

Kali Yuga

~

The Terrible Age of Kali

Kali Yuga, the Iron Age, the Age of Darkness, is the Age of “Quarrel and Hypocrisy.”

Hypocrisy is the dominant quality amongst human beings.

In this Age, people's words and actions are directly oppositional, especially in matters of dharma.

People make claims of virtue, while opposing it in their actions.

Truth, the foundation of dharma, is under severe attack in the Kali Yuga.

During this time, human beings are prone towards ignorance, deceitfulness, falsehood, selfishness, and violence. Egotism predominates.

Those with money will be worshiped, and a person's propriety will be seriously questioned if he does not earn a good living. A person will be judged unholy if he falls into poverty.

Genuine spirituality is gradually reduced to nil, and is replaced by false spirituality in the form of materialism. Material desire supersedes desire for Spirit, even amongst those who claim to be practitioners of dharma.

Quarrels occur over minor things, leaders exploit their populations in all ways possible, and both so called teachers and students of spirituality become insincere and unqualified.

Scriptures are disrespected and ignored.

Lust predominates, and the minds of the people are always disturbed.

People are unlucky.

No one is pure in Kali Yuga.

Sincere practitioners of dharma are exceedingly rare and hard to find.

To whatever extent a person is sincere and genuine in the pursuance of dharma, then to that extent that person is hard pressed in the Kali Yuga.

“The Yuga Cycle doctrine tells us that we are now living in the Kali Yuga; the age of darkness, when moral virtue and mental capabilities reach their lowest point in the cycle. The Indian epic The Mahabharata describes the Kali Yuga as the period when the "World Soul" is Black in hue; only one quarter of virtue remains, which slowly dwindles to zero at the end of the Kali Yuga. Men turn to wickedness; disease, lethargy, anger, natural calamities, anguish and fear of scarcity dominate. Penance, sacrifices and religious observances fall into disuse. All creatures degenerate. Change passes over all things, without exception.”

<http://www.viewzone.com/kali.html>

~

Characteristics of Kali Yuga

There are many passages in the Hindu writings which describe the condition of the World during Kali Yuga, actual era in which suffering plays an important part in spiritual liberation. Amazingly these written facts are exactly what we are seeing in the World today. Among the most striking of these passages from the Hindu holy books are the following.

Swami Vivekananda, great Indian mystic, wrote, 'But greater than the present deep dismal night...no pall of darkness had ever before enveloped this holy land of ours. And compared with the depth of this fall, all previous falls appear like little hoof-marks'. Obviously this seer is referring to our actual era, Kali Yuga.

'Cheating will be the order of the day in business relations; satisfaction of sexual pleasure will be the only consideration of male or female excellence and worthiness.'

'When deceit, falsehood, lethargy, sleepiness, violence, despondency, grief, delusion, fear, and poverty prevail, that is the Kali Yuga...'

'Celibates will cease to observe their vows of study, purity and celibacy; householders will take to begging (instead of giving alms); hermits will resort to villages (leaving their retreats in the forests); and sanyasins will be extremely greedy for money.'

'In the Kali Yuga, men will abandon their parents, brothers, friends, and relatives. They will occupy high seats (and pulpits) and will (pretend to) preach religion.'

<http://www.santhigiri.com/prophecies/pages/characteristics.htm>

It is well known that scriptures expound the continuing deterioration of values with the onset of Kali Yuga. Following are some of the common behavioral characteristics attributed to people in the Kali Yuga:

- *The increasingly evil disposition acquired by the human mind*
- *Irreverence and utter disregard for elders, Gods and scriptures*
- *Loss and erosion of familial values*
- *Dilution and abandonment of varnas and ashramas*
- *Greedy and mindless pursuit of materialism*

Mahabharata goes further in quoting some specific details, some of which are listed below:

- *Brahmanas abstain from sacrifices and the study of the Vedas, and divested of their staff and deer-skin, become omnivorous in diet and get intoxicated by drinks (Mbh 3.187); they will speak disrespectfully of the Vedas, and clouded by the science of disputation, they will no longer perform sacrifices. (3.189)*
- *People leading domestic lives, afraid of the burden of taxes, become deceivers. (3.187)*
- *More youths act like the aged; while all that is observable in youth may be noticed in the old. (3.187)*
- *Women given to impropriety of conduct and marked by evil manners, deceive even the best of husbands (3.187); wives will not wait upon and serve their husbands. (3.189)*
- *It is doubtful that Vedas will ever become even visible to the eye. (12.237)*
- *Kings of the earth with souls steeped in ignorance, and discontented with what they have, will at such a time, rob their subjects by every means in their power. (3.189)*
- *And Brahmanas and Kshatriyas and Vaisyas will disappear, leaving, O King, no remnants of their orders. And all men towards the end of the Yuga will become members of one common order, without distinction of any kind. (3.189)*
- *Men will cease to gratify the gods by offerings of Sradhas; and without a knowledge of the ordinance, men will perform ceremonies and rites. (3.189)*
- *People will, without compunction, destroy trees and gardens. (3.189)*
- *And renouncing the gods, men will worship bones and other relics deposited within walls. (3.189)*

