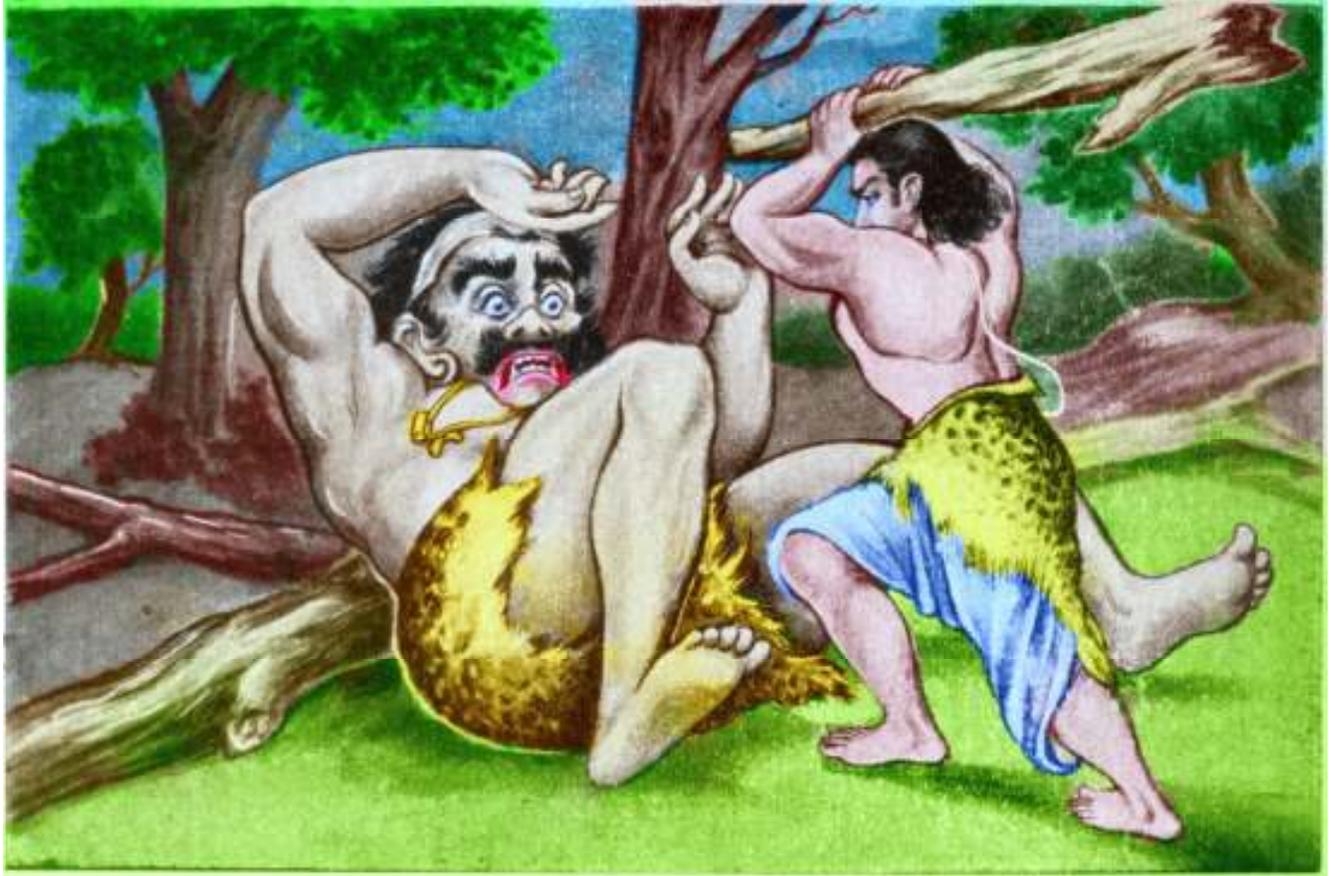


MAHABHARATA – Part 5

(Hidimbasura and Bakasura Vadha)



The Pandavas demonstrated their superiority over the Kauravas in every aspect, both in strength and intelligence at the show. Karna had made his grand appearance at the end of the show, and Duryodhana now had three cohorts, Dusshasana, Karna, and Shakuni. The Pandavas were the darlings of the public too. They openly talked about Yudhishtira as their future king as he was an ardent follower of Dharma, and also the most capable of all Kuru princes. Duryodhana heard all the comments that the public made, and his rage knew no bounds. Duryodhana came up a plan with his uncle Shakuni to kill Pandavas so that he can ascend the throne of Hastinapur. He approached his father Dhritarashtra, and requested him to send the Pandavas and their mother Kunti to city Varnavata, where annual festivities were held in honour of Lord Shiva.

