

The Divine Ambassador

by

Swami Krishnananda

The Divine Life Society

Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India

[This poem describes the scene of Lord Sri Krishna's going on a peace mission to the court of the Kauravas.]

1. The glorious Master, Mighty Krishna, in his omniscience,
Majestic rode to Pandavas with all his retinue.
2. Yudhishtira and all the brothers seeing Krishna come,
Rose up in honour, folding hands and fell prostrate on ground.
3. In all compassion Krishna great with charming smile on face
Did seat himself on throne arranged by melting hearts of love.
4. The Master, then, enquired in grace the welfare of brothers,
Who sobbed and poured their bursting sorrow in their exiled life.
5. "O great one, what can we say, poorlings, of our condition,
Thou knowest well how we were forced to live in wilderness.
6. Bless us, O Master, we are thine, what else is there in us,
Except thy mercy and affection which alone we crave."
7. Sri Krishna turned his gracious glance and spoke in soothing terms,
"Well, what is past is past, of course, now further steps be thought."
8. "A messenger, learned in lore, be despatched quickly hence,
To court of Kurus with a request that your share is due."
9. "Since errand sent with milder touch bore not a happy end,
Methinks a stronger politic take up this task on hand."
10. "Whom shall we send, thou, all-knowing, may kindly suggest us,
A person who would speak and explain facts of justice plain."
11. So wondered eldest of the brethren, good Yudhishtira,
To which Sri Krishna thus replied in loving tender words.

12. “I am here, king, ready am I to do this work of peace,
As errand-man I go to Kurus and convey your views.”
13. “No, nothing doing, thou shalt not, our heart and soul thou art,
Thy single march to camp of foes I wholly disapprove.
14. “Thou shalt not go, our life thou art, our life is in thy life,
No, never, Master, I shall myself or my brothers go.”
15. In loving kindness Krishna spoke to fearstruck righteous king,
“Fear not my life, I have the strength to protect myself safe;
16. “Not all the kings, with all weapons can face me in battle,
As herd of deer dare not stand before a lion’s rage.
17. “If act unlawful Kurus deem to mete to my person,
I shall not wait for war to render justice to thy cause;
18. “But, then and there, to heap of ashes I shall burn all foes,
With might the earth has never seen nor see with all its eyes.”
19. So assuring the divine one had chariots harnessed well,
With Satyaki and handful heroes, as a God would move.
20. Sages and saints and learned ones were seen on wayside tracks,
And queried Siddhas spoke to Krishna on his greeting them;
21. “O Perfect One, we heard that thou would deliver addresses
In court of Kurus, which to listen we are journeying;
22. “Thy speech should indeed be a treat to ears and our hearts,
On knowing this we trek and fly to Kurus’ royal court.”
23. Sri Krishna smiled and bowed to them in humble reverence,
And speeded up for urgent task in Hastinapura.
24. The blind old ruler, Dhritarashtra, summoned Sanjaya,
And called for details when he heard that Krishna is on move.
25. “What for is this, why does he come, what kind of person he,
In full-description please recount this novel circumstance.”

26. To which the wise and good minister spoke in plainest terms,
Why Krishna comes and who he is and how to receive him.
27. “O honoured king, thou askest who this Krishna is who comes,
And why he does this errand now to court of thy highness.
28. “Listen with care to what I say, I say this for your good,
And good of all and everyone and peace to all ensure.
29. “This Krishna, mighty, looking normal, is not normal one,
No one can know his secret thoughts or deeds he does perform;
30. “I warn thee, king, receive him well with kindest of feelings,
Let no one show irreverence or proudly speak to him.
31. “His power even angels dread and dare not approach him,
His hidden aim, O please listen, is ruin of thy sons,
32. “Who harm intend to Pandavas whose friend this Krishna is,
Who’s heaven-bent to save the brothers with his might and mien.
33. “Beware, then, please instruct thy sons to behave well with him,
And gladly part to Pandavas their lawful share of land.”
34. On hearing this, the frightened king did quake in deepest grief,
And forthwith ordered all arrangements for reception grand.
35. “Lo, drench the streets and strew with flowers, hoist festoons and raise
up flags,
Let best of music and procession greet the coming guest so great.”
36. And Bhishma, sire, sagely hero, strict instructions gave,
“We should receive the greatest one with greatest love and care.”
37. Duryodhana who heard all this and saw the movements made
To receive Krishna whom he knew as comrade of his foes.
38. Disdainfully agreed to do the behest Bhishma sire’s
For fear of elders and the fear of old sire’s wrath.
39. Music and band and gaiety best find finest dancing scenes
Did greet Sri Krishna, august guest, who arrived at the gate.

