

Life Values Reflected in Mythological Narratives

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ABSTRACT:

Mythology has always been a powerful guide for human growth, offering life lessons, practical wisdom, and examples of how to face challenges and handle success. It highlights the importance of values and discipline in our lives and often reflects the way we live. One of the highest spiritual goals is moksha, or liberation. While many believe there are 330 crore gods, most people pray to just a few, especially the Trimurti—Brahma, the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Shiva the destroyer. Every myth carries important teachings, such as the Story of Puranjana, told by Narada to King Prachinabarhi. In this symbolic tale, the soul (Puranjana) becomes separated from the divine (Avigyathan) and becomes attached to the human body (Nawadwarapuri) and intellect (Puranjani), which pulls him into the cycle of karma and rebirth. Age (Durbagai), time (Kaalán), disease (Prajvaran), and fear (Bayan) represent how the body weakens over time. Upon death, the soul is reborn based on its last thoughts. Only through a true guru can the soul find its way back to the divine and achieve liberation. Stories like these remind us of the deeper meaning of life and how to live with wisdom and purpose.

KEYWORDS:

Liberation, Moksha, Mythological Teachings, Self-Realization, Divine Wisdom, Detachment.

Introduction:

The Bhavagad Purana, commonly known as Srimad Bhagavatam, is a Hindu-oriented literature that describes Lord Vishnu's incarnation. It is the greatest purana, comprising twelve cantos and written in Sanskrit. Purana stories include a range of topics, including karmic problems, happiness, misery, and liberation. It is claimed that when people gain power, they become more egoistic and greedy, ultimately believing they are superior. However, they will culminate in a catastrophic ending that is both pathetic and tragic in nature. People who lose confidence in themselves may seek confidence outside of themselves rather than within. Anger makes people feel down, and they get nothing out of it. Many prominent individuals change their behaviour and become completely different people at times, but when they try to reform, they are punished or taught a lesson. Humans born on Earth go through a life and death cycle, during which they confront a variety of problems such as distraction, love, lust, and depression. However, all humans strive for emancipation and salvation.

The saying goes, when we have honey in our hands, we try to search far and wide for it, much as individuals attempt to concentrate on tasks while also seeking shortcuts and ultimately ending up doing something harmful. It may be landing our ideal job or anything else we have always wanted. The main topic of this article will be a few stories from the Bhavagad Purana and the lessons they teach.

The lesson of the Mythological story

There are a few stories which are considered and explained here, such as:

The churning of the ocean of milk:

Samudra Manthan, which is also called Sagar Manthan or

Amrit Manthan (Churning of the ocean milk), is a story that talks about the two types of people, Devas and Demons, as to how they fought to get Amrita that was extracted from the ocean. So, this story started when Indra (The King of God) was going in his vaahan, Airavatha. On the way, he met the Durvasa sage. And the sage gave a garland which was precious to Indra, so he took it and put it on the elephant, and the elephant threw it on the ground. Seeing that the sage got very angry cursed Indra (The King of God), saying all the gods would lose all their power and strength. With this curse, they all lost their power.

And the god met Lord Naryana for help, and then they got the reply only when they churned the ocean and got Amrita, that is when they got their powers back. But there was a difficulty, as it was a huge ocean, it would be difficult for the devas to churn the oceans alone. So, they planned to involve demons in it. Mandara Mountain was used to churn the ocean, and the Lord Vishnu was turned into Kurma (Tortoise) for the mountain to stand still. Vasuki (Snake) was used as the tool for churning the ocean. The demons faced the head side, and the Devas were holding the tail part. Slowly, things started coming out of the ocean. Fourteen ratnas such as Kamadenu (Cow), Goddess Lakshmi (Wife of Lord Naryana) and so on. The Amritha also came out. But there was a lot of fight for it as Devas wanted the whole whereas the demons wanted the Amritha, but Devas tricked the Demons and drank the whole Amritha. On this occasion, lord shiva drank the poison which was released from the ocean, and he came to be known as the Neelakanta, and that is the reason for the celebration of Mahasivarathri.

