

The Yaksha's Questions 74 - 102

Mahabharatha Collection

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 Description: A comprehensive guide to the profound Q&A between Yaksha and Yudhishtira, exploring timeless wisdom on life, death, virtue, and dharma

 Tags: mahabharata, yaksha-prashna, yudhishtira, philosophy, dharma, wisdom



Section 1: Life, Death, and Essential Virtues (Q74-102)

No.	Question (English / Sanskrit)	Answer	Wisdom / Explanation
74	Which one is considered as dead? Daridra (<i>Mritah katham syat purushah?</i>)	Daridra (<i>The Poor</i>)	A poor person is treated as invisible by society. However, God is also called <i>Daridra Narayana</i> because He has no equals.
75	When will a Kingdom be considered as dead? (<i>Katham rashtram mritam bhavet?</i>)	Arajakam (Anarchy)	A nation dies when it lacks a government or leadership. Anarchy leads to the death of the state.
76	When will a Sraddha be considered as dead? (<i>Sraddham mritam katham va syat?</i>)	Ashrotriyam (Unlearned)	A ritual is "dead" if the Brahmin performing it does not know the Vedas.
77	When will a sacrifice (Yajna) be considered as dead? (<i>Katham yajno mrito bhavet?</i>)	No Dakshina (No Gifts)	A sacrifice is dead if the priest is not compensated. Modern rituals often waste money on status but scrimp on fees.

No.	Question (English / Sanskrit)	Answer	Wisdom / Explanation
78	What constitutes the way (Direction)? (<i>Kim dik?</i>)	Santah (Good People)	"Direction" isn't North/South. The true path is shown by Good People (Sadhus/Acharyas).
79	What has been spoken of as water? (<i>Kim udakam?</i>)	Akasha (Space)	Just as salt dissolves in water, all elements eventually dissolve back into Space during dissolution.
80	What is food? (<i>Kim annam?</i>)	Gau (Cow/Earth)	Refers to the cow, the earth, and the senses—that which sustains life.
81	What is poison? (<i>Kim cha visham?</i>)	Prarthana (Begging)	Excessive desire is poison. Duryodhana destroyed himself because he refused to share even a needle-point of land.
82	What is the proper time for Sraddha? (<i>Sraddhasya kalam?</i>)	Brahmana (Learned Man)	The <i>real</i> proper time is defined by the arrival of a Brahmin who knows the Vedas.
83	What is the characteristic of Tapas? (<i>Tapah kim lakshanam?</i>)	Swadharma (Own Duty)	Pundalika made God wait because he was serving his parents. Doing one's duty is the highest Tapas.
84	What is Dama (Self-control)? (<i>Ko damah?</i>)	Manasa damanam (Mind Control)	True control is mental. Sitting in a lecture while the mind wanders means there is no <i>Dama</i> .
85	What is the highest patience? (<i>Kshama cha ka?</i>)	Dvandva Sahishnutvam (Enduring Opposites)	Handling victory and defeat equally. One must accept both outcomes like Rama.
86	What is Shame? (<i>Ka cha hi hri?</i>)	Akarya nivartanam (Withdrawning from bad)	The internal check that prevents hypocrisy—like praising clean streets abroad but littering at home.

No.	Question (English / Sanskrit)	Answer	Wisdom / Explanation
	What is Knowledge? <i>(Kim jnanam?)</i>	Tattva (True Reality)	Realizing the ultimate Truth. Simply put: Knowing that Krishna is the highest Truth.
88	What is Tranquility (Peace)? <i>(Kah shamah?)</i>	Chitta prashantata (Peace of Heart)	Peace is achieved when the mind is settled and filled with God, leaving no room for disturbances.
89	What is Mercy? <i>(Daya cha ka?)</i>	Sarva sukhaishitvam (Wishing happiness for all)	Gajendra Moksha: Vishnu rushed weaponless to save the elephant. Krishna saved Draupadi's dignity.
90	What is Simplicity? <i>(Kim cha arjavam?)</i>	Sama chittata (Equanimity)	True simplicity is having a mind that sees equality in everything, rather than being crooked or biased.
91	Who is the foe invincible to man? <i>(Kah shatru durjayaha pumsam?)</i>	Krodha (Anger)	Conquering money or the mind is hard, but conquering anger is the most difficult task for a human.
92	What are the endless desires (Disease)? <i>(Kascha vyadhir anantakah?)</i>	Lobha (Covetousness)	Greed mixed with envy is an incurable disease, compared to "chicory" mixed endlessly into coffee.
93	What is said to be goodness? <i>(Kidrishas smritah sadhu?)</i>	Sarva bhuta hitah (Welfare of all)	The Dharma Vyadha: A butcher was a Sadhu because he served his parents and sought the welfare of others.
94	What is said to be badness? <i>(Kidrishas smritaha asadhuh?)</i>	Nirdayah (No Compassion)	Jayadratha: Showed no mercy when blocking the Pandavas, leading to Abhimanyu's death.
95	What is delusion (Moha)?	Dharma mudhatvam	