<http://thekarna.wordpress.com/2010/04/17/kali-yuga-behavioral-characteristics-of-humans/>

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam

Canto 12: The Age of Deterioration, Chapter 2: Symptoms of Kali Yuga

12.2.1: *Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Then, O King, religion, truthfulness, cleanliness, tolerance, mercy, duration of life, physical strength and memory will all diminish day by day because of the powerful influence of the age of Kali.*

12.2.2: *In Kali-yuga, wealth alone will be considered the sign of a man's good birth, proper behavior and fine qualities. And law and justice will be applied only on the basis of one's power.*

12.2.3: *Men and women will live together merely because of superficial attraction, and success in business will depend on deceit. Womanliness and manliness will be judged according to one's expertise in sex, and a man will be known as a brāhmaṇa just by his wearing a thread.*

12.2.4: *A person's spiritual position will be ascertained merely according to external symbols, and on that same basis people will change from one spiritual order to the next. A person's propriety will be seriously questioned if he does not earn a good living. And one who is very clever at juggling words will be considered a learned scholar.*

12.2.5: *A person will be judged unholy if he does not have money, and hypocrisy will be accepted as virtue. Marriage will be arranged simply by verbal agreement, and a person will think he is fit to appear in public if he has merely taken a bath.*

12.2.6: *A sacred place will be taken to consist of no more than a reservoir of water located at a distance, and beauty will be thought to depend on one's hairstyle. Filling the belly will become the goal of life, and one who is audacious will be accepted as truthful. He who can maintain a family will be regarded as an expert man, and the principles of religion will be observed only for the sake of reputation.*

12.2.7: *As the earth thus becomes crowded with a corrupt population, whoever among any of the social classes shows himself to be the strongest will gain political power.*

12.2.8: *Losing their wives and properties to such avaricious and merciless rulers, who will behave no better than ordinary thieves, the citizens will flee to the mountains and forests.*

12.2.9: *Harassed by famine and excessive taxes, people will resort to eating leaves, roots, flesh, wild honey, fruits, flowers and seeds. Struck by drought, they will become completely ruined.*

12.2.10: *The citizens will suffer greatly from cold, wind, heat, rain and snow. They will be further tormented by quarrels, hunger, thirst, disease and severe anxiety.*

12.2.11: *The maximum duration of life for human beings in Kali-yuga will become fifty years.*

12.2.12-16: *By the time the age of Kali ends, the bodies of all creatures will be greatly reduced in size, and the religious principles of followers of varṇāśrama will be ruined. The path of the Vedas will be completely forgotten in human society, and so-called religion will be mostly atheistic. The kings will mostly be thieves, the occupations of men will be stealing, lying and needless violence, and all the social classes will be reduced to the lowest level of śūdras. Cows will be like goats, spiritual hermitages will be no different from mundane houses, and family ties will extend no further than the immediate bonds of marriage. Most plants and herbs will be tiny, and all trees will appear like dwarf śamī trees. Clouds will be full of lightning, homes will be devoid of piety, and all human beings will have become like asses. At that time, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will appear on the earth. Acting with the power of pure spiritual goodness, He will rescue eternal religion.*

12.2.17: *Lord Viṣṇu – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the spiritual master of all moving and nonmoving living beings, and the Supreme Soul of all – takes birth to protect the principles of religion and to relieve His saintly devotees from the reactions of material work.*

12.2.18: *Lord Kalki will appear in the home of the most eminent brāhmaṇa of Śambhala village, the great soul Viṣṇuyāśā.*

12.2.19-20: *Lord Kalki, the Lord of the universe, will mount His swift horse Devadatta and, sword in hand, travel over the earth exhibiting His eight mystic opulences and eight special qualities of Godhead. Displaying His unequalled effulgence and riding with great speed, He will kill by the millions those thieves who have dared dress as kings.*

12.2.21: *After all the impostor kings have been killed, the residents of the cities and towns will feel the breezes carrying the most sacred fragrance of the sandalwood paste and other decorations of Lord Vāsudeva, and their minds will thereby become transcendently pure.*

12.2.22: *When Lord Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appears in their hearts in His transcendental form of goodness, the remaining citizens will abundantly repopulate the earth.*