Life lessons learnt from this in all our lives, we will have a lot of difficulties, each obstacle will have different types of consequences, which can either be positive or negative. A few times, we need to face it and look at them from a different perspective. So,

have a clear hope in yourselves, and we have a few good qualities which come out as the ratnas. In the same way, if you dig in and find yourself by realisation, you will be able to ace anything in your life.

Story of Ajamila:

A Brahmin named Ajamila was once known for his truthfulness, discipline, and adherence to virtuous living. He was deeply devoted to his duties and lived a life of integrity. One day, he was sent to the forest to collect flowers, fruits, and grasses. While there, he witnessed a disturbing scene—a man misbehaving with a prostitute. Though Ajamila initially tried to control his emotions, he eventually succumbed to desire. Over time, he abandoned his values, married the prostitute, and had ten sons with her. His youngest son, whom he loved dearly, was named Narayana. As Ajamila reached the age of eighty-eight and lay on his deathbed, the servants of Yama (Yamaduttas) came to take his soul. Terrified, he instinctively cried out the name of his beloved son, “Narayana!” Although he meant his son, the divine name invoked the presence of Vishnuduttas, servants of Lord Narayana (Vishnu)—who arrived immediately and prevented the Yamaduttas from taking his life. This moment became a turning point for Ajamila. He realised the gravity of his past actions, repented deeply, and renounced all materialistic desires. He devoted the rest of his life to spiritual practice and ultimately attained liberation.

Life Lesson is that no matter what stage of life we are in, self-belief and sincere realisation can lead us back to the right path. Spiritual awakening and trust in the divine can redeem even a life led astray. Material desires may offer temporary pleasure, but they can never provide lasting fulfilment. True peace comes from turning inward and aligning ourselves with higher values.

Bhakta Prahlad Story:

There were once two gatekeepers of Vaikunta, the abode of Lord Narayana (Vishnu), named Jaya and Vijaya. One day, the Kumaras, four child-sages, came to visit the Lord. But Jaya and Vijaya, bound by their duty, stopped them at the gate. Offended by this denial, the Kumaras cursed the gatekeepers to be born on Earth as mortals and enemies of Lord Narayana, to be slain by him in three lifetimes.

In their first birth, they were born as powerful demon brothers—Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu. Hiranyaksha was eventually slain by Lord Narayana in his Varaha (boar) avatar. His brother, Hiranyakashipu, burned with hatred for Vishnu, blaming him for Hiranyaksha's death. To become invincible, Hiranyakashipu undertook severe penance and received a unique boon: he could not be killed by man or beast, inside or outside, during day or night, and not by any weapon made of wood or metal. Arrogant and ruthless, Hiranyakashipu declared himself a god and demanded that all worship him. But his own son, Prahlad, was a devoted follower of Vishnu. Gentle and steadfast, Prahlad chanted the Lord's name constantly, enraging his father. Despite threats and horrific punishments—being thrown into fire, among snakes, off cliffs—Prahlad remained unharmed, protected by divine grace.

In desperation, Hiranyakashipu sought help from his sister Holika, who had a boon rendering her immune to fire. She sat in a blazing fire with Prahlad on her lap. But since she used her boon for evil, it failed: Holika perished, while Prahlad emerged unscathed. Finally, the furious king challenged Prahlad: "If your God is everywhere, is he in this pillar?"

Prahlad calmly replied, "Yes." Striking the pillar with his mace, Lord Narayana burst forth as Narasimha, a terrifying half-man, half-lion form. It was twilight—neither day nor night. He

carried the demon king to the threshold—neither inside nor outside. Placing him on his lap—not earth, not sky—Narasimha tore him apart with his claws—neither metal nor wood. The boon was upheld, yet justice was served.

