

Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1 Chapter 10: Krishna Departs for Dwaraka

11 September 2026



A note before you read

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Seated upon His chariot and showered with flowers, Sri Krishna takes His leave of Hastinapura and sets out for His own city of Dwaraka, while the sorrowing house of Kuru watches Him go.

Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya.

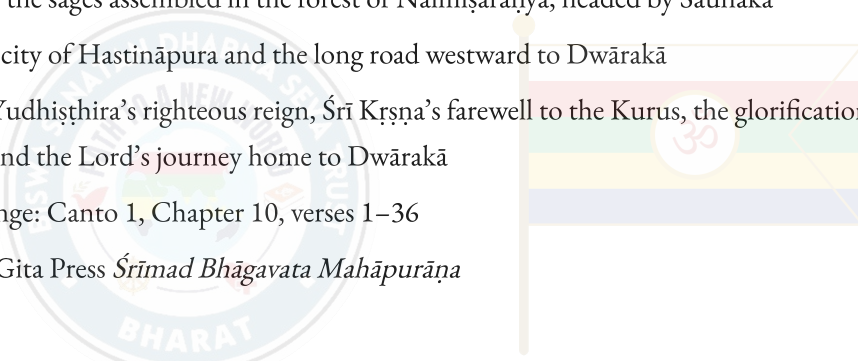
Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya.

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Welcome to *Srimad Bhagavatam Wisdom*, a devotional journey through the sacred histories and teachings of the Srimad Bhagavat Mahapurana. The war is long over, the great Bhishma has departed, and the throne of the Kurus is secure once more in the hands of the righteous Yudhishtira. Into this hard-won peace the tenth chapter of the First Canto brings a quiet, aching farewell. Having stayed on for a while to comfort His grieving kinsmen, Sri Krishna at last prepares to return to Dwaraka — and the whole city cannot bear to let Him go. Here we see what devotion feels like when the Beloved turns to leave: the fainting of loved ones, the rain of flowers from the rooftops, the glorification on the lips of the women of Hastinapura, and the Lord’s own gentle, smiling passage back to His city by the sea.

Chapter Information

- Scripture: Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa
- Canto: 1 (Book One)
- Chapter: 10 (Discourse 10)
- Chapter title: The Departure of Sri Krishna for Dwaraka
- Principal speakers: the blessed Sūta, Ugrasravā (narrator); Śaunaka (questioner); the women of Hastināpura
- Principal listener: the sages assembled in the forest of Naimiṣāranya, headed by Śaunaka
- Main setting: the city of Hastināpura and the long road westward to Dwārakā
- Central subject: Yudhiṣṭhira’s righteous reign, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s farewell to the Kurus, the glorification sung by the women of Hastināpura, and the Lord’s journey home to Dwārakā
- Principal verse range: Canto 1, Chapter 10, verses 1–36
- Primary edition: Gita Press *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*



Context from the Previous Chapter

In the ninth discourse, the grandsire Bhīṣma lay upon his bed of arrows, awaiting the auspicious hour of his passing. In the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa he instructed Yudhiṣṭhira at length on the duties of kings and the eternal principles of dharma, then fixed his whole mind, speech and sight upon the Lord and gave up his breath, merging into the one indivisible Brahman. After the funeral rites, and with the sages returning to their hermitages, Yudhiṣṭhira, accompanied by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, went back to Hastināpura, consoled his uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra and aunt Gāndhārī, and — permitted by his elders and approved by the Lord — took up the righteous rule of his ancestral kingdom. It is here that the tenth chapter opens.

Yudhishtira’s Reign of Righteousness

The chapter begins with a question. Śaunaka, foremost of the assembled sages, asks the narrator: having destroyed the ruffians who sought to rob him of his lawful inheritance, how did Yudhiṣṭhira — the best of the upholders of dharma — go on to rule together with his younger brothers, he who took no pleasure in the gratification of the senses, and what did he accomplish thereafter?

The blessed Sūta answers. Having caused the dynasty of Kuru — all but consumed by the forest-fire of internal feud — to spring up and grow green again, and having firmly established Yudhiṣṭhira upon his own kingdom, the almighty Lord Śrī Hari, the well-wisher of all the worlds, was glad at heart. His infatuation dispelled by the wisdom that had dawned upon him through the counsel of Bhīṣma and of Lord Acyuta Himself, Yudhiṣṭhira ruled the whole earth to the very shores of the ocean, like Indra in heaven, protected by the invincible Lord and served by the loyal devotion of his brothers.



