

49. Ill-motivated Dhṛtarāṣṭra

[31:07 Minutes]

Audio

Chapter Forty-nine. Heading: "Ill-motivated Dhṛtarāṣṭra."

Akrūra, thus being ordered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, visited Hastināpura. Hastināpura is said to be modern New Delhi. The part of New Delhi which is still known as Indraprastha is accepted by people in general as the old capital of the Pāṇḍavas. The very name Hastināpura suggests that there were many *hastīs*. *Hastī* means elephants. Because in the capital of the Pāṇḍavas there were many elephants, it is called Hastināpura, and to keep many elephants means the kingdom must be very opulent, because to keep elephants is very expensive job. Only the kings and royal order can keep elephants, and in Hastināpura there were full of elephants, horses, chariots and other opulences for a rich kingdom. So when Akrūra reached Hastināpura, he saw the capital full of all kinds of opulences. The kings of Hastināpura were supposed to be the ruling king all over the world. Therefore their names and fame was very widely spread, and the whole kingdom was conducted under the good counsel of learned *brāhmaṇas*.

So Akrūra, after seeing the very opulent capital city Hastināpura, he met first of all the King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and while meeting Dhṛtarāṣṭra he saw also the old grandfather Bhīṣma sitting with him. After meeting them, he went to see Vidura. Then Akrūra saw his sister, Kuntī. In this way, one after another, he saw the son of Somadatta, and along with him he saw the king of Bāhlikā. Then he saw Droṇācārya, then he saw Kṛpācārya, then he saw Karṇa and Suyodhana. The Suyodhana is the name of Duryodhana. Then he saw also the

son of Droṇācārya, Aśvatthāmā. Then gradually he saw the five brothers, Pāṇḍavas, and other friends and relatives living in the city. Akrūra is known as the son of Gāndīni, so whomever he met was very much pleased to receive him and inquired about the welfare of their respective relatives, and Akrūra was offered good seat for reception. Akrūra also inquired from them about their welfare and other activities.

Akrūra was deputed by Lord Kṛṣṇa to visit Hastināpura. It is therefore understood that he was very intelligent to study diplomatically the situation, because Dhṛtarāṣṭra unlawfully occupied the throne after the death of King Pāṇḍu, although his five sons were present. Akrūra wanted to study the whole situation by remaining there for a few months. He could understand very well ill-motivated Dhṛtarāṣṭra, that he was very much inclined in favor of his own sons than the Pāṇḍavas, and because he had already usurped the kingdom, he was intriguing and planning how to dispose of the five brothers known as Pāṇḍavas. He knew also that all the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, headed by Duryodhana, were very crooked politicians, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra did not act in pursuance of good instruction given by Bhīṣma and Vidura, but he was being conducted by the ill-instruction of such person as Karṇa, Śakuni and others. Therefore, Akrūra decided to stay there for a few months to study the whole political situation.

While staying in the city of Hastināpura, Akrūra gradually could learn from the topics of Kuntī and Vidura that Dhṛtarāṣṭra was very much intolerant and envious upon the five brothers Pāṇḍavas, on account of their extraordinary features of personalities. In the matter of learning the military science, developing bodily strength, acting like chivalrous heroes and, above all this, good qualities of *kṣatriyas*, they were very much responsible princes, always thinking of the welfare of the citizens. And Dhṛtarāṣṭra, being envious in consultation with his ill-advised son, how he tried to kill the Pāṇḍavas by

administrating poison, which was most abominable attempt by such ill-advised diplomat.

Next paragraph.

Akrūra happened to be one of the family cousin-brothers of Kuntī. Therefore Kuntī, after meeting him, began to inquire about his..., about her paternal relatives, and as it is very usual she began to cry, thinking of her birthplace. She immediately began to inquire from Akrūra whether her father, mother, brother, sister and brothers' wife, her other friends, if they were still remembering her at home. She especially inquired about Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, her glorious nephews, and inquired whether Kṛṣṇa, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is very affectionate to His devotee, does remember her sons, and whether Śrī Balarāma also remembering them. She thought herself as if a she-deer in the midst of tigers. Actually her position was like that. After the death of her husband, King Pāṇḍu, she was to take care of the minor children, the five Pāṇḍavas, but Dhṛtarāṣṭra was always planning to kill them some way or other. Certainly, therefore, she was just living as a poor innocent animal in the midst of several tigers.

Being a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, she was always thinking of Him and expecting that someday Kṛṣṇa would come and save them from the dangerous position. Therefore, she inquired from Akrūra whether Kṛṣṇa proposes to come there some day and would advise the fatherless Pāṇḍavas how to get out of the intriguing policies of the Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his sons.

