

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Bhāgavatam Rasamālayam

The Abode of Supreme Nectar

Meditations & Reflections from the lectures of His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami

NOV 10, 2019 | ISSUE 28

• Mām ekam śaraṇam vraja - Go with Krishna's Flow •

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Srimad Bhagavatam Class [1.15-25-26]
At Iskcon Ujjain, India, on Jan 17, 2015

With Faith, Fully Surrender to Krishna

If we are real devotees then simply depend on Krishna. Srila Prabhupada demonstrated very wonderfully. When Calcutta was about to be bombed in 1944 during the peak of world war II. Japan was going to bomb Calcutta because Calcutta was the base for the British military during that time, the fort William just to cripple the British army. So, naturally everyone was leaving the city. Even one of Prabhupada's Godbrother who was staying with him decided to leave. So, he asked Prabhupada, "aren't you going"? Prabhupada said, "no". So, his Godbrother said, "so what are going to do here"? Prabhupada said, "I will go out on harinam". Prabhupada said if I chant the holy name either the Lord will protect me or even if I die chanting the holy name I will achieve the ultimate goal. Either way is no loss. Now the question is, Japan was all set to bomb Calcutta. Now why did they stop all of a sudden? Atleast we know that because of Prabhupada's going out on harinam sankirtan in the city the city was saved. This is the attitude of a devotee and this is how Lord reciprocates a devotees dedication and surrender to him. Because Prabhupada was depending on Krishna fully, Krishna protected.