Under the righteous reign of King Yudhishtira the rains fall in season, the earth yields her wealth, and the cows gladly moisten the pastures with their milk (verses 4-6).

Under his rule the whole of creation flourished. The god of rain sent down showers whenever they were needed; the earth yielded everything that was desired; and cows with heavy udders, glad at heart, sprinkled the cow-pens with their milk. Rivers and seas, mountains, trees and creepers and every kind of herb and plant gave their abundant produce in each due season. And no creature was ever afflicted — neither by anxieties of the mind, nor by bodily disease, nor by any suffering caused by the gods, by other beings, or by one's own body and mind — so long as Yudhiṣṭhira, who regarded no one as his enemy, reigned as king.

नाधयो व्याधयः क्लेशा दैवभूतात्महेतवः । अजातशत्रावभवन् जन्तूनां राज्ञि कर्हिचित् ॥ ६ ॥

nādhayo vyādhayaḥ kleśā daiva-bhūtātma-hetavaḥ । ajāta-śatrāv abhavan jantūnām rājñi karhicit ॥ 6 ॥

Meaning: While Yudhiṣṭhira — who looked upon no one as an enemy — reigned as king, no living being was at any time troubled by anxieties of the mind, by bodily disease, or by afflictions of any kind, whether arising from the gods, from other creatures, or from one's own body and mind. (SB 1.10.6)

The Lord Asks Leave to Depart

Having stayed on at Hastināpura for some months — for the consolation of His friends and kinsmen, and for the joy of His sister Subhadrā — Śrī Hari at last sought leave of King Yudhiṣṭhira to return to His own city. Permitted by the king, the Lord embraced him and bowed to him; and, embraced and greeted in turn by all who were of His own age or younger, He mounted His chariot.

Then a wave of sorrow passed through the whole household. Subhadrā, Draupadī, Kuntī, and Uttarā the daughter of King Virāṭa; Gāndhārī and Dhṛtarāṣṭra; Yuyutsu and Kṛpācārya; Nakula and Sahadeva, Bhīmasena and Dhaumya; Satyawatī and the other ladies — all of them nearly fainted away, unable to bear the thought of separation from the Lord who wields the Śārṅga bow. For the Sūta explains a truth known to every lover of God:

सत्सङ्गान्मुक्तदुःसङ्गो हातुं नोत्सहते बुधः । कीर्त्यमानं यशो यस्य सकृदाकर्ण्य रोचनम् ॥ ११ ॥ तस्मिन्न्यस्तधियः पार्थाः सहेरन् विरहं कथम् । दर्शनस्पर्शसंलापशयनासनभोजनैः ॥ १२ ॥

sat-saṅgān mukta-duḥsaṅgo hātuṁ notsahate budhaḥ । kīrtyamānaṁ yaśo yasya sakṛd ākarṇya rocanam ॥ 11 ॥ tasmin nyasta-dhiyaḥ pārthāḥ saheran virahaṁ katham । darśana-sparśa-saṁlāpa-śayanāsana-bhojanaiḥ ॥ 12 ॥

Meaning: A wise man who, through the company of saints, has been freed from all bad company cannot bear — having once heard them — to give up listening to the enchanting praises of the Lord being sung. How, then, could the sons of Pṛthā endure separation from Him, on whom their very minds were fixed, and whom they had enjoyed the privilege of seeing, touching, and conversing with, and beside whom they had rested, sat, and dined? (SB 1.10.11–12)



The Lord bows to and embraces King Yudhishtira before mounting His chariot, while the royal family, unable to bear the parting, gather about Him in grief (verses 7-10).

Gazing at Him with unwinking eyes, bound to Him by cords of affection, they all hurried this way and that, their hearts running after Him. And as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, was about to set out from the palace, the ladies of the family — anxious lest even a shed tear should bring Him ill fortune on His journey — held back the tears that welled up from their

longing eyes.