40. The Yoga's lord on beholding the colour, sound and haste,
Noticed the soulless pageantry set up to buy his heart.
41. Duryodhana did feign all courtesy and honour high,
Which, all-seeing, the subtle eye of Krishna just did gaze.
42. Rejecting pleadings falsely made by cunning Kuru's chief,
Krishna, the friend of poor souls, did bid goodbye to kings.
43. In humble hut of Vidura the Master spent his night,
Who, overwhelmed with joy supreme, fed Krishna with the peels.
44. And threw the stuff of plantain fruits knowing not what he gave,
For lost he had his ego-self and sunk in joy divine.
45. In morn, on waking, Krishna rose with friends and crowds around.
And marched to palace where all waited for his great coming.
46. When Krishna entered he there saw the sages and the saints
Standing to honour and receive his magnetic presence.
47. "May sages first be seated," so did Krishna expressed wish,
At which did Bhishma order hundreds of the best of seats.
48. When all were seated Krishna sat as last of all to sit,
Saluting all the audience with loving folded hands.
49. Who was to speak the first of words, no one there ever knew,
So, Bhishma, great, the sire old, with welcome broke silence.
50. "Supremely honoured all are here with presence amidst us
Of best of men and greatest master, Krishna, Yadus' lord.
51. "May we receive his message now and know his intentions,
So that the earth would grace enjoy and all would live in peace."
52. As rumbling cloud would deeply sound and touch the hearts below,
In sonorous and soothing words Sri Krishna stood and spoke.
53. "Elders and sages, learned ones, in this wise audience,
Know well the tragic history of Kuru's family.

54. “As God creates the field of world and all living beings
In bond of loving sacrifice with mutual share of love,
Dvaipayana, the sage, was cause of Kuru-Pandavas.
55. “As seer-seen in cosmic set-up mingle united,
The Pandavas and Kauravas should share and live in peace.
56. “But Kuru hosts betrayed their trust and harmed the Pandavas,
From very childhood poisoned them and tried to burn them live.
57. “By tricky game of vilest dice they were exiled to woods,
And now from exile returned they demand their kingdom’s share.
58. “I’m fully sure that you elders would endorse this my view,
That justice calls for equity; let justice then be done.”
59. “Hail, hail, I fully hold the same opinion of the law,
That Krishna’s words be respected and Pandu’s sons have share.”
60. Thus Bhishma judged and then proclaimed the justice of the cause,
That half of kingdom be made out to Pandava brothers.
61. Drona and all the sages there assembled then did rise
And one by one gave voice to justice hailing Krishna’s views.
62. Everyone spoke in full agreement that the share of land
In justice due to Pandavas be forthwith made over.
63. Silently grouched, and seated haughty, raged Duryodhana,
And rudely gave a counterbolt to all this good advice.
64. “How come that all the people here speak as if I have failed,
What fault of mine it is if Pandu’s children lost the game?”
65. Sri Krishna quickly raised his point rebutting counter terms
And hinted at the flaws that lay on head of Kuru king.
66. “Is it true that the Pandavas lost all by their own choice?
Or were they duped by gamester’s tricks which none could decipher?”
67. “However and whatever that be, now the exile’s terms
Are completed and thus the share of Pandavas is due.