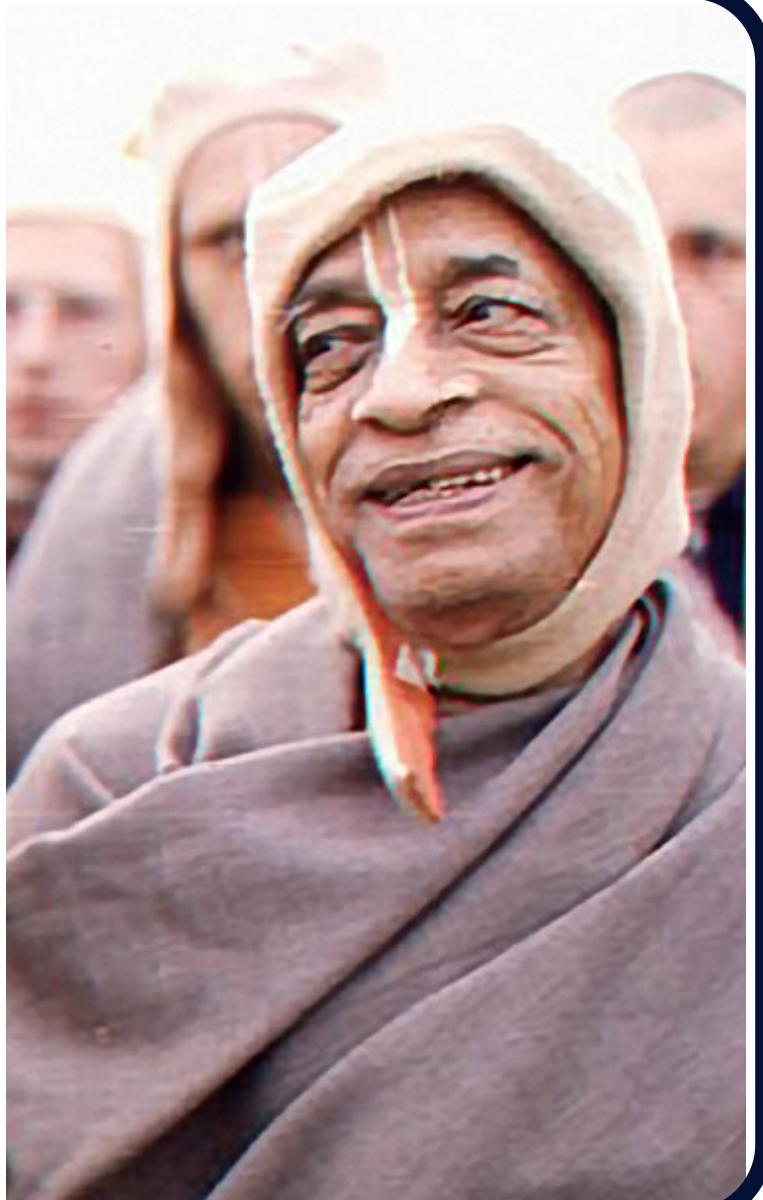
- H.H Bhakti Charu Swami

Srila Prabhupada on Surrender

In the Seventh Chapter it was said that only one who has become free from all sinful reactions can take to the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus one may think that unless he is free from all sinful reactions he cannot take to the surrendering process. To such doubts it is here said that even if one is not free from all sinful reactions, simply by the process of surrendering to Śrī Kṛṣṇa he is automatically freed. There is no need of strenuous effort to free oneself from sinful reactions. One should unhesitatingly accept Kṛṣṇa as the supreme savior of all living entities. With faith and love, one should surrender unto Him.

Anything that does not lead to the perfectional stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness should be avoided. One should be confident that in all circumstances Kṛṣṇa will protect him from all difficulties. There is no need of thinking how one should keep the body and soul together. Kṛṣṇa will see to that. One should always think himself helpless and should consider Kṛṣṇa the only basis for his progress in life. As soon as one seriously engages himself in devotional service to the Lord in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, at once he becomes freed from all contamination of material nature.

- Srila Prabhupada in Bhagavad Gita, Ch. 18.66]



Mahā-prasthān - Due to Intolerable Separation from the Lord

H.H BCS: This chapter is describing how the Pandavas left Hastinapur and went out on a maha-prasthan yatra. Maha-prasthan means leaving home. In order to give up their bodies they left home and walked towards the Himalayas, walked towards the north and while walking they did not eat anything; they did not drink anything; nor did they take any rest; they just walked and walked and walked until their bodies fell and they died.

When the news was received that Krishna has left this planet, Krishna has withdrawn His pastimes, at that time Yudhistir Maharaja decided to leave home and go out on Maha-prasthan. He felt - now what is the use of living? Why should I live? - Krishna has left the planet so there is no use for me to continue to live. So Yudhistir Maharaja decided to go on Maha-prasthan. Then, his other brothers, four of them Bhima, Arjun, Nakul and Sahadev also decided to follow and their wife Draupadi also decided to do the same. They just left home.

This is how a devotee feels when he is in separation from Krishna. He feels what is the use of living. As long as Krishna was here, we (the Pandavas) had such wonderful association with Him and we always had the opportunity to go and meet Him and whenever we were in difficulties, we approached Krishna and Krishna helped us, saved us from that difficult situation, but now that Krishna has left, there is no need for us to continue to live. Why does a devotee feel in this way?

A devotee feels in this way because of his love for Krishna. When one is in love with somebody then that is how he feels. He feels that the purpose of my existence is to be with that person, the object of my love and if I become bereft of his association, then there is no need for me to continue to live. Doesn't one feel like that when in love? You all read the story of Romeo and Juliet. What happened? Romeo took a medicine that would make him look like he is dead for some time. Juliet came and she found that Romeo is dead, so she also took poison and killed herself. Then when Romeo came back to life, he felt, "What is the point in my living when she is dead?" So he also took poison and died.

Now, in the material nature this kind of love affair takes place, but this is rare. In the material nature everyone loves himself the most. Isn't it?

When someone goes crazy one can do such a thing like Romeo and Juliet. But generally these kinds of happenings are only in the story books, not in real life, but a devotee who has real love for Krishna, he feels that way. He feels, "What is the point of me remaining alive anymore? Let me also go". In the material nature also, such things used to happen.

Do you know the process of 'Sati'? Actually 'Sati' was a very noble custom; when the husband died, the wife used to feel, "What is the point in me remaining alive?" Because the love between the husband and wife used to be so deep, that when the husband left, the wife felt that there is no need for her to be alive. So when the husband's body used to burn, the wife used to enter the funeral pyre. Unfortunately later on this system was brutally distorted. Previously it was a voluntary thing.