Flowers from the Rooftops

Now the whole city gave itself to a splendid and sorrowful farewell. Tabors and conches, kettledrums and lutes, cymbals, trumpets, and many kinds of drums sounded together. The ladies of the Kuru race climbed to the tops of their mansions to catch sight of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and rained down flowers upon Him, greeting Him with smiling glances mingled of love and modesty.



Arjuna holds the pearl-fringed white umbrella over his dearest friend while Uddhava and Satyaki wave the chowries, and the ladies of the Kuru race rain flowers from the rooftops (verses 16-18).

Then the thick-haired Arjuna, the favourite of the Lord and dearest of His friends, took up and held aloft over Him a white umbrella adorned with strings of pearls and set upon a jewelled handle.

सितातपत्रं जग्राह मुक्तादामविभूषितम् । रत्नदण्डं गुडाकेशः प्रियः प्रियतमस्य ह ॥ १७ ॥

sitātapatram jagrāha muktādāma-vibhūṣitam / ratna-daṇḍam guḍākeśaḥ priyaḥ priyatamasya ha ॥ 17 ॥

Meaning: Arjuna of the thick hair, dearly beloved of the Lord, took up and held over his dearest friend a white umbrella adorned with strings of pearls and mounted upon a handle set with jewels. (SB 1.10.17)

Uddhava and Sātyaki fanned Him with a pair of wonderful chowries; and, showered with flowers all along the way, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the Madhus, shone with dazzling splendour. Everywhere the Brāhmaṇas pronounced true benedictions over Him — words that, though they do not befit the Lord in His unqualified, absolute aspect, are wholly fitting for Him in His personal, gracious form.

The Glorification of the Women of Hastinapura

As the Lord passed on, the women of Hastināpura, who had fixed their hearts upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa of matchless renown, fell to speaking with one another — and their words ravished the ears and hearts of all who heard.



The women of Hastinapura, their hearts fixed upon Sri Krishna, speak to one another of His glory as the eternal Person and the Lord who descends age after age (verses 20-30).

He, they said, is that very same primeval Person, the one Reality who alone abides:

स वै किलायं पुरुषः पुरातनो य एक आसीदविशेष आत्मनि । अग्रे गुणेभ्यो जगदात्मनीश्वरे निमीलितात्मनिशि सुप्तशक्तिषु ॥ २१ ॥

sa vai kilāyaṁ puruṣaḥ purātano ya eka āsīd aviśeṣa ātmani । agre guṇebhyo jagad-ātmanīśvare nimīlitātman niśi supta-śaktiṣu ॥ 21 ॥

Meaning: This, verily, is that same primeval Person who alone existed, undifferentiated within His own Self, before the modes of Nature arose — when, in the night of dissolution, the individual souls had withdrawn into Him, the Lord and Soul of the universe, and all the creative energies lay dormant. (SB 1.10.21)

It was He, they marvelled, who — wishing to grant form and name to the formless, nameless soul — set in motion His own creative power, His Prakṛti, and revealed the Vedas and the other scriptures; He is the very Author of sacred wisdom. He is that Supreme Spirit whom seers of subdued senses and steadied breath behold within, their hearts cleansed of every impurity by devotion; for He alone can purify the heart. He is the Lord whose sacred stories are sung again and again in the Vedas and the esoteric scriptures by sages who know the deepest truths, and who, in His own free play, creates, sustains, and withdraws the universe, yet remains untouched by it all. And whenever kings whose minds are darkened by ignorance take to unrighteousness, it is He who descends, age after age, in various forms, to set the world aright.

The women went on to bless the very land the Lord had touched: how praiseworthy is the race of Yadu, honoured by His birth among them; how sacred the forest of Madhu, made holy by His wanderings; how blessed is the city of Kuśasthali — Dwārakā — whose people daily behold their Lord casting His smiling glance upon them. They spoke, too, of His

queens — Rukmiṇī, Jāmbavatī, Nagnajitī and the rest — who by their past devotions had won so glorious a Lord, and whose lives had lifted and sanctified womanhood itself. Such was their loving talk as the chariot rolled on.

The Journey Home to Dwaraka

While the women of the city were still speaking these words, Śrī Hari went on His way, acknowledging them with a gracious, smiling look. King Yudhiṣṭhira, who regarded no one as a foe yet feared danger to the Lord from His enemies, out of pure affection sent along a full four-limbed army — of elephants, horses, chariots, and foot-soldiers — to escort Him.

Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa, seeing that the Pāṇḍavas, bound to Him by deep love, had followed Him a long way in the distress of parting, firmly turned them back, and set out for His own city with His dear companions. He passed through the lands of Kuru-Jāṅgala and Pāñcāla, through Śūrasena and the tract along the Yamunā, through Brahmāvarta and Kurukṣetra, the kingdoms of Matsya and Sārasvata, and across the desert of Marudhanva; and beyond the regions of Sauvīra and Ābhīra He reached at last the land of Ānarta, His horses somewhat wearied by the long road.



As evening falls on the long road to Dwaraka, the Lord alights from His chariot and, beside a quiet lake, offers His twilight Sandhya prayers (verse 36).

तत्र तत्र ह तत्रत्यैर्हरिः प्रत्युद्यतार्हणः । सायं भेजे दिशं पश्चाद्गविष्ठो गां गतस्तदा ॥ ३६ ॥

tatra tatra ha tatratyair hariḥ pratyudyatārhaṇaḥ । sāyaṁ bheje diśaṁ paścād gaviṣṭho gāṁ gatas tadā ॥ 36 ॥

Meaning: In every region through which He passed, the people of that place came forward to honour Śrī Hari with offerings. And when evening drew near, the Lord would alight, betake Himself to some lake, and there offer His twilight prayers. (SB 1.10.36)

With this gentle image the chapter closes — the Supreme Lord Himself, at the setting of the sun, stepping down from His chariot to sit in prayer by the water, teaching by His own conduct the sacred discipline He has given to the world. So ends the tenth discourse, told as part of the great narration unfolding among the sages in the forest of Naimiṣāraṇya.

Important Verses

The women's glorification gathers into a single verse the timeless principle of the Lord's descent — why the Formless takes form in every age:

यदा ह्यधर्मेण तमोधिyo नृपा जीवन्ति तत्रैष हि सत्त्वतः किल । धत्ते भगं सत्यमृतं दयां यशो भवाय रूपाणि दधद्युगे युगे ॥ २५ ॥

yadā hy adharmeṇa tamo-dhiyo nṛpā jīvanti tatraiṣa hi sattvataḥ kila । dhatte bhagaṁ satyam ṛtaṁ dayāṁ yaśo bhavāya rūpāṇi dadhad yuge yuge ॥ 25 ॥

Meaning: Whenever kings whose minds are clouded by darkness live by unrighteousness, then the Lord, drawing upon pure goodness, manifests His divine majesty — truth, moral order, compassion, and glory — and, assuming various forms age after age, descends for the welfare of the world. (SB 1.10.25)

And the chapter's opening verse quietly reveals the Lord's own delight in the restoration of dharma:

वंशं कुरोर्वैशदवाग्निनिर्हृतं संरोहयित्वा भवभावनो हरिः । निवेशयित्वा निजराज्य ईश्वरो युधिष्ठिरं प्रीतमना बभूव ह ॥ २ ॥

vaṁśaṁ kuror vaṁśa-davāgni-nirhṛtaṁ saṁrohayitvā bhava-bhāvano hariḥ । niveśayitvā nija-rājya īśvaro yudhiṣṭhiraṁ prīta-manā babhūva ha ॥ 2 ॥

Meaning: Śrī Hari, the well-wisher of every being, felt joy fill His heart: the near-extinguished Kuru line had been revived under His will, and its rightful heir now sat secure upon the throne. (SB 1.10.2)

Principal Teachings

1. Righteous rule blesses the whole of creation. Under Yudhiṣṭhira, whose infatuation had been dispelled by the counsel of Bhīṣma and of Kṛṣṇa, the rains came in season, the earth gave freely, the cows overflowed with milk, and no creature knew affliction of any kind (verses 3–6). When the one who governs keeps his heart turned toward God, the whole world is brought into harmony with dharma.
2. Separation from the Lord is the devotee's deepest grief. The entire household nearly fainted; the Pāṇḍavas, who had eaten and slept beside Him, could not endure His leaving (verses 9–12). To be near the Lord is the soul's true wealth, and to lose His nearness the only real poverty.
3. Once the heart has tasted His praises, it can never let them go. A wise man, freed by saintly company, cannot forgo the joy of hearing the Lord glorified even once (verse 11). Hearing — *śravaṇam* — is the very seed of devotion, and it takes root and grows for a lifetime.