68. “Let this be done and all shall then be well I do believe,
There need be no delay at all in this the plainest truth.”
69. “Nothing, nothing, I shall not give, let there be no such talk,”
So retorted in arrogance Duryodhana, the king.
70. “Do wise ones in assembly here approve of rudeness this,
Which unbehaving youngster speaks before a visitor?”
71. Sri Krishna turned to those on seats with this his surprised look,
Awaiting gestures in response from all the aged ones.
72. “Be not so proud and unrelenting, listen well to sense,”
Thus all the sages assembled in chorus raised their voice.
73. “The young is also fool in one, methinks he’s out of wits,”
That sensible and sound advice he scornfully abhors.”
74. So Bhishma wroth voiced forth his view and Drona seated there,
The sages ‘gain illustrated their judgment in stories.
75. But Kuru chief wrung up his brows and defied everyone
And added that he is no one who can be threatened thus.
76. Sri Krishna queried if he would give five villages ‘tleast,
For poor brothers five in number for their humble homes.
77. “No talk of gift, let there be no such prating before me,
I fear none, and threats I care not, speak not thus, Krishna;
78. “A needle-point of space the Pandavas do not deserve,”
So twisting back his face from all clinched up Duryodhana.
79. With raised up brows, astounded by this unabashed conduct,
Sri Krishna even insisted that something be given.
80. “Let houses five at least be granted creature comfort’s sake,
To helpless Pandu’s poorest children come from forest life.”
81. To every request Krishna made and elders there endorsed,
Duryodhana struck up his thigh and grimmed in defiance.

82. Roused up to quick Sri Krishna addressed all the audience,
“This meanest man is shame to all, to ruin all Kurus.
83. “How keep you hint in this reputed palace of Kurus,
Uncouth, shameless, inhuman brute from manner he behaves.
84. “I request you to bind him up, banish him from this place,
And hand him over in all goodness to Yudhishtira.”
85. As provoked snake would hiss and offer then and there to bite,
Duryodhana rose up from hall and rushed out to his house.
86. Returning home he connived with his henchmen secretly,
To bind and lock up ambassador Krishna, honoured guest.
87. “This man is hatching with the help of Bhishma and others
To bind me and then haul me up to bitter foe of mine.”
88. Shrewd Satyaki and friends there heard the secret whispered talks
Regarding catching Krishna and then imprisoning him.
89. Conveyed to Krishna strangest news in wide assembly hall,
And asked the Master that they should to danger meet prepare.
90. Sri Krishna turned to old king seated and then admonished,
“King, listen, I think that your son is asking for trouble;
91. “For news has reached that he intends to catch and bind me up
With Duhsasana-Karna group’s assistance on his side.
92. “Let him then try and please himself, and all of them may come,
And imprison me with their strength, if strength they any have.”
93. Gandhari, queen, seated in hall, on hearing Krishna’s words
Was deeply distressed, wailing, at once summoned eldest son.
94. On call from mother, Duryodhana hotly entered hall
And stood defying in demeanour, pride at highest pitch.
95. The parents strongly reprimanded standing defiant son,
In grief-struck-speech and fear-struck feelings jointly facing him.

96. “Fool, art thou sane or gone off mad to think doing mischief,
Be thou restrained, and behave well and respect elders’ words.”
97. Then Krishna rose up from his seat and stood as lion raged,
And directed his final words on proud Duryodhana.
98. “Thinkest thou in thy delusion that I am here alone,
Unbefriended and unprotected and be caught by thee?”
99. “Look, all the gods and army-chiefs of all the fourteen worlds
Are here and now at this moment and at this very spot.”
100. So saying Krishna laughed aloud which shook the earth below,
As quake would rend the very corn of every inch of ground.
101. Angels as stars there shot up from his arms,
Fierce tongues of fire rushed out from his mouth,
Brahma on forehead, Rudra on his chest,
The guardian gods from shoulders did emerge,
The sun and moon and all the stars of skies
Projected from his blazing Mighty form.
Yudhishtira and Bhima, Arjuna,
The two brothers, Nakula, Sahadeva,
Were all there seen with uplifted weapons.
From eyes and ears and all his myriad arms
Emergent flames fiercely jetted forth,
As if portending end of all the worlds.
From every pore of that Divinity
Speedingly rose bright rays as solar lights.
The earth and all atmosphere trembled
And oceans lapped up roaring surging waves.
There wonder-struck the blessed ones beheld
That Glorious Form which Lord, the Master showed,
Revealed in Himself as the All-in-All,
The Soul and Self of all creation vast,
All worlds, all gods, and all creation glowed
In that Majesty Krishna’s—All in One.