The wife voluntarily used to become sati but later on what happened? They forced some women to become sati. She didn't want to die. But they forced her. It was brutal. The others tied her up by her hands and feet and threw her in the fire. That is what sati became. But actually sati was a Vedic process where a wife used to voluntarily enter into the funeral pyre of her husband. Why? Because her love for her husband was so deep that she felt what is the point of her being alive when he is gone. Out of love one feels this way. **Now let us consider what is love? What is real love? Love is only for Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the material nature what goes on in the name of love, is not love. In the material nature what is identified as love is lust. Do you all know the difference between love and lust? It has been described in the Vedic scriptures that love is the desire to serve Krishna or please Krishna's senses and lust is the desire to gratify one's own senses.**

When one tries to give pleasure to Krishna that is love; when one tries to give pleasure to himself that is lust. Now in the material nature what generally happens? In the material nature everyone is trying to give pleasure to himself. Actually Romeo fell in love with Juliet- why? Because Juliet was a very beautiful young woman. Would Romeo fall in love with an old wrinkled, shriveled up woman?

Did you ever see any incident where a young man fell in love with an old, old woman and because of her he gave up his life? No, because Juliet was a beautiful young woman that is why Romeo fell in love. Now tell me why Romeo fell in love with Juliet? Because he wanted to enjoy Juliet. He didn't actually love her; he loved himself. So this is the condition of what goes on in the name of love in the material nature, but **when one loves Krishna, then what happens? That love is natural; there is no desire for one's own enjoyment. When one serves Krishna he simply wants to please Krishna, serve him because of his love for Him.**

In order to understand this point let us go deep into what love is. What is love? Again we will take the meaning of this word from our Vedic scriptures. I am directly taking it from Vedic scriptures, because nobody knows what love is; they use the word "love" , but nobody knows what love is. They may come up with so many different explanations or so many different descriptions but they do not know what love is. Isn't it? They can describe, "Yes a boy fell in love with a girl and this is what they did," but what is love, they don't know. **Now the Vedic scriptures are describing what love is. Love is the desire to become united with somebody. Isn't it? When we are in love with somebody we want to be with that person; we want to become united with that person but actually it is the desire of the spirit soul to become united with Krishna. Why? Because a living entity is a part and Krishna is the whole.**

Let me go little further. This part of your body, this little finger is a part of your body; since it is a part of your body it should remain connected to your body. If the little finger is separated from your body, then it is unfortunate. Although the finger is a finger, it is a unit by itself, but the utility of its existence lies in its connection to the body. What is connecting this little finger to the body? There are various things- the muscles, the skin, the nerves and all this, right. Materially, different parts are connected to each other in this way. In the material nature, say, if this breaks, then what happens? We try to join it. How do we join it? We join it by some method such as welding it or putting some glue or if the finger becomes disconnected from the body, how do we join? By stitching it up and then the blood start flowing; the nerves become joined together then this again becomes a part of the body. To be connected we need some arrangement. **For a soul to be connected to Krishna the force or the arrangement that is necessary is love. Is that point clear? Love is the force that unites us together.** Don't we see that? When we love somebody we want to be with that person.



Why Should We Surrender to Krishna?

When we hate somebody we don't want to see his face. So love unites, hatred separates. **So, where is love? Love is with the soul. Do you know where the soul resides in the body? In this body where is the soul situated? In the heart. The soul is situated in the heart.** And it is the soul who loves. That is why we say, "We love somebody with all our heart?" Do we ever say that we love somebody with all our brain? Do we ever say that? I love you so much with my brain. Do we say that? No. We say love is from the heart. So that indicates that the love is coming from the soul. It is the soul who loves. Our head doesn't love; our head plans, "How am I going to exploit this person" but love has no tendency to exploit; love actually wants to surrender, to offer. In love what do you want to do? In love we want to give ourselves to the person whom we love. Now actually to whom do we want to offer ourselves? To whom should we offer ourselves? To whom? **Ultimately to whom should we offer ourselves?**

