

ANUSASANPARVA

This is the thirteenth parva of the Mahabharata. It consists of two sub-parvas namely Daandharmaparva and Bhishmasvargaarohanaparva. This has 9641 slokas.

I. DANADHARMAPARVA

This sub-parva contains 166 chapters, which further has 7556 slokas. While answering the questions of Yudhishtira, Bhishma instructed various types of Dharmas. After listening to them, he said to Bhishma thus, 'O grandfather! Though you have explained various kinds of realities of the virtue of peace, I didn't get peace. O king! Having seen you while lying on the earth, in a distressed condition, I will not get peace. I think that the death of Duryodhana is far better than my condition because, he didn't see your distressed condition. You please instruct me in such a way that I can get relief even in the nether world from this sin.' While replying to this, Bhishma narrated the ancient history of Gautami, an old Brahmin lady, a hunter called Arjunaka and the conversation among a snake, Death and Time. He further said, 'the entire universe is the form of Time. Either you or Duryodhana didn't do anything. All the kings were killed as they were dependant on the Time.' After listening to his words, Yudhishtira's grief was removed and he further asked, 'O the best among men! Please tell me that, having relied upon Dharma, which household has won over the death?' In this context, Bhishma narrated the story of Sudarsana, Son of the fire, who had won over the death by giving the hospitality to the guest. While narrating about the way through which, Vishwamitra obtained Brahmarshitva . He also explained the birth of Vishwamitra. While narrating the instance of the conversation between Indra and a parrot, he explained the virtues of sympathetic and devotees. Through the conversation of Vashishta and Brahma, he explained the importance of human effort than the fate. While replying to Yudhishtira's question, Bhishma explained about the fruit of action and respectable and worthy persons. While narrating the conversation between the wolf and the monkey, he explained how the gods and ancestors get satisfied by donating to the Brahmins. Hence, an intellect should certainly donate to a Brahmin. After narrating the story of a Sudra and a devout Brahmin he said that it would be troublesome to instruct an unworthy. He further explained in detail as with what kind of person Goddess Laxmi stays and with whom she doesn't. After narrating the story of a royal sage called Bhangasvan, he said that the women obtain much happiness than men while experiencing the materialistic pleasures.

Bhishma further instructed that, 'O king! Killing others, stealing and consummation with other's wife are the three sins that are done with the physical body. Speaking bad words, harsh words, back biting and untruth are the four sins that are done through the speech. To be greedy towards others' wealth, developing enmity with other living beings, unbelieving the fruit of action, are the three sins that are done through mind. One should abandon these ten kinds of sins.' As Yudhishtira asked, Bhishma requested Lord Krishna to explain the greatness of Lord Shiva. Then Vasudeva depicted the greatness and virtues of Lord Shiva. He also narrated the prayer of thousand names of Lord Shiva and while explaining about the result of its reading, he said that having controlled the senses, whoever



reads this prayer for a period of one year will obtain the result of the Asvamedha sacrifice. Sage Vyasa insisted Yudhishtira to read the verse of thousand names of Lord Shiva. Yudhishtira asked, 'O the best in the clan of Bharatas! How it is applicable that the women are instructed the duty of association at the time of their marriage? If one of the wife and husband dies, then how can that duty of association be retained in one person?' While answering to that, Bhishma told the conversation of sage Ashtavakra and Uttara Disha. He also told the qualities of the persons obtaining the heaven and the hell. He depicted the importance of various pilgrimages. While narrating various short tales, he instructed the method of obtaining the Brahmanism. Through the conversation of Lord Srikrishna and the great sage Narada, he introduced the respectable persons of all the three worlds. He narrated various conversations on the protection of women. He also stated about a worthy person to whom a daughter should be donated. He told the procedure of distributing the ancestral property that is applicable to all four castes such as Brahmins and others.