Dhritarashtra was a very learned man and followed Dharma most of the time except when it came to Duryodhana. His blind love for his son, made him take bad decisions. He liked his brother's sons, the Pandavas, but his weakness of will and doting love for his own children made him a participant in Duryodhana's evil plans. Dhritarashtra affectionately told the Pandavas to go there as the people of Varnavata will also be very happy to receive the sons of Pandu. The unsuspecting Pandavas were easily persuaded. They began their preparations for the journey and took their leave of Bheeshma and other elders. Duryodhana was elated and sent their trusted minister Purochana to Varnavata with secret instructions.

However, Vidhura, uncle of the Pandavas came to know of Duryodhana's evil plan to burn Pandavas alive while sleeping, and alerted Yudhishtira. Pandavas reached Varnavata and were astonished by the beautiful palace Duryodhana had built for them. Yudhishtira proceeded to examine the walls and realized they were made up of highly combustible materials. He told his other brothers and mother to behave such as not arouse any suspicion that they were aware of Duryodhana's plan. Vidhura had sent one of his trusted artisans to dig an underground tunnel leading to the forests surrounding the Palace. On the full moon's night, the Pandavas gave the night off to all the palace workers and sent them home. Then they pretended to retire to bed as usual. Yudhishtira woke the other up at midnight and they set the palace ablaze before Purochana could get up and escaped through the tunnel.

The fire quickly spread across the palace, and the people of Varnavata soon came running to put it out. However, the highly flammable palace burnt to ashes quickly. Everyone thought that the Pandavas were burnt in the fire. Soon the news reached

Hastinapura. Bheeshma, Drona, and other were shocked to hear the news and were sunk in sorrow. Duryodhana was elated to hear it, but outwardly acted sad.

Hidimba - Ghatotkacha

With the utmost difficulty, the Pandavas crossed through the tunnel and entered the dense forest. After many miles of walk through the forest, the Pandava brothers and mother Kunti laid down under a big tree, hungry and thirsty. Bhima went to get the water but when he came back, he saw everyone in deep sleep. Bhima stayed awake to guard them.

A fearful demon called Hidimbasura lived with his sister Hidimba on a huge tree, near the place where the Pandavas were resting. As soon as Hidimbasura smelled the presence of humans, he asked his sister Hidimba to capture them for their dinner. Hidimba reached the place and saw Bhima guarding the Pandavas. She instantaneously fell in love with Bhima; transformed herself into a beautiful maiden, and approached him. She said "I am Hidimba, my brother is a demon, and he will eat all of you." Bhima smiled and replied, "Don't worry; I am strong enough to defeat your brother." When Hidimba did not return for a long time, Hidimbasura went looking for her, and saw her with Bhima. "I sent you to kill the human and you are talking to him. I will kill him myself." Saying so, he attacked Bhima. A fierce fight followed and ended with Bhima killing Hidimbasura. The thunderous roars of the two fighters woke the four Pandavas and Kunti. Hidimba then met the other Pandavas and requested Kunti to permit Bhima to marry her. Hidimba promised to return Bhima to the Pandavas after the birth of a child. Kunti and her four sons were impressed by Hidimba, and agreed to accept her as Bhima's wife.

After some time Hidimba gave a birth to a son, who was named Ghatotkacha. Ghatotkacha grew up in no time and, like his father, became a great warrior. Bhima returned to his family with his son and wife. As promised, Hidimba left with her son after a short visit and Ghatotkacha promised to return to the Pandavas whenever they need him.

