन्यसे सुकरं प्रभो ॥

easily in your opinion.
manyase sukaraṁ prabho (76.1,2)

अफलं मन्यसे चापि

You consider to be ineffective
aphalaṁ manyase cāpi

पुरुषस्य पराक्रमम् ।

the efforts of a person,
puruṣasya parākramam

न चान्तरेण कर्माणि

but also without efforts,
na cāntareṇa karmāṇi

पौरुषेण फलोदयः ॥

nothing is accomplished.
pauruṣeṇa phalodayaḥ (76.3)

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

एवमेतन्महाबाहो

O Arjuna, thus it is
evam etan mahābāho

यथा वदसि पाण्डव |

as you say.
yathā vadasi pāṇḍava (77.1)

क्षेत्रं हि रसवच्छुद्धं

A fertile, clean field
kṣetraṁ hi rasavac chuddhaṁ

कर्षकेणोपपादितम् |

can be prepared by a farmer,
karṣakeṇopapāditam

ऋते वर्षं न कौन्तेय

but without rain, O Arjuna,
ṛte varṣaṁ na kaunteya

जातु निर्वर्तयेत्फलम् ||

it will never produce crops.
jātu nirvartayet phalam (77.2)

तत्र वै पौरुषं ब्रूयुर्

They say that efforts
tatra vai pauruṣaṁ brūyur

आसेकं यत्नकारितम् |

can made to irrigate the field.
āsekaṁ yatna-kāritam

तत्र चापि ध्रुवं पश्येत्

But even then, it is seen that
tatra cāpi dhruvaṁ paśyet

शोषणं दैवकारितम् ||

the field can dry up -- due to daiva.
shoṣaṇaṁ daiva-kāritam (77.3)

तदिदं निश्चितं बुद्ध्या

This has been clearly understood
tad idaṁ niścitaṁ buddhyā

पूर्वरपि महात्मभिः |

by the great souls who lived before:
pūrvair api mahātmabhiḥ

दैवे च मानुषे चैव

Both daiva and effort
daive ca mānuṣe caiva

संयुक्तं लोककारणम् ||

together are the cause for what happens in the world.
saṁyuktaṁ loka-kāraṇam (77.4)

अहं हि तत्करिष्यामि

I will indeed do

ahaṁ hi tat kariṣyāmi

परं पुरुषकारतः |

the utmost that can be done through effort.

paraṁ puruṣa-kārataḥ

दैवं तु न मया शक्यं

But as for daiva, I cannot

daivaṁ tu na mayā śakyaṁ

कर्म कर्तुं कथञ्चन ||

do anything.

karma kartuṁ kathañcana (77.5)

यत्तु वाचा मया शक्यं

Whatever I can do through word

yat tu vācā mayā śakyaṁ

कर्मणा चापि पाण्डव |

or deed, O Arjuna,

karmaṇā cāpi pāṇḍava

करिष्ये तदहं पार्थ

that I will do. But, O Arjuna,

kariṣye tad ahaṁ pārtha

न त्वाशंसे शमं परैः ||

I do not expect peace with the Kauravas.

na tvāśaṁse śamaṁ paraiḥ (77.18)