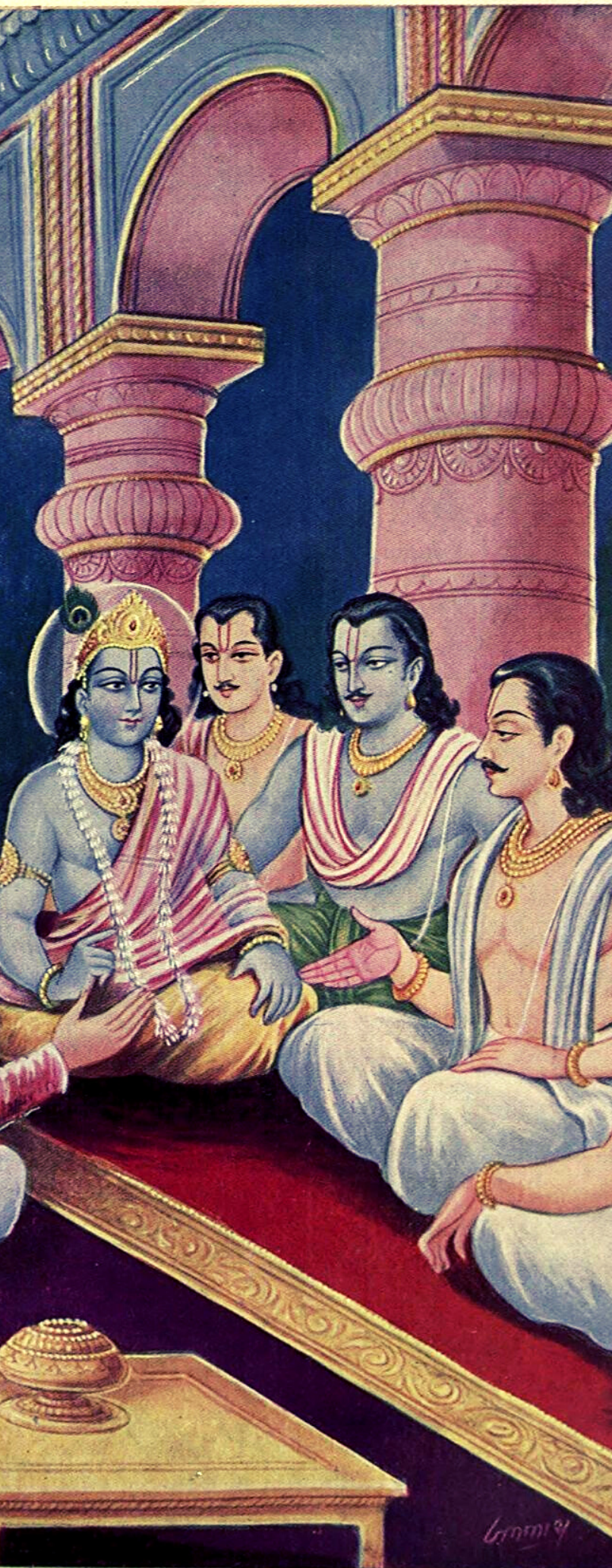
We should offer ourselves to somebody who loves us. Now tell me who loves you the most? Krishna. Isn't it? Who loves you the most? Your friend, your father your mother, yes, they love you, but the love of Krishna is incomparable. Krishna loves us the most. Now let us see how I can justify this statement. Let us find out whether Krishna really loves us. We made the statement that Krishna loves us but now let us find out is it true that Krishna loves us. Can you give some examples to prove that Krishna loves you?

Krishna gave us light, air and tell me something more? Water, food, right? Why is Krishna giving it to you? Because He loves you. So do you all agree with this point? Krishna loves you that is why Krishna is giving you light, air, water, food and everything. If He didn't love you why would He give it to you? Now, is it Krishna who is actually providing us with all these things or is it happening just by accident? Now it is the mango season; did you see mangoes on a tree? Did the mangoes come on the tree by accident? It is a very systematic arrangement how a fruit appears in a tree. The grains come in the plants. Does it come out accidentally? Is it accidental happening that a seed falls on the ground and a tree comes out? No - these are all divine arrangements of Krishna. Tarun made a statement that the way we understand that Krishna loves us is because Krishna is giving us the light, the air, the water, the food and everything. Is that point clear? Now think about it deeply that how Krishna loves you. So the point was made that we must love somebody who loves us.