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	<i>(Ko mohah prokshyate?)</i>	(Not knowing Dharma)	True delusion is simply the ignorance of what constitutes right action.
	What is pride?	Atmabhimanita	Interpreted as the realization of the Atman (Soul) as distinct from the body.
96	<i>(Kasya mana prakirtitah?)</i>	(Self-consciousness)	
	What is to be understood by laziness? <i>(Kim alasyam cha vigneyam?)</i>	Dharma nishkriyata (Not doing Dharma)	Failing to perform one's prescribed duties. Like making excuses to avoid doing good work.
97			
	What has been spoken of as grief (Shoka)? <i>(Kasya shoka prakirtitah?)</i>	Ajnana (Ignorance)	Grief comes from not knowing reality. Example: Parents grieving over marks while ignoring the child's effort.
98			
99	What is the steadfastness spoken of by the Rishis? <i>(Kim sthairyam rishibhi proktam?)</i>	Swadharma (Sticking to Duty)	Nachiketas persisted in going to Yama's abode to keep his father's word, even though it was spoken in anger.
100			
100	What is referred to as courage? <i>(Kim dhairyam udahrtam?)</i>	Indriya nigrahaha (Sense Control)	True courage isn't physical bravado; it is resisting temptation (e.g., avoiding "honey-traps").
101			
101	What is the supreme bath? <i>(Snanam cha kim?)</i>	Mano mala tyagaha (Cleaning the Mind)	A physical bath is temporary; the true bath is washing the mind by listening to good things.
102			
102	What is here said to be Dana or charity? <i>(Danam cha kim?)</i>	Bhuta rakshanam (Protecting Beings)	Beyond giving money or clothes, the highest charity is protecting living beings.



1. Lakshmi as Loka Shoka Nashini

- **The Concept:** The Yaksha asks what covers the world (*Loka*). While *Loka* means "world," it also refers to the **Shastras** (Scriptures).
- **The Grief:** The Shastras feel "grief" because people do not follow them properly.
- **The Remedy:** Goddess Lakshmi is known as *Loka Shoka Vinashini* (Destroyer of the World's Grief) because she wipes away the sorrow of the Shastras by guiding humanity back to them.



2. Daridra Narayana (The Meaning of "Poor God")

Yudhishtira states that a poor man is considered "dead." The term **Daridra Narayana** offers two profound insights: 1. **Invisibility:** Society looks "through" a poor person as if they don't exist. Similarly, God is present everywhere but remains invisible to those without faith—He is hidden in plain sight. 2. **The "Lack":** *Daridra* means "one who lacks something." God lacks nothing, except **one thing:** He has no equal and no superior. In this specific "lack" of peers, He is poetically called *Daridra*.



3. The Story of Dharma Vyadha (The Righteous Butcher)

This story defines what makes a person a **Sadhu** (Good person). * **The Arrogant Sage:** A sage burnt a crane to ashes with his angry gaze and felt proud. Later, a housewife made him wait for alms while she served her husband. When he got angry, she asked, **"Did you think I was that crane?"** * **The Lesson:** Shocked by her insight, the sage was sent to learn from a **Butcher (Dharma Vyadha)**. * **The Truth:** The butcher sold meat in a crowded shop, yet he was a *Gnani* (enlightened soul). He performed his *Swadharma* without attachment and served his parents with devotion. He taught that goodness comes from conduct and duty, not just profession.



Story 4: The Secret Behind Yudhishtira's Answers

Based on the sources, there are two hidden layers to Yudhishtira's success in the Yaksha Prashna: a specific **Mantra** he recited and a divine **Protection Plot** orchestrated by Krishna.

1. The Power of the Mantra

- **The Context:** While Yudhishtira was wise, it is humanly impossible to be an expert in every field (Dharma, science, world affairs, etc.). Even a genius usually stumbles on topics outside their specialization.
- **The Secret:** The Tamil poet **Villiputhurar** records that before answering, Yudhishtira "thought of a supreme mantra within himself" (*uyarnthathor manthirathai thannul ninaithan*).
- **The Identity:** This mantra is identified as the **Dvaya Maha Mantra**, a sacred invocation of Lord Narayana alongside Goddess Mahalakshmi.
- **The Result:** By connecting to the Lord and the Goddess of Wisdom, the answers appeared to Yudhishtira instantly and spontaneously ("*takku takku takku*"), allowing him to pass the test his brothers failed.

2. The Hidden Protection Plot

Why did this event happen at all? It was a protective drama orchestrated by Krishna to save the Pandavas from black magic. * **The Threat:** Karna and Duryodhana had hired a sorcerer named **Kalamamuni** to perform a black magic ritual (*Abhichara Yaga*). This sent a demon named **Kritya** to kill the Pandavas. * **The Rule:** The demon was bound by a rule: it could only kill living, conscious targets. If it failed, it would return to kill the sender. * **The Strategy:** Krishna directed **Yama** (the Deity of Dharma) to appear as the Yaksha. * The Yaksha rendered the first four brothers "unconscious" (appearing dead). * He kept Yudhishtira engaged in a deep trance-like state of questioning. * **The Escape:** When the demon Kritya arrived, it saw the Pandavas in a state resembling death and believed its mission failed. It returned and killed the sorcerer instead. Thus, the questioning session was actually a shield created by Krishna.



Reference

Watch the full discourse here: [YouTube Link](#)



Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

These articles are based on discourses by **Sri Dushyanth Sridhar**, who renders discourses in English & Tamil on Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavata, Vishnu Purāna, Bhagavad Gitā, Vishnu Sahasranāma, and Divya Prabanda in the upanyāsam, pravachanam, or kālakshepam style. Visit <https://desikadaya.org> for more information. These notes are presented solely for educational purposes to help viewers download and benefit from these teachings. Any incorrect interpretations or inaccuracies are mine and unintentional—please forgive me. For any feedback, please send an [email](#).

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