By talking with Akrūra about all these affairs, she felt herself too much helpless and began to exclaim, "My dear Kṛṣṇa, my dear Kṛṣṇa, You are the supreme mystic. You are the Supersoul of the universe. You are the real well-wisher of the whole universe. My dear Govinda, although You are far away at this time from me, still, I pray that I am surrendered unto Your lotus feet. At

the present moment, I am very much aggrieved with my five fatherless sons. I can fully understand," Kuntī continued to say "that except Your lotus feet, there is no other shelter for us for protection. Your lotus feet can deliver all aggrieved souls because You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One can be saved from the clutches of repeated birth and death by Your mercy only. My dear Kṛṣṇa, You are the supreme pure Supersoul and master of all *yogīs*. What I can say? I can simply offer my respectful obeisances unto You from here. Accept me as Your fully surrendered devotee."

Next paragraph.

By this behavior of Kuntī, that although Kṛṣṇa was not present before her, still she offered her prayers to Him, just placing Him in her presence—so this is possible for everyone, following the footsteps of Kuntī. It is not that Kṛṣṇa has to be present physically everywhere. He is present everywhere by His spiritual potency. One has simply to surrender unto Him sincerely.

Next paragraph.

When Kuntī was offering her prayers very feelingly to Kṛṣṇa, she could not check herself and began to cry very loudly before Akrūra. At that time Vidura was also present there, so both Akrūra and Vidura became very much sympathetic on Kuntīdevī, mother of the Pāṇḍavas, and they began to solace her by glorifying her five sons, like Yudhiṣṭhira, Arjuna, Bhīma. They pacified her, that her sons were extraordinarily powerful; therefore, she should not be perturbed about them on account of they are born of the great demigods like Yamarāja, Indra, Pāvana, etc.

In this way, Akrūra studied the whole political situation, the extreme circumstances under which Kuntī and her five sons were passing through, and thus when he decided to return back, he wanted to give some good advice to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who was too much inclined favorably towards his own sons and

unfavorably towards the Pāṇḍavas. When the King Dhṛtarāṣṭra was sitting amongst all friends and relatives, Akrūra began to address him as follows with good instructions.

Akrūra first of all addressed Dhṛtarāṣṭra as "Vārcitravīrya." This Vārcitravīrya means son of Vicitravīrya. Vicitravīrya was the name of father of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Actually, Dhṛtarāṣṭra was not the begotten son of Vicitravīrya; he was begotten son of Vyāsadeva. When the father is unable to beget a child, formerly there was system, *devareṇa sutotpattiḥ*. The brother of the husband could beget a child in the womb of the woman. That is now forbidden in this age of Kali. So "Vārcitravīrya" was sarcastically addressed by Akrūra as such, because he was not actually begotten by his father. He is the son of his father *kṣetra-jña*. When a child is begotten in the wife of somebody else, the child is claimed by the husband. But actually the child is not born by the husband. So this "Vārcitravīrya," this was a sarcastic remark on Dhṛtarāṣṭra, that actually he was not the son of his father, and still he was claiming the throne on hereditary descendance, which he ought not have done. Actually, the Pāṇḍu was the king, and in the presence of Pāṇḍu's sons, the Pāṇḍavas, he should not have occupied the throne.

Therefore, first of all Akrūra said that "My dear son of Vicitravīrya, you have unlawfully usurped the throne of the Pāṇḍavas. Therefore, you are glorifying the prestige of your parenthood in the opposite way. But whatever it may be, somehow or other you are now on the throne. Therefore, I beg to advise you that you rule over the kingdom on moral and ethical principles, and if you do so and try to please your subjects in that way, then your name and fame will be perpetual."

Indirectly he hinted that "Although you are differentially treating your nephews, the Pāṇḍavas, they happen to be your subjects. Even you treat them

not as the owner of the throne, even if you treat them as your subjects, still you should equally think of their welfare along with your own sons. But if you do not follow this principle and act just on the opposite way, then you will be unpopular amongst your subjects, and in the next life you will be subjected to accept hellish condition of life. I hope, therefore, you shall treat equally your sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu on the same level."

Akrūra indirectly hinted that if Dhṛtarāṣṭra would not treat the Pāṇḍavas and his sons on equal footing, then surely there will be a fight between the two camps of cousin-brothers, and as the Pāṇḍavas' cause would be right, they would come out victorious and the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra would be killed in the fight. This was a sort of foretelling by Akrūra to Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Akrūra further advised Dhṛtarāṣṭra that "In this material world, nobody can remain as eternal companion. In other words, by chance only we assemble together in the family, in the society, in the community or in the nation. But at the end, because every one of us has to give up this body, we must be separated at the ultimate goal. Therefore, unnecessarily to be very much affectionate towards the members of the family, and that also unlawfully, is not evidence of nice intelligence." In plain words, Akrūra hinted to Dhṛtarāṣṭra that his staunch affection for the family was due to his gross ignorance of facts or his blindness towards moral principles.