We must surrender ourselves, offer ourselves to somebody who loves us. Now Krishna loves us the most. Now you tell me who should you surrender to? Krishna, right? You agree with me. Okay. So this is how we begin to realize how Krishna is loving us, therefore we must surrender unto Him and when one surrenders to Krishna then he is called a devotee of Krishna. So when we develop this relationship with Krishna, we develop intense loving relationship, then we feel that separation from Krishna is unbearable. It becomes totally unbearable to bear the separation from Him. One feels how can he continue to live without being with Him. Now as this verse is describing, as this chapter is describing that is how the Pandavas felt; when they got the news that Krishna left the planet, Krishna left, Arjuna came and gave the news; this is what actually Arjuna is describing.

Arjuna is describing that first Krishna made the Yadus fight with themselves and kill themselves. Do you know this incidence? Do you know where Krishna appeared? Krishna appeared in Mathura; Krishna came to Vrndavana and then He went to Dwarka. Why did Krishna come? Okay, this question I will ask? To kill the demons and to protect the devotees -paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya. [BG 4.8]

In this way Krishna establishes dharma and sambhavāmi yuge yuge. That is what Krishna Himself said. So five thousand years ago why did Krishna come? Krishna came to protect the sadhus and kill the demons and to establish dharma. So when He did that, after He accomplished his mission, after all the demons were killed and the devotees were secured, dharma was established, Krishna decided to go back to the spiritual world. But before going back, Krishna decided to take the Yadus (Yadus are Krishna's eternal associates) also back to the spiritual world. Therefore, what did Krishna arrange? Krishna arranged that the Yadus would fight amongst themselves and kill themselves. Do you know why Krishna made this arrangement that Yadus would fight amongst themselves and kill themselves? Because no one else could kill the Yadus. It is only the Yadus who could kill the Yadus. Yadus were so powerful because they are Krishna's eternal associates, no one else could kill them. So Krishna made this arrangement. It is like a drama.



"Krishna's associates are eternal. There is no question of Yadus dying. Krishna's eternal associates who are situated in the spiritual identity, there is no question of them dying. Does a soul die? No. So if one is situated in his spiritual identity does he die? No, he does not die. It is only Krishna's lila, Krishna's pastimes. His pastimes are like a play on a stage. In a play on a stage, when an actor dies, does he really die? No, it is just an act.

Similarly Krishna's pastimes are like acting. He doesn't die but it appears to those who are watching the play that He died. In this way, when the hero dies or the heroine dies, people start to cry but the hero didn't die. Similarly when somebody watches Krishna's pastimes he also becomes overwhelmed with emotion and that is the purpose - to stir our emotions to develop our love for Krishna.

So in this way when the Pandavas got the news that Krishna made the Yadus kill each other and then He Himself left the planet, from Arjuna who brought it to Yudhistir Maharaja, Yudhistir Maharaj decided to leave everything and give up his body. To commit suicide is not advisable but this Maha-prasthan which is not eating, not drinking, not resting, but walking and walking and walking and thus giving up the body is a bona fide process. It is not really suicide. Only a devotee of Krishna who is in deep love for Krishna can act in such a way, although apparently it may sound like suicide. Similarly due to the separation from the Lord when one gives up his body not all of a sudden - when one kills himself it is sudden- that is suicide; one hangs himself or "blows his brains" or places himself under a moving train which is a sudden thing and that is not desirable, but this kind of thing Maha-prasthan shows what deep determination one has due to one's love for Krishna to stop eating, stop sleeping, stop drinking. What happens normally if we don't eat for one day, we fast for one day? The next day we want to "eat up the whole universe". Don't we? But this is not just a temporary thing; until the end one would act like that.

So this chapter is describing how in this way the Pandavas retire timely. The Pandavas left their home, left their palaces and they went towards the Himalayas; and they went on Maha-prasthan. Draupadi also joined them. Draupadi was the first one to fall; then next was Sahadev; then after Sahadev was Nakul; after Nakul was Arjuna; after Arjuna was Bhima. Do you know where Bhima's body fell? Bhima's body fell near Badrinath. Can you imagine he just walked and walked. Where was Hastinapur? Hastinapur is Delhi.