The Life Lesson of this tale of Prahlad shows us that true faith transcends fear. Even when evil seems powerful, righteousness and devotion prevail. When we keep our hearts pure and trust the divine, help will come—often in unexpected forms. God is everywhere, and those who sincerely believe are never alone.

The story of Dhurva:

There was a noble king by the name of Utthanapada. Both Suruchi and Suniti were his spouses. His first wife, Suniti, had a son named Dhruv, and his second and more favoured queen, Suruchi, had a son named Uttam. The king had fallen in love with Suruchi because of her beauty, and he focused all his attention on her and her child. Unfortunately, Dhruv and Suniti were largely disregarded and ignored.

Suniti, who was hurt by this disregard, discreetly left the palace to live with young Dhruv in the jungle. Dhruv was only five years old, but he could already feel his mother's grief and yearned for his father's love. He asked his mother one day whether he could come to see the palace. Dhruv set off with hope after Suniti acquiesced gently. He arrived to find his father playing happily with Uttam. "I want to play with you, too, Father," Dhruv remarked as he walked up. Let me sit on your lap, please. However, the monarch declined out of concern for Suruchi's response. Dhruv was then severely reprimanded by Suruchi, who said, "You don't belong here! Return to your mother.

Heartbroken and embarrassed, Dhruv sobbed in his mother's arms as he made his way back to the forest. When Suniti noticed

her kid in agony, she consoled him and said, “My son, pray to Lord Vishnu.” He alone can guide you and ease your suffering. Dhruv was moved by her comments and decided to go to the mountains by himself to meditate and ask for divine favours.

He encountered the famous sage Narada along the way, and the boy’s tenacity inspired him. He learned the holy mantra “Om Namoh Bhagavate Vasudevaya” from Narada, who also gave him instructions on how to meditate with complete concentration and confidence.

When Dhruv arrived at the highlands, he started his rigorous penance under a tree. He subsisted on fruits and roots during the first month. He subsisted on dry leaves for the following month.

He thereafter just drank river water. He was barely breathing by the fourth month, and at one point, while standing on one leg and utterly engrossed in the name of Lord Vishnu, he even stopped breathing. The power and devotion of this young kid astounded the gods. Concerned by his increasing spiritual strength, Indra went to Lord Vishnu. “Dhruv’s devotion is pure,” Vishnu informed him. I’ll see him shortly. Lord Vishnu eventually materialised before Dhruv, who was pleased with his steady focus.

“I am very pleased with you,” Vishnu responded, beaming with celestial grace. Request any blessing you want. Dhruv, however, who was suddenly free of material possessions, bowed respectfully and stated that all he wanted was to always remember the Lord. He was blessed by Lord Vishnu, who expressed his admiration, saying, “You will always shine like a star in the night sky.” You will be surrounded by the Saptarishis, the great sages. Dhruv Tara, the Pole Star, will be your moniker. When Dhruv returned to his kingdom, his family joyfully greeted him. For many years, he governed with wisdom and justice after being anointed king at the

age of six.

This story's life lesson demonstrates the importance of Dhruv's journey and teaches us that the true sources of peace are not material comforts but rather spiritual strength and self-realisation. If a youngster has unwavering faith, perseverance, and determination, they can achieve the seemingly impossible. Dhruv is also still visible in the night sky, which serves as a reminder of the power of faith and inner dedication.

Conclusion:

Mythological depictions of life values provide timeless teachings that hold in the fast-paced world of today. The fundamental values of integrity, self-control, and respect for others are more crucial than ever in the twenty-first century, despite the quickening pace of technological development. Despite reading old tales, watching mythical movies, and hearing moral lessons, we frequently neglect to put them into practice in our day-to-day activities. The moment has come to contemplate these ancient lessons and incorporate them into our behaviour. To honour the knowledge of our ancestors, we should live compassionately and purposefully and treasure the stories they told us to help us navigate life.

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