In the family, society, community or nation, although we appear to be combined together, every one of us has a individual destiny. Every one of us takes birth according to individual past work; therefore, everyone has to enjoy or suffer individually the result of his own *karma*. There is no possibility of improving one's destiny by cooperate living. If somebody acquires money by illegal and irreligious principles... Sometimes it so happens that a father accumulates wealth by all illegal ways, and the son takes away the money of the

father, although it was hard earned by the father. It is exactly like the small fishes in the ocean eats the material body of the large and old fish. One should not therefore accumulate wealth illegally for gratification of his family, society, community or nation. There were many empires also developed on this principle in the past, but they are no longer existing actually on account of being squandered away by later descendants.

One who does not know these subtle principles of fruitive activity and thus gives up the principles of moral and ethical life, such persons only carries with him the result of his sinful activities. While the ill-gotten wealth and possessions are taken up by somebody else, he goes to the darkest region of hellish life. One should not therefore accumulate wealth more than what is allotted to him by destiny; otherwise he would be factually blind to his own interest. Therefore, instead of fulfilling his self-interest, he would act just in the opposite way for his own downfall.

Akrūra continued to say, "My dear Dhṛtarāṣṭra, therefore I beg to advise you that don't be blind about the facts of this material existence. All our material conditional life, either in distress or happiness, are to be accepted as if one is in dream, and thus one should try to bring under control his mind and senses to live very peacefully for spiritual advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness only."

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, therefore, it is said that except persons who are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all are always in disturbed condition of the mind and full of anxiety. Even those who are trying for liberation or merging into the Brahma effulgence or the yogīs who are trying to achieve perfection in mystic power, they also cannot be in peace of mind. Pure devotees of Kṛṣṇa, they have no demand from Kṛṣṇa. They are simply satisfied with the service. Therefore, actual peace and tranquility of the mind can be attained in perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, after hearing from Akrūra all these moral instructions replied, "My dear Akrūra, you are very charitable in giving good instructions to me, but unfortunately I cannot accept them, exactly like a person who is destined to die does not utilize the effect of nectarean although administered to him." Dhṛtarāṣṭra continued to say, "I can understand that your instructions are very valuable. Unfortunately, they do not stand in my flickering mind, exactly like the glittering lightning in the sky does not stand on a fixed cloud. I therefore can understand only that nobody can check the onward progress of the Supreme Will. I understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa has appeared in the family of the Yadus, and He has appeared in order to decrease the overburdened load of this earth."

In other words, Dhṛtarāṣṭra gave hints to Akrūra that he had complete faith in Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But because at the same time he was very much inclined to his family members, therefore Kṛṣṇa in the very near future would vanquish all the members of his family, and naturally in a helpless condition, Dhṛtarāṣṭra would take shelter of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa usually, in order to show His special favor to a particular devotee, takes away all the objects of his material affection and thus forces such devotee to be materially helpless, when he has no alternative than to accept the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Actually this happened to Dhṛtarāṣṭra after the end of the Battle of Kurukṣetra.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra could realize two opposite factors acting before him. One thing is that he could understand that Kṛṣṇa was there to move away all the unnecessary burden of the world. Therefore, his sons also were unnecessary burden, and he expected that they would be killed. At the same time, from his mind he could not withdraw unlawful affection for his sons. So understanding these two contradictory factors, he began to offer his respectful obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that "The contradictory ways of material

existence are very difficult to understand. But it can be adjusted only as inconceivable execution of the plan of the Supreme, who by His inconceivable energy creates this material world, enters into it and then sets into action the three material modes of nature. And when everything is created, He enters in each and every one of them, including the smallest atoms. Nobody can understand the incalculable plans of the Supreme Lord."

After hearing this statement of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Akrūra could very distinctly understand that Dhṛtarāṣṭra was not going to change his policy of discrimination between his sons and the Pāṇḍavas. So without staying anymore in Hastināpura, he took leave from the friends and returned to his place in the kingdom of the Yadus. And after returning home, he informed Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma the actual situation in Hastināpura and the intention of Dhṛtarāṣṭra very vividly. Akrūra was actually sent to Hastināpura by Kṛṣṇa to study the situation, and he was, by the grace of the Lord, successful to inform Kṛṣṇa about the actual situation.

Next paragraph.

Thus ends the Forty-ninth Chapter in the matter of "Ill-motivated Dhṛtarāṣṭra."