"From Delhi they walked and walked and walked without taking any rest or eating anything till their bodies fell. So Bhima walked from Delhi to Badrinath, high up in the Himalayas and he was the last one to fall and then for Yudhistir Maharaj a chariot came from the heavenly planet to take him there. Yudhistir Maharaj was so pure that he didn't die. In his self-same body he was allowed to go to the heavenly planet.

When the body becomes pure then it becomes suitable for going to the heavenly planet, otherwise for entering the heavenly planet we need a different type of body. Just like when you go up in the mountains where it is very cold, do you go in the same dress? You have to put on thick woollen clothes. Or, when you go to some place where the climate is hot, then do you wear the same dress? No, in a hot climate what do you wear? You wear light clothes. So similarly, to go to different planets we need different types of bodies. Are those planets empty? All these planets and stars that we see- are they empty places or are there people there, living beings there? What do you think? Are they empty? No. Is the Sun planet -Surya Mandal empty? No. On the Sun planet there are living entities but to live on the sun planet you can well imagine it is so hot that even before this body can approach that planet, this body will be burned to ashes. Now tell me, to live on the Sun planet what kind of a body do you need? You need a body suitable to that situation. The Sun planet is a fiery planet; it is fire; so there, the bodies are made of fire. Similarly moon planet is very cold, therefore the bodies are suitable to the moon planet. In this way according to the situation we get different types of bodies. For example, are there living entities in water? There are living entities like fishes, aquatics. They have a body which is suitable for living in the water.

If you bring a fish onto the land what will happen? It won't be able to survive. Similarly, if you take a man into the water will he be able to stay in water? No. Why? Because his body is not suitable for water. So if there can be living entities in water, if there can be living entities on land, on earth why can there not be living entities in fire? Isn't it common sense? There is life in water, there is life in air, there is life on land so can there be life in fire? Yes; sure, but to live in that atmosphere they need a body suitable to that atmosphere. So Yudhistir Maharaj was so pure that in the same body he could go to the heavenly planets.



Inquiries of the Soul

Question: What is the difference between Yudhistir Maharaj's actions and Arjuna's actions?

HHBCS: You see the ultimate consideration of right and wrong is: to follow the instructions of Krishna is right and to disobey Krishna is wrong. That is the ultimate consideration. There are laws in a state but what is the ultimate law? To abide by the government or the king and not to disobey him. Now the law may be that the cars should drive from the right hand side of the road but if the King says, "Look, drive the car on the left hand side of the road" and if you say, "No I can't drive on the left. I have to drive on the right hand side of the road." So you see the point. The law is to follow the order of the king not just blindly follow the law and disobey the king. Actually in the Mahabharat we find cases like that. Yudhistir Maharaja, as you are asking what is the difference between Yudhistir Maharaja's act and Arjuna's act. Yudhistir Maharaja's crime was not, his sin was not that he lied because he did not lie. Would Yudhistir Maharaja lie? He refused to say that Asvathama is dead although Krishna told him to say that.

So then Krishna told Bhima, "Bhima, our brother won't tell a lie. Go kill that elephant called Asvathama and then probably our brother will be able to tell the truth." So Bhima immediately went and killed that elephant. He did it in a moment practically because Dronacharya was coming and by the time Dronacharya came Krishna said, "Yudhistir, say that Asvathama is dead." Still Yudhistir said, "Asvathama, the elephant is dead." And not Asvathama is dead, but in Sanskrit the structure is such - Asvathama is dead, the elephant, "Asvathama hatah iti gajah." After saying Asvathama is dead (Asvathama hatah), when Yudhistir Maharaj said the last word (iti gajah), Krishna blew the conch shell. So Dronacharya couldn't hear the last part(iti gajah). Yudhistir Maharaja's offense was that, when Krishna told him to do something, he refused to do it. So that was what I was saying - the ultimate law is to abide by the King, abide by Krishna, the Lawmaker. Who made all these laws? Here we see that Bhismadeva also failed. He was so adherent to the rules of moral codes that he did not consider Krishna. That is why Arjuna is a greater devotee than Yudhistir Maharaj. Krishna didn't reveal himself to Yudhistir Maharaja but He revealed Himself to Arjuna.