Yudhishtira asked Bhishma, 'O grandfather! To obtain the kingship we had to kill men in crores, because of which, we will certainly go to the hell. So by performing a terrific penance I want to dry up my body. Please instruct me in this context.' While answering his question, Bhishma told him about the kinds of results of various actions that are performed by the human beings. He told about the result of constructing the gardens and lakes. He told that donation and sacrifice are the main duties of a Kshatriya. A king should always protect the people. One-fourth part of the sin that is performed by the people unprotected by the king is shared by that king. Similarly one-fourth part of the good that is performed by the people protected by the king is shared by that king. Among all the donations, donation of the land is the best. Yudhishtira further asked, 'O father! What are the objects that can be donated to the Brahmins? What could be the result of that?' While answering to this, Bhishma told the importance of the donation of the food. He said that, whoever wishes his own welfare should donate the food to whoever desires it. One should never insult the person who comes to one's house. The food that is donated even to a Chandala or to a dog is never wasted. He said the fruit of donation of various objects on the union of different stars. He told the importance of donation of slippers, carts, sesame seeds, land and others. While narrating the history that is in the form of conversation of Brahmin and Yama he told the importance of the result of donating the sesame seeds, water, lamps, gems and others. After narrating the short tale of the king Nruga, he told that one should never steal the wealth of a Brahmin. He told the importance of donating a cow, while narrating the short tale of sage Uddalaka and Naciketas. He said that who ever kills the cow or eats its flesh and encourages slaughter of a cow, will dwell in the hell for as many number of years as many pores of a cow. While replying to the question of Yudhishtira, Bhishma said that if one donates the gold as per the scriptures, one will obtain the result of chanting the Vedas. He further narrated the story of slaughter of a demon called Taraka. He introduced the method of offering libations and the objects that can be donated while doing that. He narrated the conversation between Lord Srikrishna and the earth and instructed the principles of a house-hold. He depicted the respect of the mother, father, preceptor and elders. He said that, in the case of offering due respect, a



preceptor is more respectable than ten teachers. A father is more respectable than ten preceptors. A mother is more respectable than ten fathers. A mother would reject the entire earth with her respect. Hence, there is no preceptor who is equal to mother. After the death of one's father one should consider the elder brother as one's father. Parents create only the body. But the preceptor imparts knowledge. He is the truth, immortal and eternal. The eldest sister and the wife of the eldest brother should also be considered as mothers.

While answering to Yudhishtira, Bhishma explained in detail about the result of the vow of fasting. While praising the non-violence, he said that non-violence is the supreme duty and it is the supreme control, supreme donation, supreme penance, supreme sacrifice, supreme result, supreme friend and it is the supreme happiness. He narrated various conversations and told the covert of Dharma. He explained the verse of thousand names of Lord Vishnu and explained its importance. He explained the importance of Lord Krishna. When Yudhishtira asked, Lord Krishna explained the importance of Lord Shiva. Thus, Bhishma clarified the doubts of Yudhishtira. Thereafter, having obtained the permission of Bhishma, Yudhishtira went to Hastinapura along with his family.

II. BHISHMASWARGAAROHANAPARVA

This subsection consists of just 89 slokas.

Having reached Hastinapura, Yudhishtira felicitated every one by following the tradition and permitted them to go to their houses. He recollected the words of Bhishma. When the Sun Lord, moved from south to north, Yudhishtira came out of Hastinapura along with the sacrificial priests. He sent the priceless objects for the funeral of Bhishma. King Yudhishtira along with Dhritarashtra, Gaandhari, Kunti, the other Pandavas, Lord Krishna, Vidura, Yuyutsu and Satyaki went to Bhishma. Sage Vyasa, Narada and Devala sat near Bhishma. The other kings were also assembled there. Yudhishtira saluted to Bhishma, who was lying on the bed of arrows, and said thus, 'O grandfather! We all have assembled here to serve you. You please open your eyes and see. As per your instructions I arranged all those things that are necessary.' When Yudhishtira said thus, Bhishma had opened his eyes and saw the clan of the Bharata. He held the hands of Yudhishtira and said thus, 'It's fortunate that you all have come here. The Sun god has returned from south to north. I have passed fifty-eight days while lying on the bed of arrows. As per the lunar month, the month of Magha has arrived. The lunar days are passing on, of which, one-fourth has passed away and three-fourth is remained. (It is the eighth day of lunar days of the month Magha). Later, he called Dhritarashtra and said, 'O king! You know the covert of science of the Vedas fully. You should not lament for the incidents of past.' He then spoke to Lord Srikrishna thus, 'O lord! I offer salutations to you. You may protect me. Now you permit me to go. I know that you are the eternal Narayana. Give me permission to abandon this body.' Srikrishna said, 'I will permit you. You go to the world of Vasus. You haven't done any sin.' Bhishma further requested Pandavas and others to permit him to abandon his body. He instructed them to always follow the truth and perform the duty. Truth is the supreme strength of all. After instructing Yudhishtira to always honor the



preceptors and the priests who officiate at a sacrifice, he remained silent for two seconds. Through the path of yoga his lives went upwards. At that time sage Vyasa and others were surprised to see that as the life of Bhishma was departing from a particular organ so the arrows also came out of that particular organ and even his wounds were cured. Thus, within no time his body was left without the arrows. When he closed all the doors of his body through the strength of yoga, his skull was opened through which, his lives went into the sky. Later, Pandavas performed the funeral as per the rites. Lord Srikrishna and sage Vyasa pacified Goddess Ganga, who was grief-stricken for her son.