Bakasura

When Pandavas were about to leave the forest, sage Veda Vyasa arrived there. He consoled the Pandavas, and assured them that justice will finally prevail. On the advice of Veda Vyasa, Kunti and her five sons went to a nearby town, called Ekachakra, and stayed there in a Brahmin's house, disguised as Brahmins. The Pandavas lived on

begging alms and chanting prayers. Kunti always divided the food into two portions – one for Bhima alone, and the other portion for the rest of them. Bhima was big and could eat as much as all the other Pandavas!

One day, while Kunti was resting at noon, she heard wailings inside the Brahmin's house where they were staying. Considering it to be a part of their duty to stand beside their host at the time of adversity, Kunti went to inquire of their misery. The Brahmin then told her the details about a demon named Bakasura who captured the city years ago. Since then he has been terrorizing the inhabitants. Overcome by fear, the ruler of that kingdom fled to the other city so there was no one to protect the citizens. He continued that, "Bakasura comes out from his cave and would kill men, women and children and would feast on them at his will. The villagers tried to make a deal with him that they would provide food and wine for him only if he would leave them alone. They would send him food drawn by two bullocks and driven by a human being, and he can eat it all, bullocks and human included. Bakasura agreed to the proposal and has stopped terrorizing the people since. However, now it is my turn to take the food to him. Since my family cannot survive without me, I will have to take us all for him to feast on".

Kunti was moved by the story, and thought that a good deed must be repaid with a good deed and to the surprise of all, she offered her help. "I have five children and I will send Bhima to meet the demon. He is strong enough to kill the demon and free the town from his clutch forever. The only request that I will make is to keep it a secret and not to reveal our identity."

All preparations were made for Bhima to take the food to Bakasura. Bhima left the town with a cart full of food to the demon Bakasura. On the way, he ate most of the food and reached the demon's place with almost an empty cart. Noticing that, Bakasur got furious and attacked Bhima. A fearful fight soon ensued and Bakasur was killed. Bhima secretly dragged his body at night to the entrance of the town and left it there for the people to witness. Next morning, the citizens were surprised to see the dead body of Bakasura. They rejoiced to their heart's content. When they asked the Brahmin, the host of the Pandavas, he only said, "It is all God's will. Let us thank Him for removing the menace for good."

Questions:

Why did Duryodhana want to kill the Pandavas?

What is jealousy?

Does jealousy make you happy or unhappy?
How did Duryodhana plan to kill the Pandavas?
What saved them?
How did they escape?
Who was Hdimba?
Who did she fall in love with?
Who was their son?
Who did the Pandavas stay with in Ekacharya?
Why did they stay there and not go back to Hastinapur?
How did they help their hosts?
Why?
Have you ever done something good for someone else? Give an example.

Stotras for this week:

MahaLakshmi Ashtakam

PadmasanaSthite Devi ParabrahmaSwarupini Paramesi Jaganmatarmahalakshmi Namostute (7)

*The Devi Who is Seated on a Lotus, Who is of the Nature of Supreme Brahman,
Who is the Supreme Lord and the Mother of the Universe; Salutations to that Mahalakshmi.*

SwetambaraDhare Devi NanalamkaraBhushite Jagatsthite Jaganmatarmahalakshmi Namostute (8)

*The Devi who is Dressed in White Garments, Who is Adorned with Various Ornaments,
Who Abides in this Universe and is the Mother of the Universe; Salutations to that Mahalakshmi.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5Pq1RoMJP4>

Bhojan Mantra (While Eating):

**Brahmaarpanam Brahma Havir
Brahmaagnau Brahmanaa Hutam
Brahmaiva Tena Gantavyam
Brahma Karma Samaadhinaha**

http://www.hindukids.org/pray/shlokas/morning_prayer_shlokas.html

Meaning:

*The act of offering is God, the oblation is God
By God it is offered into the Fire of God
God is That which is to be attained by him
Who performs action pertaining to God.*

Jumble Words – All words are from this lesson

H F T G I

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E D P E

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S E F T A

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T I N G H

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V C E A

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G Y H N U R

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H C C T U L

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Coloring exercise: Forest