12.2.23: *When the Supreme Lord has appeared on earth as Kalki, the maintainer of religion, Satya-yuga will begin, and human society will bring forth progeny in the mode of goodness.*

12.2.24: *When the moon, the sun and Bṛhaspañ are together in the constellation Karkaṭa, and all three enter simultaneously into the lunar mansion Puṣyā – at that exact moment the age of Satya, or Kṛta, will begin.*

12.2.25: *Thus I have described all the kings – past, present and future – who belong to the dynasties of the sun and the moon.*

12.2.26: *From your birth up to the coronation of King Nanda, 1,150 years will pass.*

12.2.27-28: *Of the seven stars forming the constellation of the seven sages, Pulaha and Kratu are the first to rise in the night sky. If a line running north and south were drawn through their midpoint, whichever of the lunar mansions this line passes through is said to be the ruling asterism of the constellation for that time. The Seven Sages will remain connected with that particular lunar mansion for one hundred human years. Currently, during your lifetime, they are situated in the nakṣatra called Maghā.*

12.2.29: *The Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, is brilliant like the sun and is known as Kṛṣṇa. When He returned to the spiritual sky, Kali entered this world, and people then began to take pleasure in sinful activities.*

12.2.30: *As long as Lord Śñ Kṛṣṇa, the husband of the goddess of fortune, touched the earth with His lotus feet, Kali was powerless to subdue this planet.*

12.2.31: *When the constellation of the seven sages is passing through the lunar mansion Maghā, the age of Kali begins. It comprises twelve hundred years of the demigods.*

12.2.32: *When the great sages of the Saptarṣi constellation pass from Maghā to Pūrvāsādhā, Kali will have his full strength, beginning from King Nanda and his dynasty.*

12.2.33: *Those who scientifically understand the past declare that on the very day that Lord Śñ Kṛṣṇa departed for the spiritual world, the influence of the age of Kali began.*

12.2.34: *After the one thousand celestial years of Kali-yuga, the Satya-yuga will manifest again. At that time the minds of all men will become self-effulgent.*

12.2.35: *Thus I have described the royal dynasty of Manu, as it is known on this earth. One can similarly study the history of the vaiśyas, śūdras and brāhmaṇas living in the various ages.*

12.2.36: *These personalities, who were great souls, are now known only by their names. They exist only in accounts from the past, and only their fame remains on the earth.*

12.2.37: *Devāpi, the brother of Mahārāja Śāntanu, and Maru, the descendant of Ikṣvāku, both possess great mystic strength and are living even now in the village of Kalāpa.*

12.2.38: *At the end of the age of Kali, these two kings, having received instruction directly from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, will return to human society and reestablish the eternal religion of man, characterized by the divisions of varṇa and āśrama, just as it was before.*

12.2.39: *The cycle of four ages — Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali — continues perpetually among living beings on this earth, repeating the same general sequence of events.*

12.2.40: *My dear King Parīkṣit, all these kings I have described, as well as all other human beings, come to this earth and stake their claims, but ultimately they all must give up this world and meet their destruction.*

12.2.41: *Even though a person's body may now have the designation "king," in the end its name will be "worms," "stool" or "ashes." What can a person who injures other living beings for the sake of his body know about his own self-interest, since his activities are simply leading him to hell?*

12.2.42: *[The materialistic king thinks:] "This unbounded earth was held by my predecessors and is now under my sovereignty. How can I arrange for it to remain in the hands of my sons, grandsons and other descendants?"*

12.2.43: *Although the foolish accept the body made of earth, water and fire as "me" and this earth as "mine," in every case they have ultimately abandoned both their body and the earth and passed away into oblivion.*

12.2.44: *My dear King Parīkṣit, all these kings who tried to enjoy the earth by their strength were reduced by the force of time to nothing more than historical accounts.*

Other Scripture References

*“Noble friend,
When I leave this world
Darkness will descend:
The dreaded Age of Kali will begin ~
The age in which all that is auspicious
Becomes hidden and obscured.*

*Do not remain here when I have gone.
You are a worthy soul,
But in this darkness which is to come
People will indulge in all that is unworthy.”*

- Krishna, Uddhava Gita 2.4-5

“(And in Kali Yuga) hypocrisy will be considered morality.”

- Sukadeva Gosvami, Bhagavata Purana 12.2.5

*“(In Kali Yuga men) give up even the last vestige of dharma by making their speech
totally devoid of truth.”*

- Markandeya Maharishi, Vana Parva, Mahabharata

*“In Kali Yuga, the unrighteous are always exultant and the
righteous are always depressed. But those who persevere to
the end will be saved.”*

- Narada Muni, Mahabharata

~