4. The Lord descends, age after age, for the good of the world. When unrighteousness prevails, He manifests truth, compassion, and glory and takes form *yuge yuge* (verse 25). His descents are not for Himself but are pure acts of mercy toward a suffering world.

5. Devotion makes the mighty humble and the humble radiant. Arjuna the great archer holds the umbrella like a servant; Uddhava and Sātyaki wave the fans; the women glorify Him from their rooftops; villagers along the road press forward with gifts. In loving service, no role is small and none is beneath the greatest.

6. Even the Lord honours the discipline He gives. At dusk Śrī Kṛṣṇa alights from His chariot to offer His twilight prayers (verse 36). The Supreme Himself keeps the sacred practices He has entrusted to us, teaching by His own example that no one is above devotion's daily rhythm.

A Devotional Reflection

There is a tender lesson hidden in this chapter of farewells. The people of Hastināpura are not losing Krishna forever — He is only returning home — and yet they grieve as though the light were leaving the world. Their sorrow is not weakness; it is the natural ache of hearts that have loved rightly. We tend to measure our lives by what we possess and achieve, but the Bhāgavata quietly asks a different question: what is it that we cannot bear to be parted from? For the Pāṇḍavas and the women of the city, the answer was not the kingdom so newly regained, nor wealth, nor safety, but the nearness of the Lord Himself. And Krishna, for His part, does not vanish in a blaze of glory; He rides on gently, smiling back at those who love Him, pausing at dusk beside a lake to pray. The chapter invites us to loosen our grip on the many things we clutch and to fix our longing where it truly belongs — on the One whose smiling glance follows us even as He seems to move away, and who is, in truth, never far.

A Daily Devotional Practice

Following the Lord's own example in the closing verse, mark the turning of your day toward the Divine. As evening draws near — or at any settled moment you can keep — pause, sit quietly, and offer a short twilight prayer or the sacred name, “Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya.” Let the day's cares be set down at His feet for a few unhurried breaths. If you can, read aloud a single verse from this chapter and let one line rest in your heart. Small and sincere, repeated each day, this becomes the seed of that same love that could not bear to see Him go.

Conclusion

So ends the tenth discourse of the Śrīmad Bhāgavata, which the God-realized call the Paramahansa-Saṁhitā. In this chapter, Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1 Chapter 10, we have seen the righteous reign of Yudhiṣṭhira, under whom the rains fell, the earth gave freely, and no creature suffered; we have watched Śrī Kṛṣṇa take His leave of the sorrowing house of Kuru, embraced and wept over by all who loved Him; we have heard the trumpets and drums, seen Arjuna raise the white umbrella and the flowers fall from the rooftops, and listened as the women of Hastināpura glorified the eternal Person who descends age after age for the good of the world. And we have followed the Lord along the long westward road to

Ānarta, honoured in every land He passed, alighting at dusk to offer His twilight prayers. Devotion here wears the face of parting — and in that parting we learn how dear the Lord had become, and how dear He may become to us. May we, too, hold Him more closely than all that we fear to lose.

May the divine wisdom of Srimad Bhagavatam awaken pure devotion within our hearts.

Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya.

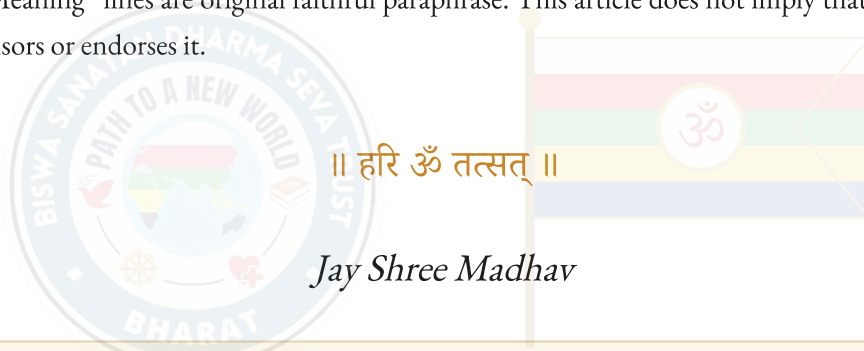
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References and Attribution

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